"WHO AM I?": AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF TUTORS' LIVED EXPERIENCES PROVIDING ONLINE WRITING TUTORING

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to highlight tutors' voices and experiences using reflective practices and purposeful exploration to illustrate their complex and transformational journey transitioning into the online environment. This interpretive phenomenological analysis offered a deeper and richer exploration of the intricacies of five tutors' experiences by discovering what it meant to shift from campus-based settings into the online environment and the ways tutoring roles, practices, and communication, among other aspects, were influenced in the transition process. This study also examined whether the tutors' experiences aligned with aspects of Herring's (2019) Multimodal Communication theory and Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory. The study found that when shifting online, tutors remained in a constant state of transition, whether it was months or years after their first online writing tutoring session. Before the start of their online tutoring experience, the participants reported that their experiences began with a sense of loss, distress, and negativity or reserve regarding the online environment. However, after their initial online tutoring sessions, they gained relief. Through continued online tutoring sessions, the participants faced challenges that required adjustments and changes to overcome. Eventually, the mere experience of tutoring online led to a transformational mindset, as the participants began viewing the online environment positively. The study partially confirmed Herring and Yellin's respective theories and discovered that computer-mediated communication may influence the roles tutors play. The study also found that tutors experience more fluid roles in the online environment compared to campus-based settings. The participants acknowledged that they never fully transitioned online and were in a constant state of flux. The findings of this study have implications for learning and writing centers, as spaces that intersect campus and online writing support as well as the potential to reimagine online tutoring roles, policies, strategies, and

integrated support. Recommendations for future research were also documented. Overall, the study revealed that the online environment is complex and required changes in roles, strategies, and self for tutors to gain comfort, confidence, and positivity, as they continued to reside in a state of transition.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing skills help students succeed in academics and beyond (Conference on College Composition & Communication, 2015). Yet, scholars have recorded the difficulties students have faced with college writing skills since the beginning of the twentieth century (Murphy & Law, 2013). Writing is a complex skill that is not developed naturally, rather it requires extensive practice and instruction (Hayes, 2012) and many incoming college students do not have college-level writing skills (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Relles, 2016). Studies have found that there are many reasons that inhibit student's writing development, including "instructional time, teacher's preparation, school policies, and historical, social, cultural, and political influences" (Graham, 2019). Writing is a challenging task that requires extensive time to gain proficiency, but mitigating factors can influence a person's writing development in elementary and secondary school (Drew et al., 2017; Graham, 2019). Consequently, graduated high school students who enter college with lower writing proficiency skills can face disadvantages (Graham, 2019). In fact, one college retention and writing skills study found that only 17% of college students placed in remedial composition courses will graduate (Adelman, 2016), whereas incoming students with strong writing preparedness are twice as likely to graduate (DeAngelo et al., 2011). Clearly, research suggests writing is an essential skill that can reduce attrition and foster scholastic success, yet many students' writing is underdeveloped. In an effort to build writing support, higher education institutions in the United States have developed several writing support mechanisms for college students. These mechanisms include remedial/developmental education programs (Levin & Calcagno, 2008), bridge programs (Wathington, & Barnett, 2016), accelerated coursework programs (Jenkins et al., 2010), and writing centers (Boquet, 1999; Truschel & Reedy, 2009). Of the programs created to offer writing support, writing centers

might be the most common in United States colleges and universities (Bushman, 1991; Brown 2015). Key definitions and terms, including those tutors related, are located in Appendix A.

Writing centers and tutoring date back to the early twentieth century (Boquet 1999; Murphy & Law, 2013), and their purpose has shifted over the years. In the early 20th century, writing tutoring was provided using a lab model, where instructors fixed, critiqued, and changed students' work (Boquet, 1999). The lab model used in writing centers slowly vanished and replaced instructors with peer undergraduate tutors (Boquet, 1999). The creation of the Higher Education Act in the 1960s established Title III (Higher Education Act, 1965). This act offered increased pathways for African-American, under-privileged, and first-generation students to attend college (Higher Education Act, 1965), and writing centers saw a rapid increase in student usage from this decade onward (Brown, 2015). Since then, peer tutoring has become a prevalent mode of educational pedagogy in colleges and universities across the United States (Brown, 2015; Kim, 2015), as decades of research have revealed the positive effects of peer tutoring on student development and persistence rates within campus-based settings (Tinto, 2012; Cooper, 2018; Ghadirian & Ayub, 2017). Although writing centers might have rapidly swelled among the nation due to socio-political and economic imperatives (Mezirow, 1978), Salem (2016) argued that these centers have stuck around by being sustained by numerous factors including the knowledge economy demand. Regardless of their positionality in higher education, writing centers have evolved from their humble beginnings. One factor responsible for this evolution is the technological era.

Writing tutoring as an educational practice has continued to thrive in the technological age, but the traditional communicative modes of peer tutoring have changed (Hobson, 1998; Mobert, 2010; Dvorak & Roessger, 2012; Rennar-Potacco, Orellana & Salazar, 2017; de Jong,

Verstegen, & Könings, 2018). Students no longer need to be physically present on campus to work with a tutor (Paiz, 2018; Martinez & Olsen, 2015; Boone & Carlson, 2011). Advancements in online asynchronous and synchronous technology allow students to engage online in one-on-one or in small group tutoring sessions to receive supplemental practice, explanation, and instruction (Rilling, 2005; Rennar-Potacco, Orellana & Salazar, 2017; Boone & Carlson, 2011). While online writing tutoring is expanding rapidly, made evident by mass-tutoring businesses like Net-Tutor, Tutor.com, and Smart Thinking (Thiel, 2010; Smith, 2018), less is known about how technology has changed tutoring in online environments (Lin & Yang, 2013). Clearly, technology has made tutoring more accessible, but, as a result, the online tutoring environment deviates from traditional tutoring (Jones et al., 2006). In the past, students had to navigate college campuses to access their tutoring sessions, but now, especially in a pandemic, many writing centers allow students to access their tutoring sessions online by navigating technological environments (Cahill, 2020). Early writing centers previously offered asynchronous tutoring through email correspondence to provide supplemental support to their students (Martinez & Olsen, 2015; Moberg, 2010). With the advent of new technology, writing centers have increased their writing tutoring offerings through various modalities (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced many campus-based writing tutors online (Cahill, 2020), which inevitably means peer writing tutors must transition from traditional environments so they can offer tutoring support to students through the online sphere. In all, with the need for writing support across U.S. colleges and universities, writing centers have begun utilizing technological advances to increase writing support via online tutoring.

Statement of the Problem

Technological Influence on Tutoring

Technology is changing the face of traditional tutoring (Jones et al., 2006) and writing tutors must adjust to this change. The transition from a campus-based to an online educational environment can present challenges (Gallagher & Maxfield, 2019). A case study with fourteen college instructors suggested that not only does workload increase online, but instructors found that online learning is a contested space, where there is a tension between traditional hierarchies that are tested and sometimes changed in the online environment. In addition, college instructors described being in a constant state of flux in relation to their relationships with students (Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, & Mardomingo, 2012). The computer-mediated environment was challenging and forced instructors to use different ways of interacting with their students (Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, & Mardomingo, 2012); these findings might also be true for writing tutors. Yet, tutors' positionality is different from instructors, as they are a type of middle-person who reside in-between students and instructors (Gellin, 2012; Harris, 1995); how tutors might leverage their positionality (Sarbin, 1976), especially when transitioning online, and while interacting in computer-mediated environments, is unclear and lacks research (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018).

Limited Research on Tutor Transitions

The use of synchronous and asynchronous peer tutoring in online learning environments suggests a greater opportunity for different kinds of student-to-tutor social interaction and collaboration (Yeh et al., 2019), yet more empirical research is needed to understand the nature of online peer tutoring (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana & Salazar, 2017; Baumann et al., 2008). Studies have explored student experiences in online tutoring (Price et al., 2007; Wolfe & Griffin,

2012; Hewett, 2015), but less is known about tutor experiences from the perspective of tutors (Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019; Abbot, Graf & Chatfield., 2018). In fact, de Metz and Bezuidenhout (2018) argued that tutors often have very little voice in studies on tutoring. For example, most writing tutor scholars assume tutor roles from student or practitioner perspectives (Hobson, 1998); despite this, there is a large gap in literature regarding tutors' views of the roles they play (Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019; Baumann et al., 2008), and this is true for the online environment (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Revealing writing tutors' experiences will illuminate the complexity and possible tensions that tutors' experience as they transition into computer-mediated environments and the ways their experiences form their own self-development. By understanding tutors and their experiences operating in new delivery formats, this research will assist writing centers to consider building practices to best support tutors to successfully transition into the online realm and may support developing more well-rounded tutors.

Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore writing tutors' lived experiences with online tutoring. Aiming to better understand tutors' lived experiences, this study used a qualitative approach via an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Borrowing Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory and Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC theory, this study addressed how tutors experience role changes or role acquisition from tutoring in campus-based to online delivery formats with attention to multimodal computer-mediated communication.

Research Questions

The primary research question driving this study was the following: What are past and present lived experiences of tutors transitioning to online environments? The following sub-questions sought to provide a pathway to answer the primary research question:

1. How do tutors make sense of their transitioning process?
2. How do tutors make sense of their past, current, and/or future roles as tutors while tutoring in various delivery formats?
3. How do tutors make sense of online environments vis-à-vis their transition and roles?

Significance of the Study

Online writing tutoring has increased in use and popularity among writing centers in the United States, yet there are significant gaps in the literature on tutors' experiences shifting into online learning environments (Abbot et al., 2018). Scholars have extensively researched instructors' experiences in transitioning from campus-based to online teaching (Gonzalez, 2009; Martin & Parker, 2014; Harasim, 2017; Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). The results of this research have been widespread from illustrating types of roles instructors can expect to adopt (Rehn, Maor, & McConney, 2018; Martin & Parker, 2014), the tension in changes between tasks and skills (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018), and the types of preparation needed for online teaching success (Rehn, Maor, & McConney, 2018), among other factors. Time and resources have not been spared for research on instructors, but little is known about the complexity of transitioning from campus-based environments to online, computer-mediated learning environments for peer writing tutors (Abbot et al., 2018). Most online tutoring research leaves out the perspective of tutors (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). What is more, little is known about the transformation in roles of online tutors (Baumann et al., 2008). Yellin (1999) argued

that individuals play roles that are associated with a particular social status, and while tutors might adopt specific roles in campus-based environments, it's unclear how the computer-mediated environment might influence the roles tutors adopt and play in online modalities (Baumann et al., 2008; Williams, 2002). This study uniquely focused on tutors' transition, including but not limited to their transition with technology, pedagogy, and computer-mediated communication, and sought to understand how tutors might adopt roles vis-à-vis their shift in modalities. Documenting tutors' experiences assisted in identifying the complexity and needs involved in shifting from campus-based to online environments. Empirical research in this area also sheds light on tutors' experiences with online role adoption, among other aspects of tutor development.

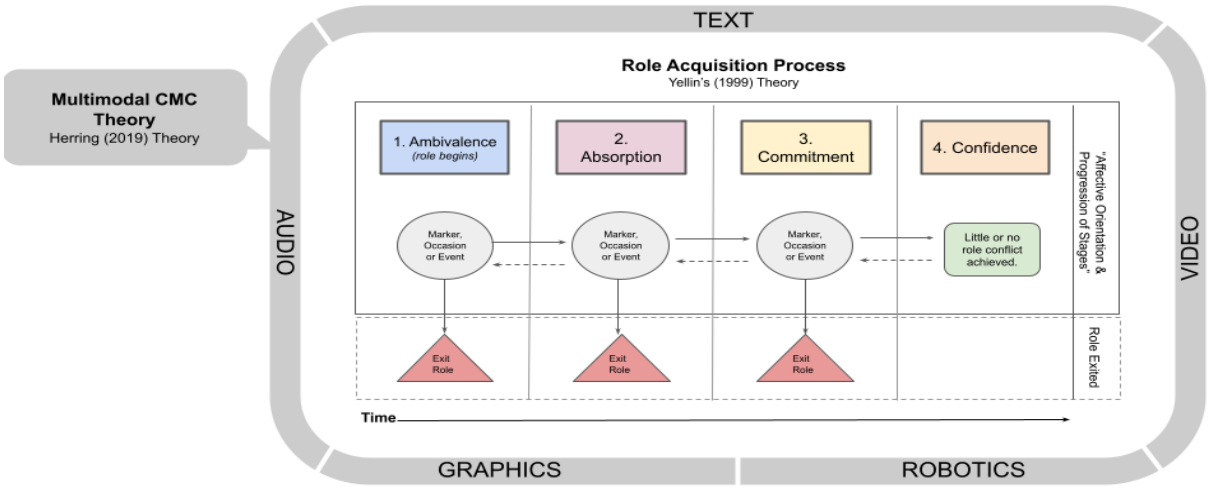
This study's findings provide a deeper understanding of how to support writing in preparing for a successful transition from campus-based to online tutoring. Theoretically, this study adds to the field of tutoring by highlighting the differences between traditional and online tutoring. In addition, this study revealed the nature of online learning for a specific educator group, tutors. With little research on these types of educators, this study uncovered critical aspects of the roles of online tutors. It also adds to the growing scholarship in the field of online education; such as the extent that tutors must adapt or transform their practices, roles, relationships, etc. to ensure learning occurs and highlight how tutors' experiences are similar or different to instructors' experiences. This study also reinforces previous research and theories related to the transition into the online environment, but it also highlights unique variances that add to literature on peer writing tutors transitioning from campus-based to online environments and the importance that confidence and comfort play in transitioning online.

Conceptual Framework

Multimodal CMC and Role Acquisition

Few empirical studies have explored computer-mediated communication (CMC) and online tutoring (Herrera Bohórquez et al., 2019; Hsu, 2019), or role-theory and tutoring in general (Sarbin & Allen, 1976). With research in its infancy between online tutoring and role theory and CMC theory, this study proposes to marry two theories together: Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory and Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC theory. Information on these theories can be referenced in the Literature Review. This adapted framework considers each process in the Role Acquisition theory and Multimodal CMC theory, which allows the researcher to identify the role-acquisition stages within the CMC environment (see Figure 1). Combining the two theories produces a new framework to illustrate the way tutors could adopt or acquire roles within a computer-mediated environment through any of the five communicative-modes. This perspective suggests that role acquisition can take place through any of the CMC modes. In fact, role acquisition could take place through one or all five modes, depending on the setting, context, and individuals (Yellin, 1999).

Figure 1. Role Acquisition and Multimodal CMC Framework



An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach (see Methodology section) was essential to capturing the nature of role acquisition and the ways in which role acquisition happens in online environments, as an IPA approach analyzes each case individually. Through this process, no assumptions were made related to the stages of acquisition. In other words, the role-acquisition process via the Multimodal CMC theory was used to determine whether there is a match between tutors' experiences and this dual framework. In all, through an IPA perspective, this framework illustrated writing tutors' role acquisition process in online tutoring sessions.

It is necessary to note that while this joint conceptual framework is important and can bolster a qualitative study (Collins & Stockton, 2018), this study identified aspects of the phenomenon that were similar to the framework. That said, there is no strong emphasis on testing a hypothesis in IPA research, rather the goal was to explore the lived-experiences of a phenomenon with flexibility and in detail (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Relatedly, IPA's philosophical characteristic, while valuable, should serve the nature of the lived experiences and not the other way around (Smith et al., 2009). That said, the framework was considered within the analysis. In particular, the researcher moved back and forth frequently between the conceptual framework and the data (Jeong & Othman, 2016). While some elements were helpful based on the conceptual framework, it did not benefit the researcher to find specific elements such as "Events," which is important in Role Acquisition or "Robotics" in Multimodal CMC theory because those elements did not exist in data (Jeong & Othman, 2016). With these concepts in mind, this study sought to use a joint conceptual framework but used flexibility to illustrate the data results and reveal knowledge that was not always directly understood through the conceptual framework, as an IPA can move beyond the framework to posit other theoretical relationships not previously highlighted or considered.

Summary of Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore writing tutors' lived experiences with online tutoring to understand tutors' experiences, using a qualitative approach via an IPA research design. Borrowing Yellin's (1999) theory on Role Acquisition and Herring's (2019) theory on Multimodal CMC, this study addressed how tutors might experience role changes or role adoptions from tutoring in campus-based to multimodal computer-mediated environments.

Description of Research Methodology

This qualitative, IPA study explored the lived-experiences of tutors providing online writing tutoring. Semi-structured interviews and audio diaries were conducted to understand tutors' experiences transitioning from campus-based to online environments and their perceptions of the roles they played within different delivery formats and computer-mediated environments. An IPA study was appropriate to utilize, as this approach allowed the researcher to understand the multiple realities that participants might perceive given the same phenomenon and better gain an insider perspective on the phenomenon (Ary et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2009; Larkin & Thompson, 2011).

Participants and Site

The study's participants were tutors, mentors, specialists, and professional writing tutors working within learning or writing centers within a public university in the state of Hawai'i. The participants included a mixture of tutors working at two-year, four-year, or graduate-servicing campuses as part of a public university system in the state of Hawai'i. In accordance with IPA studies, saturation was not a major concern; rather, identifying participants who can provide rich details about a phenomenon was of the utmost importance (Smith et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the study interviewed 5 participants, which is consistent with IPA sample size recommendations

(Smith, 2014). While qualitative research on data saturation suggests groups of 6-12 for saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006), challenges with recruitment limited the study's sampling. Initially, a specific criterion was included to purposefully select participants (Creswell, 2009). The original recruitment contained the following criteria:

1. Work at a learning or writing center within the university system (community college or university);
2. Provide writing tutoring support to two-year, four-year, or graduate students in the university system (community college or university);
3. Work in a position providing writing tutoring such as a tutor, writing tutor, teaching assistant, mentor, consultant, specialist, or professional tutor;
4. Have had campus-based tutoring experience first, prior to online tutoring experience.

However, due to a limited number of individuals who met the study's initial criteria, the researcher revised the study's criteria in an attempt to gain more access to potential participants. In particular, the requirement to have campus-based tutoring experience first, prior to online tutoring experience was removed. This reduction was made due to many centers hiring individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic and starting tutors online prior to campus-based environments. The revised criteria contained the following details:

1. Work at a learning or writing center within the university system (community college or university);
2. Provide writing tutoring support to two-year, four-year, or graduate students in the university system (community college or university);

3. Work in a position providing writing tutoring such as a tutor, writing tutor, teaching assistant, mentor, consultant, specialist, or professional tutor;

Once selected as a participant, the researcher arranged a meeting between the interviewer (researcher) and the interviewee (participant). Before the meeting, the researcher informed the interviewees of their rights and responsibilities via IRB guidelines and asked the interviewees to sign a consent form. The researcher also asked the interviewees for permission to audio record the interview and obtain audio recordings. The researcher provided audio diary prompts for the participants to record and complete within a 2-4-week period.

Instrumentation

A demographic-survey was used to collect information about individuals interested in participating in the qualitative study and determine whether or not they met the study's criteria. While the primary instrument used in qualitative studies is the researcher (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2002), this study used a protocol with interview questions and prompts, processes, ground-rules, and an area to take notes (Crewswell, 2012; Miller, Chan, & Farmer, 2018) to guide the semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview was the study's primary method of data collection. A secondary form of data collection was selected using audio diaries. The researcher created the questions for the interview and audio diary entries. The question creation process was guided by context, nature of IPA research, literature, and from concepts within the conceptual framework (Malmqvist et al., 2019). The questions and prompts were tested via a pilot study prior to use in the larger study. The researcher reviewed the questions and prompts to ensure they best fit the nature of the research inquiry and informed the study. The pilot test reinforced the value of the questions and prompts in collecting data related to the study research questions.

Data Collection

Data was collected using semi-structured interviews and audio prompt recordings (Creswell, 2007). The researcher used structured and open techniques for the qualitative interviews and audio/diary prompts to allow the participants flexibility in answering the questions (Patton, 2003; Burck, 2005; Ohman, 2005). The structure of the interview and audio/diary prompts was to obtain both past and present constructions [i.e., thoughts, feelings, emotions, etc.] (Patton, 2003) and future constructions (Jeong & Othman, 2016) of tutoring experiences. The researcher used technological software to conduct the interviews and recorded the audio from the interviews as well as captured and collected the audio diary prompt recordings. The researcher also took notes during the interviews and while reviewing the audio recordings (Creswell, 2012). The study's participants were made anonymous, as pseudonyms were used to reference each participant (Creswell, 2012) as well as the removal of any information that might make the participants identifiable (IRB). The researcher digitally saved all data collected for the study on a password-protected computer. Only the researcher and participants had access to the data.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the audio recordings. Transcription of the recordings was conducted using YouTube, and the application was set to private to ensure confidentiality. YouTube's transcription tool uses automation to generate transcripts. The researcher edited the transcribed text, to ensure the final transcripts were consistent with the audio files. The researcher also shared the final transcript with the participants to ensure the transcription was accurate. The researcher then used annotations and analysis to identify subordinate themes. From those themes, the researcher identified superordinate themes (Finlay, 2011; Smith et al., 2009).

Each participant case was analyzed individually before analyzing themes across all cases (Finlay, 2011; Smith et al., 2009).

Role of Researcher

There is immense value in articulating my positionality in relation to my research. For transparency's sake, I was born and raised in the state of Hawai'i and have strong ties to the island of O'ahu. I am a former writing tutor and professional writing tutor with experience providing college and writing support to U.S. and international high school and college students in the state of Hawai'i and the state of Nevada. I am also a former interim tutor coordinator and tutor trainer for campus-based and online writing tutors. I have presented at several higher education conferences regarding tutoring, writing tutoring, and online writing tutoring. Currently, I work at a private corporation in the United States. I design and develop training for online and traditional environments. Through a decade of different online experiences and work, I recognize the potential for online learning and teaching. Having first-hand experience as a tutor and practitioner, I am cognizant of the challenges of tutoring in both campus-based and online environments.

My role as a researcher requires the awareness of potential bias and requires my active effort to avoid any potential predispositions based on my personal experiences. To maintain trustworthiness, I performed periodic checks for personal bias by keeping an audit trail, including conducting reflective journaling, utilizing bracketing in my data analysis, and debriefing sessions with my dissertation chair (Finlay, 20011; Smith et al., 2009). Additionally, by selecting an IPA for this research project, I committed myself to "exploring, describing, interpreting, and situating the means" of how the participants make sense of their own experiences (Smith et al., 2009, p. 40).

Limitations

This study had several limitations. One limitation was the purposeful lack of randomness in the sampling of participants. Another limitation was the limited number of organizations studied, which means the research cannot be generalized. Although not typically generalizable, qualitative research still can add to the body of knowledge because it enables researchers to explore the experiences and perceptions of selected individuals; plus, it can allow researchers to produce new concepts and add to existing research as well as offers a holistic understanding of a phenomenon under review (Nawaz, Ali Jariko & Mushtaque, 2017). Another limitation was the accuracy of the descriptions. The study beckons a retrospective viewpoint, meaning that participants discussed experiences that had already passed. Since time has elapsed, the description of the experiences might not be entirely "accurate" (Hycner, 1985, p. 296). Another possible limitation was participants might not always be truthful, for various reasons (Cypress, 2017). Yet, another possible limitation was the potential for researcher influence on the participants. The study's validity was another important concern, as it can be challenging to assess if the study's data accurately represented the phenomenon (Hycner, 1985).

Definition of Key Terms

This study contained several terms and acronyms rooted in various disciplines, including tutoring studies, writing center theory, social sciences, role theory, CMC theory, among others. Refer to Appendix A for definitions of these items.

Summary

Understanding the experiences of tutors, as they shift into online environments, provides valuable insight into their feelings about technology and the different ways technology might be changing their role from the traditional tutoring environment. An IPA research design offered the

researcher the ability to gain detailed-rich information from tutors on their thoughts and feelings toward the nature of online writing tutoring. This study added to the limited research on tutors' experiences and online tutoring by highlighting the richness of tutors' lived experiences and providing them with a voice that has hardly been heard in empirical research. Even more so, using an IPA approach offered a rich philosophical perspective on tutors lived-experiences, giving voice to their perceptions, it assisted in informing the reality versus assumptions of online tutoring as well as the impressions that the online environment can have on tutors' development as peer educators or mentors. It also sought to assist writing centers to consider policy development, training innovation; this might address factors that enhance the experiences of both tutors and, potentially, students in online tutoring sessions. Additionally, this study confirms research on educator's transition process but also generates a new perspective on the important elements related to experiences that writing tutors can face as they transition into the online environment. The next chapter discusses the literature used to frame this study.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Peer tutoring is a centuries-old practice. It was first recorded in Aristotle's day, as he employed peer-to-peer tutoring to meet the needs of his students (Donskikh, 2019). The concept of peer tutoring has not changed a great deal from its ancient roots; the concept of a peer tutor is typically defined as a person who embodies the same or near status as a student and who provides students with collaborative and supplemental support outside the classroom (Outhred & Chester, 2010). Peer tutoring saw a rapid increase in higher education institutions after the Open Admissions era, around the 1980s (Lerner, 2013). A national survey study indicated at least five common types of learning centers found in U.S. colleges and universities and among those are writing centers (Truschel & Reedy, 2009). Since the rapid increase in support services, writing centers and peer writing tutoring have become a staple in U.S. colleges and universities (Lerner, 2013).

Technology has evolved writing tutoring access by shifting support services from campus-based only services to online services (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). Initially, writing centers previously offered asynchronous tutoring, most commonly through email correspondence (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). With the advent of new technology, writing centers are increasingly offering different types of online peer tutoring, including online synchronous (de Metz and Bezuidenhout, 2018), which inevitably means peer-tutors must transition their work and roles from campus-based environments to offer support through online modalities (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana & Salazar, 2017). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, tutoring online has increased exponentially, requiring an influx of tutors to shift from campus-based to online modalities (Cahill, 2020). Philip and Cain (2015) noted that scores of studies have detailed instructors' challenges, as they transition from teaching in traditional classrooms to online environments.

These challenges include adjusting to changes in workload (Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, & Mardomingo, 2012), roles (Rehn, Maor, & McConney, 2018; Martin & Parker, 2014), and communication with students (Phillip & Cain, 2015). Yet, a recent survey research study with 215 peer college tutors pointed out that little research has been conducted on peer tutors' transitions from campus-based to online environments (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). The online, computer mediated environment, suggests a greater opportunity for student-to-tutor social interaction and collaboration, and more empirical research is needed to understand the nature of online peer tutoring (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana & Salazar, 2017).

Recent literature has compared student experiences with online and campus-based tutoring. In particular, several studies addressed the outcome of tutoring sessions and discovered that students were equally satisfied with campus-based and online tutoring (Price et al., 2007; Wolfe & Griffin, 2012), while other studies focused on tutoring practices and determined that students preferred strategies used in online synchronous sessions compared to campus-based sessions (de Jong et al., 2018). These studies reviewed subject-based tutoring from the perspective of researchers or students. Previous studies on tutoring have provided valuable insight into the dynamics of student experiences, but they have offered very little voice from tutors' experiences (Abbot et al., 2018), or from the perspective of writing-specific tutoring. What's more, little attention is given to the role of online tutors (Baumann et al., 2008). Giving a voice to tutors and understanding their experiences and roles not only validates their work but can also help determine practices or strategies that might be effective or ineffective in online tutoring (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018).

Since there is a lack of empirical research on writing center tutors' transitions between campus-based and online tutoring sessions, this chapter seeks to provide a greater understanding

of the dynamics and the purpose of writing centers. This includes illustrating campus-based and online tutoring, as well as the transition instructors make when moving from teaching in campus-based to online environments; even though the studies focus largely on instructors teaching ELL studies, perhaps they can shed light on similar transitional challenges for peer writing tutors in online environments. This chapter also illustrates a theoretical framework, using role theory (Yellin, 1999) and multimodal CMC (Herring, 2019) and describes the interrelationship between these theories as well as their connection with online writing tutoring.

College Writing Preparedness and Writing Centers

College Writing Preparedness

Writing skills are essential for the more than 25 million students enrolled in colleges and universities in the U.S. to succeed in their studies and beyond (Conference on College Composition & Communication, 2015). Yet, English composition is a subject that has the highest frequency of developmental needs among college students (Tinto, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Glau, 2007; Bettinger, Boatman, & Long, 2013). Both college administrators and employers are concerned about students' writing abilities. One report estimated that over two-thirds of all students entering U.S. higher-education institutions needed writing development or remediation (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). However, a more recent study argued that many college writing reports are skewed and the number of college students in need of writing development is much higher (Relles, 2016). A closer reality is that "more college students will matriculate without the writing skills needed to succeed" (Relles, 2016, p. 172). Interestingly, a report on writing and college students noted that only 17% of college students who are placed into developmental English courses complete degrees (Adelman, 2016). Incoming college

students with strong writing preparedness were twice more likely to complete their college degree than students who need writing development (DeAngelo et al., 2011).

Post-degree writing skills are equally important. Quibble's (2008) practitioner-based article found that American employers were not satisfied with the writing abilities of their workers. In some instances, employers struggled to find employees who could write clearly (Holland, 2013). Clearly, research indicates that writing is an essential skill for college students that can reduce attrition and foster scholastic and career success, yet many students' writing is underdeveloped. In an effort to build writing support, higher education institutions in the U.S. have built in several mechanisms to offer writing support for college students. These mechanisms include remedial/developmental education programs (Levin & Calcagno, 2008), bridge programs (Wathington, & Barnett, 2016), accelerated coursework programs (Jenkins et al., 2010), and writing centers (Boquet, 1999). Of the programs created to offer writing support, writing centers might be the most misunderstood support programs in colleges and universities in the U.S. (North, 1984; Lerner, 2003; Brown, 2015). The following section details writing centers and their use in higher education.

Writing Center History

History of Campus-based Writing Centers

Modern-day writing centers have their roots in the early twentieth century. At first, these centers had medical-connotations attached to them, as they were originally coined writing labs (Boquet, 1999). The concept of a lab was linked to a place where writers needed their writing fixed, much like medical labs where patients seek medical advice to "fix" their ailments (Boquet, 1999, p. 466). During these lab sessions, writing instructors often used their classrooms to set aside time to individually review students' writing "weaknesses" and instruct them on how to fix

their errors (Boquet, 1999, p. 467). By the 1940s, the writing lab model had changed. In 1943, the University of Iowa's writing lab coordinator detailed the value of detaching writing labs from traditional classrooms, as it benefitted students and allowed them to work "independently of the university hierarchies in which they functioned" (Boquet, 1999, p. 468). By the 1950s, the model of writing labs changed further. The philosophy of writing labs focused on increasing students' confidence in talking and working through their writing, rather than being handed a list of errors from their instructor (Carino, 1995). During the 1960s, writing labs rebranded as writing centers, to avoid negative connections attached to the term "lab" (Boquet, 2002). In the mid-1960s, writing centers increased in popularity and use among universities in the U.S. The 1965 Higher Education Act, which established Title III, offered increased pathways for African-American, under-privileged, and first-generation students to attend college (Higher Education Act, 1965). Writing centers have shifted to support an increase in the need for additional support services (Mezirow, 1978). With the dawn of Open Admissions, and later the 1970s women's movement (Mezirow, 1978), writing centers became a common form of supplemental writing support among many higher education institutions in the U.S. (Brown, 2015). Not only do traditional-track students benefit from writing centers (Mezirow, 1978), but non-traditional students do too (Salem, 2016). In fact, writing centers also, most commonly, serve women, students of color, English language learners, and students with less academic experiences (Salem, 2016).

Each following decade has seen an exponential increase in college admissions, and, consequently, rapid growth in writing centers and writing tutoring support services (Brown, 2015). With the potential to support campus retention initiatives, coupled with the birth of the Open Admissions, interest and use of writing centers exploded in campuses across the states (Bushman, 1991). By the 1990s, roughly 90% of U.S. college campuses had writing centers

offering campus-based writing support (Bushman, 1991). Thirty years later, the percentage of writing centers in U.S. college campuses is closer to 100%, with a mixture of centers offering either campus-based only or a mix of campus-based and online writing tutoring support (National Census of Writing, 2017). While writing centers might have rapidly swelled among the nation, because of socio-political and economic imperatives, Salem (2016) argues that these centers have stuck around due to numerous factors, including the knowledge economy demand. Regardless of their positionality in higher education, writing centers have evolved from their humble beginnings.

History of Online Writing Centers

The technical era has ushered in a new type of writing center, one that provides accessible, online support (Moberg, 2010; Thiel, 2010). In 1994, the Purdue Online Writing Lab was the first writing center program to launch online writing tutoring (Moberg, 2010). The center focused mostly on providing asynchronous online tutoring via emails. Email tutoring increased in popularity in the late 1990s and nontraditional students often benefited from it (Hobson, 1998). However, asynchronous tutoring was still relatively new in the 1990s and few writing centers initially offered online tutoring (Hobson, 1998). With technological advancements in the 2000s, writing centers slowly ventured into online spaces to offer support for students without having to be physically present on campus (Dvorak & Roessger, 2012; Rennar-Potacco, Orellana & Salazar, 2017; de Jong, Verstegen & Könings, 2018). Writing centers, like Purdue, began offering more services over the internet, such as email, phone, instant messaging, and later, asynchronous feedback on students' essays through comments (Moberg, 2010).

Starting in the 2010s, online tutoring expanded rapidly, evidenced by mass-tutoring businesses like Net-Tutor, Tutor.com, Smart Thinking, and others (Thiel, 2010; Smith, 2018).

Through new online synchronous technologies, campus-based writing centers began to adopt online synchronous tutoring using technologies like Eliminate Live, Adobe Connect, and other online synchronous tools (Moberg, 2010). With the worldwide pandemic of 2020, writing centers are now more accessible than ever with many centers rapidly transitioning, or in the process of transitioning, online due to COVID-19 (Cahill, 2020). In speaking to access, Hamper (2018) suggested that online writing centers can assist students overcome the "literacy gap." This relates to a study on incoming college students and college preparedness. Students from lower-income families are sometimes several years behind in college preparedness compared to their high-income peers (Reardon et al., 2013). In the same way, social factors, attributing to college students' "literacy gaps" might also hinder access to campus-based writing center visits. Consequently, several scholars argue that online writing centers promote and provide access (Robinson, 2009) and also support social equity to students otherwise unable to visit the campus-based centers (Bell, 2009; Summer, 2013). In light of online writing centers, research clearly finds that, writing centers can enhance student access and equity to writing support.

Purpose of Writing Centers

Of all the academic support programs, writing centers might be the most uniquely positioned within higher education. College writing centers are spaces of daily contact as students, faculty, and administration alike move in and out of these centers, making them one of the "busiest intersections" on campus (Kail, 2002). Relating the work of writing centers to retention gaps, Poziwilko (1997) dubbed these centers a "fortuitous nexus," as these types of centers play an essential role within many institution's retention efforts. In speaking to the purpose of the writing center, North (1984) famously argued that the purpose is to "produce better writers, not better writing" (p. 438). Murphy (2000) wrote that North's statement on the

idea of the writing center was the “most important” and “most quoted” writing center scholarship ever (p. 65). Many writing centers embraced North’s (1984) point and focused on developing students’ writing process and skills, rather than products (Harris, 1995). However, Grimm (1999) called for the redefining of the writing center as a place where deeply reflective analysis can happen and where students can negotiate and understand contact and conflict. Many scholars have attempted to reimagine the purpose of writing centers, since North’s (1984) work. Lately, writing center scholars have argued that the purpose of writing centers is to provide safe-spaces for students to grapple bravely with social and cultural issues through writing and analysis (Grimm, 1999; Morrison & Nanton, 2019; Camarillo, 2019). Additionally, several writing center theorists have called for a diversification of the writing centers by integrating reading support (Greenwell et al., 2020). Both Adams (2016) and Harris (2017) agree that writing tutor praxis should include reading. Writing centers clearly have their roots in writing support, but the purpose and goals of the writing centers continue to shift, which could have implications for peer writing tutors.

Use of Writing Centers

The use of writing centers closely mirrors the perceived purpose of these centers by writing center theorists through the decades. Historically, writing centers were fix-it labs where instructors fixed student writing and directed students to correct errors (Boquet, 1999). During the late-1940s and early 1950s, the writing center model changed, and centers became a place where students could talk through their writing process and development (Carino, 1995; Boquet, 1999). During the 1980s, writing centers shifted to spaces where students could learn how to become their own proofreaders, in a safe and engaging environment (North, 1984, Harris, 1985). Like the previous decade, in the 1990s, writing centers were given the metaphor of “home”

(Pratt, 1991), and they were used as safe-spaces for students to talk about their writing with peers or near peers (McInerney, 1999). In later research, scholars argued against the concept of a cozy home, as it seemed to domesticate and disempower the work of writing centers (McKinny, 2005; Nicolas, 2004). McKinny (2005) argued that writing centers should be welcoming, but these spaces should not be homey; they should be spaces to work through writing. This point is consistent with a philosophical article on the use of writing centers. The article illustrated the value of writing centers to foster feelings of safeness, so students can engage "with other ways of thinking or acting" (Geller et al., 2007, p. 104). A different theoretically-based article referenced the writing center as a space lined with comfy couches, where students could feel comfortable enough to pay attention to conflicts, whether social, cultural, or the like, and where students could bravely explore and resist societal or cultural norms (McNamee & Miley, 2017). In this light, modern writing centers represent a dichotomy. These places are used as both cocoons of safety and resistance. A type of homeplace; a safe space to be brave and grapple with complex thoughts through talking and writing (McNamee & Miley, 2017). Clearly, the use of writing centers has changed over the years, from fix-it labs to spaces that encourage students to challenge contemporary culture while building writing skills.

Writing Center Pedagogy

Writing center pedagogy is wide-ranging. Scholarship on the subject address's traditional theories like social and collaborative learning (Bruffee, 1984; Ede, 1989) and emerging theories like genre theory (Gordon, 2014) and critical pedagogy relating to social, cultural, and political spheres (King, 2018). In a content analysis study of thousands of writing center programs, scholars discovered that writing center pedagogy used a combination of theories from different fields (King, 2018). For example, writing center pedagogy pulled in educational pedagogies,

social theory related to interactions about race, class, gender, and culture, as well as cognitive theories focused on how the brain learns new information and uses these theories to guide tutoring practice (King, 2018). Evidently, most writing centers used a mixed-plate of theoretically grounded pedagogies.

Focused on educational practices, North's (1984) call to make better writers still emerges in most writing center pedagogy. For North, tutoring should focus on higher-order writing needs, in order to build better writers. Alluding to North's work, early writing center scholars agreed that writing tutors should focus on higher-order writing concerns (i.e. thesis support, organization guidance, purpose, audience, and development) (Clark, 1990; Thompson, 2009; Grimm, 2011). In addition to higher-order concerns, writing center pedagogy focuses on collaborative learning (Harris, 1995). In this light, tutors and students work collaboratively together to problem-solve while also offering students the ability to reflect on the writing process and outcomes (Harris, 1995). An ex post facto study of 84 undergraduate students found that peer collaboration was beneficial to collaborative learning, in general, and peer moderation, in particular (Ghardirian & Ayub, 2016). These findings echo Harris's (1995) perspective on collaboration and peer writing tutoring. However, while collaborative learning and feelings of welcome and safety are important, Salem (2016) contends that writing centers should rethink their pedagogy to a differentiated approach, providing higher-level and lower-level feedback, as needed. Writers visit the writing center for various reasons, with some students needing lower-level feedback and others needing higher-level feedback (Salem, 2016). Salmen's (2016) arguments go against the grain of many iconic writing center scholars. In this light, North's (1984) suggestions on only providing higher-order writing support might be more of an intellectual positioning rather than rigorous scholarship (Boquet & Lerner, 2018). The call for

rigorous scholarship is a sharp attack on writing center research, but empirical studies are limited and needed in writing center scholarship (Tiruchittampalam et al., 2018; Driscoll & Perdue, 2012).

Empowering students is another important practice of writing center pedagogy. A study, using a meta-analysis approach, illustrated the emphasis writing centers place on fostering a safe place for students, in order to empower them to participate in their learning and writing process (Mick, 1999). While the study is older, it contained an extensive review of iconic writing center scholarship from the 1980s and 1990s. Recent scholarship supports this study by revealing the value that student feelings of safety have in empowering their writing process (McNamee & Miley, 2017). Part of empowering students is allowing them to talk through their writing process (Rafoth, 2010). North (1984) distinguished writing tutoring as the ability to talk about writing. Moreover, several scholars agree that collaborative and social learning promotes understanding, making interaction critical in writing tutoring (Bruffee, 1984; Rafoth, 2010). Almost all writing center theorists have referenced the value that interaction plays in writing and learning development (Geller et al., 2007; McNamee & Miley, 2017; Pratt, 1991; McInerney, 1999; Nicolas, 2004; McKinny, 2005). In a more recent meta-analysis study, scholars suggested that when writing tutors talk or interact with writers, and intervene as needed, this allows writers to build their own self-sustaining skills (Howard & Schendel, 2009). In all, collaboration and social learning, through interaction, are the pillars of writing center scholarship.

Examples of Writing Center Tutoring in Higher Education

Campus-based examples

In thousands of colleges and universities across the U.S. and around the world, students walk into their campus-writing center to receive writing support (Rafoth, 2010). Whether by

appointment or on a walk-in basis, campus-based writing tutoring mostly happens in the middle of writing courses (Spigelman & Grobman, 2005). Typically, students choose to visit writing centers when large-group classroom instruction, textbooks, or classroom explanations become too abstract, and students cannot make connections between their classroom content and their writing task (Harris, 1995). In many campus-based tutoring sessions, a writer will sit down with a tutor, sometimes sipping on coffee (Nordstrom et al., 2019) and begin talking with each other about the writer's paper or writing assignment (Rafoth, 2010). These sessions are most often in closed quarters surrounded by others because writing centers usually lack space (Ryan & Zimmerelli, 2010). During a tutoring session, tutors will usually ask questions to understand, clarify, and absorb a student's work (Rafoth, 2010). Since writing is fundamentally about communication, interaction happens frequently between tutors and students (Howard & Schendel, 2009). Sometimes peer tutors will read a student's paper out-loud, so they can listen to the ways they communicated their thoughts through their writing (Rafoth, 2010). After more talking, guidance, and collaboration, a tutoring session will finish, and the student will walk away, usually with revisions or changes to make (Rafoth, 2010).

Asynchronous examples

Writing centers that offer online tutoring generally have an online component that provides students with access and information regarding online tutoring (Paiz, 2018). Technology has changed the way people read and write, and it has changed the way tutors provide writing support, especially in terms of asynchronous tutoring (Hewett, 2015). Unlike campus-based tutoring, asynchronous tutoring affords greater accessibility but changes how tutors commonly provide tutoring. Tutors often conduct asynchronous tutoring through email exchanges of essays, discussion boards, and screencast recordings (Martinez & Olsen, 2015;

Boone & Carlson, 2011). Through email, students submit essays and expect a returned draft with comments, questions, and feedback in the document within 24-48 hours (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). Sometimes students need fast clarification and might call the writing center for help understanding their tutors' feedback (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). When providing asynchronous text-based feedback, tutors are encouraged to use commenting strategies that increase interactivity for the student-writer by finding patterns and encouraging students to resubmit later drafts (Rilling, 2005). Similarly, some writing centers screencast students' essays and offer peer feedback through voice and video recordings (Paiz, 2018). In one study, tutors spent the same amount of time recording videos, as they did provide written feedback to student essays (Boone & Carlson, 2011). Some writing centers use discussion boards on a weekly basis, and encourage drop-in groups to participate, so students can connect and interact with other peers and a tutor (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). While there are several modalities to offer asynchronous online tutoring, one core concept remains the same for campus-based and asynchronous tutoring: students are responsible for their work. In other words, students must take an active role in their writing process and be responsible for their own revisions and corrections (Wolfe & Griffin, 2013; Breuch, 2005; Hewett, 2002). Scholarship offers several different methods for asynchronous online tutoring, but the responsibility of students remains the same as campus-based tutoring.

Online synchronous examples

Online synchronous tutoring is the most recent type of online delivery method used for online tutoring, and it is highly dependent on the available technology at an institution (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). Like asynchronous tutoring, writing centers need some type of online component that describes the offered service (Paiz, 2018). Online synchronous tutoring sessions

usually focus on one-on-one interactions between tutors and writers occurring in real time online (Neaderhiser & Wolfe, 2009). In synchronous online tutoring sessions, tutors often interact with students face-to-face to allow more visual cues and enhance instant communication (Yeh & Lai, 2019). During online synchronous tutoring sessions, tutors and students use verbal interaction, text messages, pictures, website links, and engage in reviewing and interacting about students' work (Yeh & Lai, 2019). One drawback of online synchronous tutoring is the potential limitations in students' ability to use all interaction types. For example, a student's socioeconomic status could limit his or her ability to use a video camera or have access to adequate high-speed internet (Martinez & Olsen, 2015). Overall, online synchronous tutoring focuses on interactions, often face-to-face, with students, and tutors use multimedia to facilitate these types of tutoring sessions.

Tutoring as an Academic Support Service

Identifying a need to bolster student enrollment and retention, U.S. colleges and universities have used tutoring services as a form of academic support (Leone & Tian, 2009). A benefit of tutoring is, unlike developmental courses that are connected to academic placement testing, tutoring services are largely voluntary and offer academic support for students, regardless of their academic performance or preparedness (Bettinger, Boatman, & Long, 2013). Several scholars have found a relationship between tutoring support services and academic achievement (Alegre-Ansuátegui et al., 2018; Moore, 2018) as well as student retention (Freeman & All, 2017; Rennar-Potacco et al., 2019). In their quasi-experimental study, Colver and Fry (2016) found a causal relationship between tutoring and final course grades, indicating tutoring could be a valuable academic support method. They also noted that tutoring support was particularly beneficial among first-generation students (Colver & Fry, 2016).

Generally, tutoring has gained popularity among higher education institutions as a model for enhancing and supporting academic success and retention efforts.

Benefits of Writing Tutoring

Peer tutoring is commonly used in writing centers because it fosters active learning and invites students to learn topics more deeply, while developing their communication, listening, personal, and social skills (Topping, 2005). A correlation-based study with a thousand college students suggested students who participate in campus-based tutoring sessions are more likely to gain writing skills needed for college success and beyond (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017). The study analyzed student test scores, course outcomes, and frequency of writing center visits (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017). This study's findings are consistent with literature on increased grades and writing center frequency. In fact, the benefit of writing tutoring is consistent for both campus-based (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017; Rendleman, Livingston, & Rose, 2019) and online writing tutoring (Rennar-Potacco et al., 2019). However, research does suggest peer tutoring instills confidence in students and sharpens students' writing skills, writing strategies, and develops their writing process (Rafoth, 2010). Research does suggest, however, that different benefits are generated, based on campus-based and online writing tutoring modalities. The following sections delineate unique pros and cons of each delivery format.

Campus-based peer writing tutoring

Benefits of campus-based writing tutoring include frequency in usage leading to the achievement of higher course grades and a sense of place and community for campus-based college students. Studies suggest when students consistently participate in writing tutoring sessions, they are more likely to develop their academic writing knowledge and skills (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017; Rendleman, Livingston, & Rose, 2019). While researchers have

explored the frequency of campus-based tutoring and academic achievement (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017; Rendleman, Livingston, & Rose, 2019), less is known about the relationship between online tutoring frequency and academic achievement. Some studies explored online tutoring and achievement, but did not address frequency as a factor (Rennar-Potacco et al., 2019; Zulkifli, Halim, & Yahaya, 2018).

Stigma is a common barrier to campus-based tutoring, compared with online tutoring. A grounded theory study described the stigma that many students have toward writing centers as places for remedial students; a common misconception among students and instructors is that writing centers fix bad writing or work with bad students (Sewell, 2016). The study lacked empirical data, but it integrated practitioner-based observations and anecdotal elements, and Salem's (2016) work confirms these findings. Using a survey research approach with over 4,000 college students, Salem's (2016) study found that students perceived the writing center with negative connotations. In order to mitigate stigmatization, campus-based writing centers attempt to use strategic marketing to create an idea of a welcoming, inclusive, and not a remedial center (Salem, 2016). The findings suggest that when students perceive the writing center as an inclusive place, they are more likely to visit the writing center (Salem, 2016). The results of Salem's (2016) work are consistent with another study, using survey research, with more than a thousand college students. The study found a connection between frequent writing center visits and increased comfortability (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017). It was also discovered that frequent writing tutoring can foster better writers and improve grades (Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017).

Speaking to comfortability, over the years, campus-based writing centers have focused on the importance of community and a sense of place to build comfort and confidence (Nicholas &

Williams, 2019). In a literature review article, comfort and confidence were the two most important factors for students in visiting campus-based writing centers (Cooper, 2018). When students and tutors feel comfortable and confident, writing centers can foster a community and make it a harmonious place to work and visit (Cooper, 2018). Writing centers have even focused on the design of their campus-based spaces to bridge institution and community boundaries. Several studies have described the importance of physical design features such using placed-based furnishings, offering coffee, providing Legos, decorating with plants and using comfy couches to increase comfortably (Nordstrom et al., 2019; Brugman, 2019). Writing centers that create a sense of place benefit not only students, lending to higher retention rates, but also college campuses holistically, as its work and purpose can extend to the greater campus and encourage more students to visit and receive writing support (Cooper, 2018). Overall, two benefits of campus-based tutoring include the enhancement of student grades, through frequent visits, and the fostering of comfortability and confidence to generate community among tutors and students.

Online peer tutoring

While campus-based writing tutoring was considered the "golden-standard" for peer tutoring among many writing center scholars (Gallagher & Maxfield, 2019), online tutoring has gained popularity, even before the pandemic. In fact, writing centers first recorded offering some type of writing support during the 1990s (Artz, Barneet, & Scoppetta, 2009). When considering the online environment, some research suggested that it can be "cold" (Harris, 2008) and lack nonverbal expressions (Rafoth, 2009). Yet, the online environment can provide support for non-traditional students (Hewett, 2015), and tutor training is important to support tutors' online preparedness (Gallager & Maxfield, 2019). More recent studies on online writing tutors highlight

several benefits. For one, the online delivery format is particularly valuable in providing access to tutoring for students unable to visit campus-based tutors (McIntyre & Hall, 2017). Students with schedule challenges and who cannot visit the center can work synchronously or asynchronously with tutors at many centers (McIntyre & Hall, 2017; Renner-Potacco et al., 2017). Online peer tutoring reduces barriers to seeking help, especially for students who must take time off work, find a babysitter, take long bus rides, or the like to make it to campus (Hamper, 2018). Likewise, online tutoring widens access to support students living in areas geographically distant from their campus by reducing the transactional distance perceived by learners (Renner-Potacco et al., 2017; Paiz, 2018).

For some students, online tutoring might naturally foster comfortability. In two different studies, students receiving online tutoring felt safe and comfortable, whether in asynchronous (Severino & Prim, 2016) or in online synchronous environments (McBrien et al., 2009). In a case study with one participant receiving online writing tutoring feedback, the student indicated online tutoring was easy, convenient, and she rather received feedback from her home, especially during the winter season (Severino & Prim, 2016). The small sample size largely overshadows the findings though.

Reflection is another benefit of online tutoring. For some students, campus-based tutoring moves too quickly and asynchronous feedback, whether text-based or using recorded videos (Paiz, 2018), allows learners to reflect on their work and the feedback provided at a pace that works for each student (Severino & Prim, 2016). Relatedly, in a quasi-experimental research study on English language learners and online writing tutoring, researchers discovered that written online communication can be an ideal medium for students to interact, reflect, and process information and feedback, especially with interactions that have greater syntactic

complexity (Tolosa, East, & Villers, 2013). The study's participants were in intermediate school, and it is unclear if the results could be consistent with college students or native-English speakers. Online tutoring clearly offers numerous benefits for college students eager to seek writing support online.

Types of Tutoring

There are several types of tutoring used in colleges and universities in the U.S. (Chi, 2006; Rheinheimer et al., 2010). Peer tutoring, professional tutoring, and supplemental instruction are three common types of tutoring used at tutoring centers in the U.S. colleges and universities (Rheinheimer et al., 2010). However, peer and professional tutors are the most frequent type of tutor working in writing centers (Ianetta & Fitzegerald, 2012; Rheinheimer et al., 2010). More specifically, a report found that 91% of tutors working in college and university writing centers in the U.S. were peer tutors, while roughly 9% were professional tutors (National Census of Writing, 2017). Professional and peer tutors' both tutor students, but studies suggest they have different responsibilities (Nordstrom et al., 2019; Mick, 1999).

Definition of peer tutoring

Research offers a mixture of definitions of peer tutoring. Bruffee (1984) defined peer-writing tutoring as the interaction between peers who share similarities in background, experience, and status, in order to foster a different and powerful context for learning. Utley and Mortweet (1997) defined peer tutoring as a student who has knowledge of a content area or discipline and who offers supplemental support, repetition, clarification, or practice to other peers. Topping (2005) took a different approach to peer tutoring. He sees it as a type of cooperative learning, where students work with peers in one-on-one meetings or in small groups to help each other acquire new information and skills (Topping, 2005). For Clark (1985), peer

tutoring is simply a student acting as a partner in learning with another peer. Similar to Clark's work, Almarzouqi and Mynard (2006) defined peer tutoring as a system where students help each other learn, and partly teach each other in the learning process.

Definition of professional tutoring

Scholars largely agree that professional tutors are experienced individuals with at least some subject matter expertise (Conrow, Lerner, & Siska, 1998). These types of tutors are often recent graduates (Chi, 2006), graduate students (Bell, 2018; Nordstrom et al., 2019), teaching assistants or mentors (Snively, 2008; Bell, 2018). Professional tutors generally have more knowledge and are more fluent in composition discourse compared to peer tutors (Grimm, 1996; Bell, 2018). Another marked difference between professional and peer tutors is supervision. Professional tutors generally have more autonomy and lack supervision, as compared to peer tutors (Frey & Reigeluth, 1986; Bell, 2018).

Tutor Characteristics

Several studies have described the common characteristics of peer and professional writing tutors. These types of characteristics exclude details related to tutor demographics. In fact, Valles, Babock, and Jackson (2017) call for research on the diverse make-up of tutors. Many studies have looked at the outward characteristics and demographics of students visiting the writing centers or writing center directors, but it is rare to find a study focusing on writing tutor characteristics or demographics (Valles, Babock, & Jackson, 2017). Scholarship on tutor diversity will allow writing center scholars to understand the types of diversity of tutors in writing centers and the rich diversity they bring (Valles, Babock, & Jackson, 2017). Consequently, the following sections on peer, graduate, and professional writing tutor

characteristics highlight common duties and roles but do not include details on tutor demographics such as age, race, ethnicity, income, gender, etc.

Peer writing tutor characteristics

The positionality of peer tutors suggests a non-authoritative individual who works and collaborates with student peers (Mick, 1999). In this way, peer tutors can provide comfortable situ for students to confidently learn and collaborate (Mick, 1999). Writing center scholarship refers to peer tutors as embodying characteristics that foster collaboration and social learning to support students in their writing and learning processes (Mick, 1999; Howard, 2001). Peer tutors are encouraged to participate with students' writing process by listening and asking questions to guide students' learning (Harris, 1994).

In theory, the concept of a peer tutor as a non-authoritative peer makes sense, but in practice, students do not always view peer tutors as peers. Several years ago, a study with 52 college tutors suggested that the tutor/student relationship lacked balance and harmony (Colvin, 2007). Using a grounded-theory approach, the findings suggested that power struggles can, and often do exist, in the tutor/student relationship (Colvin, 2007). While this study did not focus on writing tutors specifically (Colvin, 2007), writing center theorists have also referenced that there are power struggles between students and peer writing tutors (Palmeri, 2000; Carino, 2003). This study reinforced a recent case study, with 35 participants (McMurray, 2020). It suggested tutors were "in-between people" who reside between students and instructors (McMurray, 2020). In a practitioner-based article, it noted that peer-writing tutors are less authoritative than instructors are, but they must use some authority to guide and direct the session (Palmeri, 2000). Without a semblance of authority, students can lose confidence in the work of tutors (Palmeri, 2000). Another scholar reinforces the concept of authority by arguing that tutors have a responsibility to

wield their power and authority during tutoring sessions by avoiding being teachers or "the authority of writing" (Carino, 2003). A different study reinforced the power imbalance in tutoring; finding the power struggle between peer tutors and students tends to be more hierarchical in campus-based sessions and less hierarchical in asynchronous online tutoring sessions (Jones et al., 2006). While insightful, the survey-approach study's 52 participants were students who received science-based tutoring, and it is unknown if these findings are consistent in online writing tutoring sessions. Moreover, this study collected data on students' perceptions, and the lack of tutors' voices make its findings somewhat one-sided. Nevertheless, a possible reason for the perception of more student autonomy in online tutoring is the delivery format of the online environment as an "alternative space" that encourages student involvement and changes power structures from traditional settings (Selfe, 1992). However, it is unclear if writing tutors perceive the online environment as a space that promotes or nullifies power dynamics. Nonetheless, one striking characteristic of peer tutors is their elevated position of authority in tutoring sessions.

Graduate tutor/teaching assistant characteristics

Undergraduate peer tutors face complications with their in-between role, but graduate tutors working in writing centers might experience further complications (Bell, 2018). Scholars argue that graduate students can face challenges when their institutional role clash, such as teaching a class as well as tutoring or managing a writing center (Nicolas, 2008) all while navigating how to be a novice and expert (Bell, 2018; LeCluyse & Mendelsohn, 2008). Even when attempting to adopt a peer, reciprocal role, graduate students still hold a hierarchy of power and authority, which can be intensified by specific duties or roles not required of peer tutors in the writing center (Bell, 2018). One scholar attempted to capture the tension of graduate tutors

by coining them a “hybrid creation,” as they are not an instructor or peer (Harris, 1992). Holding different roles allows graduate tutors more flexibility to shift their roles in tutoring sessions (Bell, 2018). For example, in a practitioner-based study, graduate tutors took on a more mediating role than peer tutors did by acting as negotiators of sorts between instructors and writers (Baker et al., 2010). This mediator role can mean interpreting a professor’s feedback, but graduate tutors should be careful not to overwhelm students with comments and feedback (Devet; 2014; Auten & Pasterkiewicz, 2007). The shifting roles of graduate students have been largely undefined (Medvecky, 2019). In a practitioner-based article, it argued that graduate tutor roles should have a set of principles, so that it sets a clear mandate for the range of possible tutoring strategies that graduate tutors might use (Medvecky, 2019).

In contrast, graduate teaching assistants (TAs) might have a more challenging time negotiating their roles, as one article noted that students’ perceived TAs as both tutors and teachers (Snively, 2008). Holding the role of a perceived non-expert and expert can cause cognitive dissonance for graduate students in the writing center, especially when faced with having to deemphasize their authority in tutoring sessions and then re-emphasize their authority to fulfill administrative responsibilities (Bell, 2018). Overall, graduate tutors can face difficulties navigating their complex and often multi-role positions within writing centers.

Professional writing tutor characteristics

Speaking to professional writing tutors, Mick (1999) suggested that these tutors often think and provide feedback from an instructor’s perspective rather than student viewpoint. Some research separates professional tutors from graduate tutors (Census on Writing, 2017), while others consider professional and graduate tutors as one of the same (Mick, 1999). Nevertheless, professional tutors usually have more experience, whether trained or not, than peer tutors (Mick,

1999; Harris, 2003). Professional tutors in the writing center naturally have more authority compared to peer tutors, as they have chosen a path that closely aligns themselves with university authority (Mick, 1999). This authority often widens the peer-gap between professional tutors and students (Mick, 1999), with professional tutors posing even greater authority in tutoring sessions than peer tutors (Mick, 1999).

In a qualitative case-study, it was indicated that graduate writing specialist positions are becoming more common in writing centers. These positions are likened to the role of a professional writing tutor (McMurray, 2020). Undergraduate and graduate students seek out professional tutors because they are valued for their expertise in the writing process (McMurray, 2020). The role of the professional tutor could be increasing because of the increase in graduate students utilizing writing centers (Nobles, 2019). Professional tutors often demand respect and will avoid acting peer-like (Mick, 1999). In fact, writing centers encourage professional tutors to avoid labeling themselves as peer tutors (Mick, 1999). In the writing center, professional tutors or specialists often have added leadership roles, such as director (Mick, 1999), or thesis and dissertation writing mentor (McMurray, 2020), or coordinator or some type of staff-role and often take part in developing and/or providing training to peer tutors (Nordstrom et al., 2019).

One unique challenge faced by professional tutors is emotional labor. The term emotion work is defined as a social emotional response to feelings and relationships that require empathy (Holt et al., 2003) and includes emotion management where people display particular emotions for the sake of others near them (Tsang, 2011). A case-study of nine professional tutors or administrators found that emotional labor is invisible but essential for F2F interactions in the writing center, as they pull long days while smiling, mentoring, and negotiating (Jackson, McKinney, & Casewell, 2016). It is unclear if these experiences are changed in online settings.

Tutor Role and Role-Clarity

Misconceptions about writing centers as places that edit and proofread largely come from college classrooms and instructors (Brown, 2015). College instructors often send students to writing centers to get help with correcting papers or send students to writing centers because they have problems with writing (Brown, 2015; North, 1984). Upon arriving at the writing center, students are surprised to learn tutors in writing centers do not edit or proofread papers (Buck, 2018). Writing centers have long struggled to define themselves and their role in supporting student writers. North's (1984) plea sought to help others in the higher education system understand the work of the writing center and avoid misunderstanding the role of the writing center. Yet, there is still a constant gap between writing centers' goals, functions, and services and the perception of writing centers from those working outside the centers (Buck, 2018; Babcock & Thonus, 2012; Cheatle & Bullerjahn, 2015; Brown, 2015).

With confusion regarding the purpose of writing centers, tutors working in these centers often face challenges with fundamental differences in students' expectations of service (Babcock & Thonus, 2012; Raymond & Quinn, 2012). Research efforts have been made to clarify and explain (Cheatle & Bullerjahn, 2015) as well as differentiate the role of a writing center tutor compared to an instructor (Thonus, 2001), but misconceptions are still common (Brown, 2015). One possible reason for the common misconception of writing center tutors is the complexity of their role. Referring to writing support in campus-based classrooms, Hewett (2015) explained that "the roles of the teacher and tutor naturally intersect" (p. 8), but one difference between the two is that tutors "listen, read, and provide formative feedback uninvolved with grading" (p. 8). Writing tutors do not grade, but they do provide writing support, which can be confusing for students (Hewett, 2015). Hence, it is important that students and tutors understand the role of the

tutor; because without a clear understanding of a tutor's role, students leave the writing center frustrated (Buck, 2018). This is especially true when students visit the writing center expecting one type of service, and a tutor offers something quite different (Buck, 2018; Harris, 2010). Writing center scholarship on tutor roles have mostly focused on campus-based tutors and less is known about the roles of online tutors (Baumann et al., 2008). The following sections provide further insight into the significance and function of the role in tutoring as well as what little is known about online tutors' roles.

Significance of Role Clarify in Tutoring

The role of a tutor is important for both student writers and tutors, so they can collaborate with clear expectations and functions of what tutors do and do not do (Buck, 2018). At the same time, the role of the tutor is complicated. A tutor is an in-between person, who resides in a world that is between students and teachers (Gellin, 2012; Harris, 1995). Being a middle person, a tutor is not a student-advocate or teacher-advocate, but rather assumes a peer role (Thompson et al., 2009) and focuses on supporting students to make sense of students' writing process and situations (Gellin, 2012). A case-study analyzed peer tutors' unique positionality and found that the relational nature of tutoring can create confusion over role-clarity and tutoring (Abbot et al., 2018). The data from 49 participants also found that the lack of role-clarity can lead to frustration or confusion for both tutors and students (Abbot et al., 2018). While not focused on writing tutors, Colvin's (2007) study supports similar findings of student frustration over the lack of understanding regarding peer tutors' roles. A different case-study addressing role clarity with two college tutors found that some students expect tutors to teach them while others expect to be "spoon-fed" by tutors (Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019. p. 61). Although the sample size was small, Ntuli and Gumbo's (2019) findings align with other scholars on the importance of role-clarity and role

expectations among students and tutors (Abbot et al., 2018; Colvin, 2007). The lack of role clarity can also make it challenging for tutors to maintain boundaries, which can lead to tutor burnout or overwork (Christie, 2014). Lacking the ability to define their roles and expectations, some tutors provide an over-excessive amount of support for students, including tutoring after work hours, which can lead to burnout (Christie, 2014). Without clarity in their roles, tutors can also face anxiety with their tasks, including providing feedback to students (Abbot et al., 2018). Clearly, tutors need role-clarity, so they can better understand their responsibilities, avoid taking on roles that are not in their best interest, and earn trust from their students (Abbot et al., 2018; Alshareef, 2019). Supporting this point, a grounded research study on peer writing tutors found that when tutors know their role and are familiar with it, they can approach students who do not understand the tutors' role (Leary et al., 2013). In addition, the study also indicated that when writing tutors know their role and can internalize expectations, they can often successfully communicate those expectations with students and develop healthy boundaries (Leary et al., 2013). Overall, research largely recognizes the need for tutor role clarity among tutors.

Role-clarity in tutor training

To address and reinforce role-clarity, many writing centers have turned to tutor training to teach and reinforce tutor roles prior to tutors starting their first campus-based sessions (Breuch & Racine, 2000). Writing scholars suggest tutor training should stress the in-betweenness of peer tutors' roles to bridge students and teachers (Colvin, 2007; Smith, 2008). During tutor training, tutors should be provided with information that clearly defines their role (Chou & Chan, 2016; Clarence, 2016; Metcalf, 1997; Dinitz & Harrington, 2013) and be provided guidance on student populations, such as supporting international students (Metcalf, 1997) or assisting students with learning disabilities (Corbett, 2015). While many studies on writing tutor training are

informative, most studies do not provide empirical research, making it difficult to know if tutor training works to instruct tutors on their roles. One study exploring tutor training and role clarity suggested tutor training might not effectively provide clarity, purpose, or boundaries for new tutors (McFarlane, 2016). In fact, based on the study's findings, the researcher recommended tutors complete a series of professional development opportunities, in addition to tutor training, to help tutors identify their role and boundaries with students (McFarlane, 2016). This study's participants were professional subject-based tutors, rather than peer writing tutors, but it might inform challenges that new peer writing tutors have with defining their role.

Context and Function of Tutoring Roles

In most literature, writing center scholars issue roles to tutors, based on practitioner observations, student perceptions, or theories, rather than listening to tutors themselves (Abbot et al., 2018). Researchers have described a range of peer writing tutoring roles including a coach, commentator, or counselor (Gellen, 2012; Harris, 1995), guider (Bruffee, 1999), reflective knowledge builder (Roscoe et al., 2008), directive peer (Truesdell, 2007), non-directive peer and minimalist (Harris, 2001; Smulyan & Bolton, 1989; Shamoon & Burns, 1995; Grimm, 1999). In some instances, tutors even perform technical roles (Abdullah & Mtsweni, 2014; Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019) and administrative roles (Mick, 1999), among others. Researchers clearly vary on the types of roles tutors should adopt. Although scholars assume the "ideal" tutor roles (Hobson, 2015), despite this, there is a large gap in literature regarding tutors' views of the roles they play (Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019). The following sections detail the administrators, also known practitioners and used interchangeably in this study, and researchers' perceptions of the function of peer tutors' "role" in different learning environments.

The Function of "Role" in Campus-Based Peer Tutoring

There is ample research on the different roles of peer tutors in traditional, campus-based learning environments. While there are many roles scholars disagree on, the two most commonly agreed on roles for peer tutors are the: fixed-role or reciprocal-role. Interestingly, a study reviewing the differences between fixed and reciprocal tutoring found no statistically significant differences between the use of the tutor roles on student performance (Duran & Monereo, 2005). The study did have a small sample size, which could reduce the influence of the findings. Nevertheless, the fixed-role was a popular peer tutoring model in the 1990s. For traditionalist scholars, peer-tutors should adopt a fixed-role approach, which places a tutor and tutee in distinct roles. Scholars define a fixed role as a tutor who is a peer-expert. This type of tutor provides explanations (Fuchs et al., 1997; Roscoe & Chi, 2004; McDonald, 1994), asks questions (Duran & Monereo, 2005; Graesser & Pearson, 1994), offers feedback (Bentz & Fuchs, 1996; Chi et al. 2001; Duran & Monereo, 2005), and conduct demonstrations (Fuchs et al., 1997; McDonald, 1994; Topping et al., 2003) during tutoring sessions.

In reciprocal tutoring, tutors and students collaborate and switch roles often. In a reciprocal-role, peer tutors are viewed as facilitators who ask questions (Leung, 2015; Roscoe & Chi, 2008; De Backer, Van Keer & Valcke, 2015), promote knowledge construction (Pea, 2004; De Backer, Van Keer & Valcke, 2015), and role-play with students (Colvin & Ashman, 2010; Ginsburg-Block & Fantuzzo, 1997; Ismail & Alexander, 2005; Brown et al., 2014; Abbot et al., 2018). Newer empirical studies find evidence of a reciprocal approach lending to greater student agency (Duran & Monereo, 2005; Topping & Sutherland, 1999). A correlational study explored the effects of reciprocal tutoring and students' writing improvement. Among improvements in students' writing, the results also suggested that a sense of community developed between tutors

and students (Brown et al., 2014). A reciprocal tutoring role can invite the exchange of roles between tutors and students and produce an openness not as easily fostered in fixed-role peer tutoring (Brown et al., 2014). This study contained a small-participant size, which could constrict its results. Another study with a larger participant group found tutors who adopted reciprocal tutoring fostered stronger relationships with their students and significantly influenced students' test performance (Zulkifli, Halim, & Yahaya, 2018). A different meta-analysis study found tutors largely adopted a role with traits relating to their intelligence, which can cause an unhealthy power-dynamic in peer-to-peer tutoring sessions (Leung, 2015). Tutor roles can influence tutoring sessions; and, to generate healthy relationships, tutors should adopt a reciprocal role to best facilitate learning (Leung, 2015). Ultimately, while scholars present mixed-findings on which role a campus-based peer tutor should embrace, it seems a reciprocal role is becoming a popular role practiced in campus-based tutoring sessions. However, future studies might benefit from larger participant groups.

The Function of "Role" in Asynchronous Peer Tutoring

The role of an asynchronous peer tutor is not straightforward. The concept of role, in light of Yellin's (1999) theory, refers to the expectations that tutors should exhibit during tutoring sessions. Scholarship indicates tutors adopt various roles in online asynchronous tutoring sessions. One case-study, seeking to identify roles online tutors adopted, noted that online tutors can be perceived as coaches who are "error-noticing helpers" (Severino & Prim, 2016, p. 167). Despite their data from only one participant, the scholars argued that asynchronous tutors should adopt a coach role (Severino & Prim, 2016). A different study, with a larger participant group, refuted Severino and Prim's (2016) findings. Using an ex post facto approach, the scholars argued that reciprocal roles in asynchronous peer tutoring were important,

as they promoted role flexibility (Ghadirian & Ayub, 2017). The study's results suggested that when asynchronous tutors adopt reciprocal roles, students participate more and make better grades (Ghadirian & Ayub, 2017). The scholars' explored students assigned to the role of a peer tutor, rather than hired and trained writing and reading tutors like most writing center research and scholarship. This approach could constrict the findings to a particular context. Overall, there are differing perspectives on the role of an asynchronous peer tutor. Some scholars suggest a reciprocal role, whereas others argue that peer tutors should be flexible with their roles.

The Function of "Role" in Online Synchronous Peer Tutoring

While limited, studies related to online synchronous tutor roles suggest that tutors must adopt new roles in synchronous online environments. Unlike campus-based environments, online synchronous tutors must sometimes take on the role of technologist and provide technical support for their students (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). In most instances, online tutors adopt the role of a technologist to assist students in troubleshooting (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Like campus-based tutoring, online synchronous peer tutors are responsible for creating a welcoming and safe space for their students (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017). However, one difference seems to be that the responsibility of creating a welcoming environment falls mostly on the peer tutor (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017), rather than the collaborative efforts of writing center staff, as evident in campus-based tutoring (Nordstrom et al., 2019). To date, writing center scholars have not detailed the shift in tutor responsibilities for creating a welcoming and safe environment from a collective campus-based space to an individual online tutoring session.

Scholars also agree that when tutors interact or socialize with students, these actions can make students feel safe and comfortable (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Jong et

al., 2018). However, one study extensively analyzed interaction and socialization in online synchronous tutoring sessions and found that peer tutors did not prioritize socialization (de Metz and Bezuidenhout, 2018). The survey-approach study collected data from 215 social science tutors at a college in South Africa, and found that when online tutors perceived their role as a guide or facilitator, they were likely to spend a great deal of time orienting students to become familiar with an online environment. In their study, tutors were less concerned about socializing, and more concerned with guiding students through the online learning environment (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018).

Counter to campus-based research, in practice, the online synchronous tutors might not adopt a social role as frequently as other roles (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Yet, it is unclear whether the lack of socializing benefits or hinders students' experiences, and the scholars noted that socialization in online synchronous tutoring might be valuable. The results of this study suggest that tutors should inform students of online synchronous tutors' roles and expectations, before a tutoring session. The findings also indicate that tutors need extensive support in preparing to become online tutors, and they might benefit from learning how to interact and socialize online, to build a sense of community with their learners (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). The scholars noted that while tutors' roles should be flexible in online synchronous environments, students might benefit more when tutors adopt secondary roles as "socializers" and "collaborators" (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018, p. 39). Adopting roles as socializers and collaborators is consistent with writing center scholarship in campus-based sessions (Bruffee, 1984; Harris, 1995; Grimm, 2001; Brown, 2015). The benefit of this study was that it focused on the perspective of the tutor, but it reviewed subject-based tutors rather than writing tutors. Yet,

its findings alluded to previous writing center scholarship on the importance of explaining tutors' role, whichever role that is, to help students identify expectations (McFarlane, 2016).

Relatedly, a different action-research study with 25 college students in Taiwan indicated that in video-conferencing settings, socialization is an important factor in student success rates (Yeh & Lai, 2019). When students and tutors participate in social interaction, students are more likely to return for additional tutoring sessions (Yeh & Lai, 2019). Students who were frequently tutored by an online peer tutor, and whom they were comfortable interacting with, had higher satisfaction rates with their tutoring sessions (Yeh & Lai, 2019). The results of this study might be overshadowed by the focus on students' perceptions, rather than tutors. Additionally, this study focused on language tutors, rather than writing tutors, and it is unclear if these results are consistent with writing tutor experiences. A recent survey research study of 28 math tutors providing asynchronous and online synchronous tutoring found that, in online environments, crafting a friendly and welcoming environment can look very different online, depending on the technology and type of communication used (Johns & Mills, 2020). The scholars recommended that online tutor training includes training on how to use technology and the nuanced communication elements in online tutoring sessions (Johns & Mills, 2020). The limited sample size makes this study difficult to generalize, but it reinforces previous studies related to the value of interpersonal communication and socialization (Yeh & Lai, 2019). Without any doubt, online synchronous tutoring research is in its infancy. Scholars have suggested that peer tutors should expect to adopt roles as technologists and socializers, but these studies focused on online subject-tutors rather than online writing tutors.

Differences Between Online Asynchronous and Synchronous Tutor Roles

Perhaps the greatest inconsistency in role, found between scholarship on asynchronous and synchronous tutoring, was the role of the technologist. It was far more common for synchronous tutors to embrace the role of a technologist, as compared to their asynchronous counterparts. Several studies have found that online tutors frequently offer technical and troubleshooting support to students in a synchronous environment (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018), but less is known about tutors' perception as technical troubleshooters or how technology might influence the role of tutors. In all, the role of the technologist seems to be an additional role predominantly required of online synchronous peer tutors. Unfortunately, almost all of these studies addressed tutors providing subject tutoring, rather than writing tutoring. Consequently, further research should review role assumptions compared to reality. It should also review how to facilitate the best approach in online peer writing tutoring sessions. In addition, the studies in this section addressed online tutor roles from a mix of student-only or tutor-only perspectives, but no studies described the role transition process experienced by peer writing tutors. It is unclear what the transition process is like for tutors as they shift from campus-based tutoring to online tutoring or the implications the shift makes in terms of how tutors perceive their role in representing writing centers' sense of "welcomeness" and safeness emphasized in writing center scholarship.

Instructor Role Transition

Transition Process

In terms of transition, scholars indicate the transition from campus-based on online instructors extends beyond technological knowledge and abilities and includes changes in learning format and pedagogy (Thanaraj, 2016) and possibly more. While the delivery format is

a clear-cut transition, other factors related to the transition from campus-based to online learning might not be as clear. For example, one multiple-case study on seven instructors, found instructors might experience a transition process when shifting from campus-based to online environments that included a variety of transitions (Shakeeb, 2020). Some individuals experienced a pre-transition process, which is a phase where both the study's instructors and students experienced anxiety related to items such as teaching strategies, challenges with home environments and access to technology, among other factors (Shakeeb, 2020). A case-study with four online writing tutors reinforced the potential anxiety that tutors can face, as they prepare to transition to online tutoring (Werner & Scrocco, 2020). The study indicated that some tutors can experience increased anxiety and pressure, which are factors that can hinder tutors' ability to provide valuable feedback to students (Werner & Scrocco, 2020). Tutors' feelings of anxiousness can also suppress learners' ability to share their work, express their ideas and concerns (Werner & Scrocco, 2020). While insightful, further research is needed to determine if the results of this study are consistent with experiences of writing tutors in other settings.

For Shakeeb (2020), the transitioning phase was the time in which instructors enacted their transition and came across concerns and challenges during their transition. These challenges and concerns included not having enough time to get used to online teaching, difficulty with student engagement, and not having adequate training with online tools, among other challenges (Shakeeb, 2020). The instructors in the study found it not only challenging but also "mentally exhausting" to conquer the learning curve and learn to adopt different roles (Shakeeb, 2020, p. 159). However, one instructor did not seem to struggle as much; interestingly, this individual was more comfortable and confident with online learning, prior to transition to online teaching (Shakeeb, 2020). These results are consistent with an older study on instructor's challenges of

transitioning from their campus to online environments (Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Overall, readiness seemed to be important for a successful transition online for both students and instructors (Shakeeb, 2020). Although not explicitly stated, the study seems to allude to a post-transition phase, in which the instructors became familiar with technology, changed their attitudes, learned to be patient with the online learning curve, and identified effective planning and preparation techniques to assist with student engagement (Shakeeb, 2020). Thanaraj's (2016) work also reinforced the importance of changes in assumptions, practices, and attitudes toward online teaching as a marked sign in the instructor's transition process. Comfort and familiarity might inform the end of the transition process, which is consistent with Thanaraj's (2016) findings. This study did contain limitations including none of the participants were digital natives and they all recalled events that occurred four-years prior (Shakeeb, 2020). Overall, the transition process is complex, as educators are required to transition not just to a new instructional delivery format but also to transition strategies, practices, and roles.

Transformation

Likewise, after transitioning online, scholars have indicated that instructors undergo a transformation related to their teaching assumptions, beliefs, practices, roles, and identities (Thanaraj, 2016; Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Serdyukov, 2015; Shakeeb, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). One case-study with three instructors highlighted the transformative elements instructors experienced after transitioning from campus-based to online teaching (Thanaraj, 2016). The instructors underwent a transformation in not only their assumptions about teaching but also their pedagogical practices, ways they supported their students, and their adoption of new roles and identity (Thanaraj, 2016). From this perspective, transformation entailed new or

different ways of communicating, teaching, and supporting students, compared to traditional settings.

In a different, multiple-case study on eight instructors, it was argued that once an instructor started the process of transitioning to the online environment, they simultaneously instigated a personal transformation (Cochran & Benuto, 2016). It was also discovered that the process of transitioning and transforming could be "on a fluid continuum." Some instructors, who transitioned to online teaching years ago, might still perceive themselves as transitioning or transforming with regards to a specific area like utilizing specific and/or new technology (Cochran & Benuto, 2016, p. 44). In this light, transition can be a perpetual phenomenon for some instructors. The study indicated that instructors experienced transformation in two categories, knowledge acquisition and experiential learning, with six subthemes: technology, best practices, subject specific, mentoring, mirroring, and overcoming challenges (Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Both studies have several limitations, including participants representing a specific field and potential challenges in recalling past events.

Nonetheless, tutors might have similar experiences, and further empirical research should review whether tutors simply adapt to or transform to meet the needs of students in online environments. In other words, it is unclear whether or not tutors adapt their traditional tutoring practices and roles by making particular changes to meet their needs, or if they transform their roles and practices by using new, different, or by making large scale changes to meet their needs.

Overall, it is challenging to find research on the phases of the transition process. Instructors might start their transition process by being reluctant, needing extra support, and time to work through challenges (Shakeeb, 2020; Thanaraj, 2016). The post-transition phase might include instructors' increased levels of experience, comfortability, and confidence teaching in the

online environment (Shakeeb, 2020; Thanaraj, 2016). As such, this study seeks to unveil the transition process for tutors, with an emphasis on their roles, to understand if their transition is similar or different from instructors transitioning from campus-based to online environments.

Campus-based to Asynchronous Environments

Research suggests instructors are confronted with a variety of changes in their roles, as they transition from campus-based to online environments. Transitioning from campus-based teaching to online teaching can be challenging and requires a number of changes in teaching expectations and transitions of roles (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). A case-study analyzing the experiences of 13 college instructors transitioning from campus-based to online teaching found that technology greatly affected the ways in which teachers interact and teach (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). When shifting to teaching online, instructors encountered changes in their tasks, skills, and faced a need to change their professional identity (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). Through this confrontation process, new tasks and new pedagogies emerged for instructors (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). Interestingly, when comforted with change (i.e. task, responsibilities, roles), instructors differed on their process and speed in approaching and adopting those changes (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). However, further research is needed on how instructors process, approach, and adopt changes in the online environment (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). This might also be important to understand, in light of peer online tutoring.

Relatedly, a different study found instructors might need to redefine their traditional roles to form a pedagogical ecology that focuses more time and attention to interactive forms of teaching and learning (Gonzalez, 2009). Online instructors needed to adjust or adopt fluid role changes and become facilitators, coordinators, advisors, and planners to assist students in their learning process (Gonzales, 2009). While this study is older, it provides substantial focus on role

changes among online instructors. Even though instructors may undergo changes in skill and identity, their beliefs regarding learning generally stay the same (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). Instructors in online learning environments are crucial for "designing, facilitating and supporting the students for a successful learning process" (Harasim, 2017, p. 119) and this may likely be true for tutors as well. Overall, studies on transitioning teaching practices into the online environment suggest that instructors must adopt a flexible palate of roles when teaching online courses to ensure student success in the online environment.

Campus-Based to Synchronous Environments

Transitioning into a synchronous environment calls for additional roles not usually needed in campus-based environments. One of the additional roles that instructors must adopt is the role of the technologist. An instructor must be proficient in teaching with technology when transitioning into teaching synchronously online (Martin & Parker, 2014). However, researchers have contended the ease of transition. In one study, researchers suggested adopting online synchronous technology and supporting students in the adoption was not challenging, as most online synchronous technology is relatively easy to use (Martin & Parker, 2014). In another study, the researchers contended that teachers transitioning to synchronous instruction required an understanding of TPACK—technical, pedagogical, content knowledge to teach effectively (Rehn, Maor, & McConney, 2018). This contention in studies might be due to differences in educational environments and educator abilities. The instructors in higher education seemed to have an easier time adopting technology (Rehn, Maor, & McConney, 2018), as compared to K-12 instructors (Martin & Parker, 2014). Other factors like teaching experience and technological literacy, might have contributed to these results, but studies did not mention these factors. Regardless, there is agreement that the role of the technologist is an added role for online

instructors, but the ease of this role's adoption is contested among scholars (Rehn, Maor, & McConney, 2018; Martin & Parker, 2014).

Another focus of research on online synchronous instructor roles is the guide-on-the-side approach. Instructors should tailor their role as a guide-on-the-side to develop learner-centered personal environments in online synchronous sessions (Huang, 2018). Being a guide-on-the-side allows instructors the flexibility to assist students in collaborative learning through technology (Huang, 2018). Relatedly, a case-study conducted in the UK analyzed university instructors' perceptions of transitioning into online synchronous teaching (Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, & Mardomingo, 2012). The scholars found that many instructors perceived that their workload had increased, from campus-based classes, as a natural result from transitioning online. Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, and Mardomingo (2012) also suggested that the online environment becomes a type of contested space for instruction. When instructors step back as guides, students have the agency to interact and learn (Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, & Mardomingo, 2012). Overall, the scholars suggested that online synchronous classrooms could become contested spaces where traditional hierarchies and relationships between instructors and students are in a type of flux-state, with new hierarchies and relationships constantly being forged; this might also be true for peer online writing tutors. When reviewing the differences between asynchronous and synchronous instructor roles, the most apparent consistency is that of the technologist. Studies have indicated the importance of adopting the role of "technologist" in synchronous learning environments.

Theoretical Framework

For the purposes of this study, two theories were chosen to make up the theoretical framework: Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory and Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC

theory. Role acquisition theory is an offshoot of role theory, whereas multimodal CMC is an offshoot of traditional computer-mediated communication (CMC) theory. The following sections describe the background of role theory and CMC theory, Yellin and Herring's sub-theories, and the relationship of the theories to this study.

Role Theory

Background

Role theory was first conceptualized more than a century ago (Van der Horst, 2016). The theory was coined by Mead (1912) and has undergone several iterations. Over the years, the concept of role has become one of the most popularly researched topics in social sciences (Biddle, 1986). Role theory is characterized by social behavior. It seeks to theorize ways that humans behave, both differently and predictably, depending on their social identities and situations (Biddle, 1986). The focus of role theory researchers is on the "concept of social roles and role expectations" (Sarbin & Allen, 1968).

Initially theorized by symbolic interactionism, role theory has evolved to focus on cognitive roles. In the early parts of the century, Mead (1932) theorized roles through a theatrical metaphor, the concept of role theory perceived roles as performances conducted by actors using social behaviors that actors understood and adhered to. For Mead, role taking only occurred through socialization and the development of self. Later, Linton (1936) conceptualized roles as parts of culture, with roles used consistently throughout society. The perspective of role theory continued to change slightly through the years, with current empirical research on role theory focusing on cognitive role theory (Biddle, 1986). In cognitive role theory, the focus is on the ways people perceive their expectations from others and the effects of those perceptions on behavior (Biddle, 1986). A cognitive role theorist, Parsons (1951), argued that roles belong to a

particular social system explained through role expectations perceived by the individual adopting the role. Regardless of the changes in the definition, what is consistent with each theorist is that roles are fundamentally social (Karp & Bork, 2012). Roles are largely understood in a social context, where behaviors and attitudes, standards and expectations are linked together to define roles (Karp & Bork, 2012).

Role theory in the education field

Roles are prominent in education. In fact, education can be viewed in terms of a role-theory framework (Biddle, 2013). Educational systems usually involve teachers and students who adopt roles and related behaviors (Biddle, 2015). The ways in which students and teachers embrace their roles are also related to the context of education and demand, beliefs, and philosophies of those roles in the educational setting (Biddle, 2015). Role theory keys in on the ability of an initial player to predict the behavior of other role players, with the initial player adjusting their behaviors to accommodate the needs of the other role players (Biddle, 2013; Smith, 2018). This concept can easily be viewed in light of teachers or tutors assessing students and changing their behaviors to meet their students' needs. Like many role players, teachers usually have and use multiple roles (Ben-Peretz, Mendelson, & Kron, 2003). Although role is discussed among teachers, there are limited studies on the pairing of role theory and tutors.

Use of Role theory in peer tutoring research

Research on role theory and peer tutoring is inadequate. Sarbin (1976) conducted one of the earliest studies on peer tutoring and role-theory. He theorized the differences in peer tutors' roles from teachers (Sarbin, 1976). More specifically, Sarbin's work analyzed peer tutors' abilities to build relationships with students through tutors' embodiment of friendship roles. Rather than using teacher-like authority roles, tutors can leverage their unique positionality to

build rapport with students through a give-take relationship, which could explain peer tutors' abilities to foster relationships with students (Sarbin, 1976). While Sarbin's use of role theory analysis is informative, especially when considering the interactions of peer tutors, his work includes several challenges. For one, his analysis focused on young children, rather than adult learners. The experiences and roles adopted by children as peer tutors might not be the same as those by adults as peer tutors. Furthermore, Sarbin's (1976) work exclusively focused on friendship as a role among peer tutors, but he paid little attention to the features common to the adoption of peer or professional tutors' roles.

An alternative theoretical context is needed to provide greater understanding related to the common features that inform peer tutors' role adoption. A later mixed-methods study, using Sarbin and Allen's role theory analysis, analyzed the peer tutoring process and roles (Fogarty & Wang, 1982). In tutoring sessions, middle-school participants identified reciprocal tutoring as an ideal role for peer tutors. Reciprocal tutoring can improve relationships, foster social skill development, and promote the best type of peer tutoring process (Fogarty & Wang, 1982). However, like Sarbin's (1976) work, the study conducted by Fogarty and Wang (1982) also selected students and used them to provide tutoring support to middle school student peers during a class session. The nature of this study makes it difficult to draw connections to the current online writing tutoring settings in higher education. Many writing center studies refer to the role of tutors (Gellin, 2012; Thompson et al., 2009; Abbot et al., 2018; Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019; Colvin, 2007), but there is limited use of role-theory in peer writing tutoring research.

Role Acquisition Theory

Tutors adopt or acquire specific roles, expectations, and behaviors when providing support and guidance to their peers (Sarbin, 1976). Like instructors, tutors usually adopt multiple

roles at once or at different times during a tutoring session (Colvin, 2010). Yet, the process of role acquisition, the way in which individuals adopt roles, is still not well understood (Yellin, 1999), and this is especially true in online tutoring (Dammers, 2009; Renner-Potacco et al., 2017). In an effort to examine features related to the acquisition of diverse roles, Yellin (1999), conceptualized a new model of role acquisition. Evolving from role theory, Yellin (1999) posits that a role is a series of expectations that are based on behaviors, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and that individuals are influenced by expectations through modification and negotiation. Yellin's theory may be the best fit for this particular study because it synthesizes previous role acquisition theories (Cogswell, 1967; Simpson, 1967; Zurcher, 1967; Thornton & Nardi, 1975) and offers a generic process of role acquisition that is sequenced and punctuated by events that signify the progression of role adoption. Additionally, the model provides a framework to capture common features that play into role adoption of heterogeneous role types, social context, and other factors (Yellin, 1999).

Role acquisition seeks to systematically describe the role-theory phenomenon. What sets Yellin's (1999) work apart from other role acquisition theories is her argument that individuals do not simply conform to a series of role expectations; instead, there is a dynamic process by which expectations are shaped. The shaping of expectations is done by the person adopting the role, and it involves a series of interactions with a social network and role (Yellin, 1999). Yellin contends that role acquisition brings about a quick change in the way people, others, and social contexts are perceived. When a person adopts a new role, their perspective changes sharply, especially when assuming a new role for the first time (Yellin, 1999). The practice of using role-acquisition to understand tutors' experiences within an online environment has not yet been explored, and Yellin's work is an ideal framework to make sense of tutors' roles in online

environments. With theories regarding tutors' roles in online tutoring sessions in their infancy, Yellin's (1999) role acquisition is appropriate to explore the experiences of online writing tutors.

For Yellin (1999), role acquisition takes place through four sequential steps or stages (see Figure 2). These steps are characterized by the following: 1) ambivalence, 2) absorption, 3) commitment, and 4) confidence. Each of these steps is a different type of affective orientation that marks a unique step in which a person acquires a role. The Ambivalence phase is generally where individuals are contemplative and may experience depression or feelings of a loss of orientation. Regret is common in this stage and negative responses from role partners can influence role motivation. The Absorption phase is often marked by individuals feeling overwhelmed by the quantity and complexity of their role expectations. Yet, at the same time, they begin to experience pleasure and growing mastery, while they navigate information overload, as they navigate their role. The following phase is Commitment. In this phase, individuals gain heightened self-worth and self-concepts. They often commit to and identify with their role. The role begins feeling routine and comfortable. The last phase is Confidence. In this phase, the individual feels a high degree of predictability and confidence in their role. However, they can eventually experience boredom or de-motivation if they do not have added work tasks or experience self-renewal.

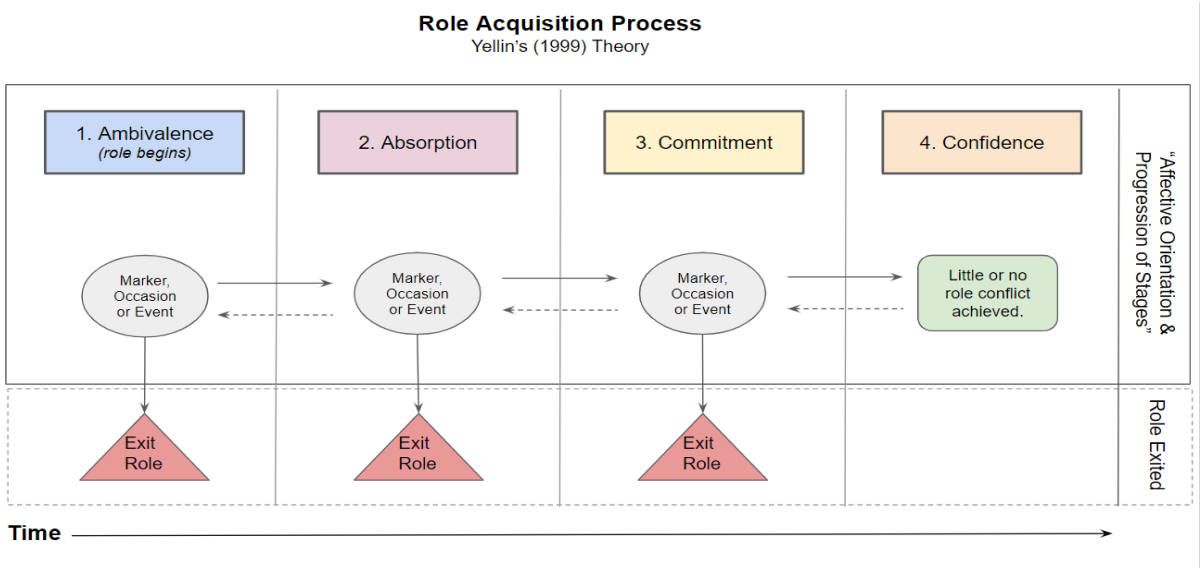
According to Yellin (1999), a person must move through each affective orientation. However, in order to move from one affective orientation to the next, a person must experience some type of positive affirmation or approval from role partners or interaction from others. The positive approval influences motivation to stay in the role, which leads the individual to move towards a new affective orientation. This positive affirmation is usually marked by a marker,

occasion, or event. Throughout each step, there are a series of achievements that must be completed, in order to move into the next step.

This process continues until all the steps are completed. Upon successful completion of all four steps, an individual will gain skills in role performance and develop feelings of identification, competence, and self-worth vis-a-vis the role (Yellin, 1999). However, as a person moves through any one of the affective stages, if they experience negative comments, disapproval, or some other social reproof, the individual can exit their role. Social disapproval or negative comments from a role player can influence motivation. If the motivation drops, the individual will choose to quit or exit the role they are attempting to acquire.

Clearly, role-acquisition is an adaptive process, much like tutoring. Yellin's model offers a unique lens into understanding roles, behaviors, and a systematic examination for the acquisition of roles. However, Yellin's work largely focuses on non-computer mediated social interactions, and it is unknown if her role acquisition theory aligns with the experiences of tutors adopting roles in online settings.

Figure 2. Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition Theory



Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) Theory

Background

The concept of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) has its origins in WWII, but its popularity increased with the first email in the 1960s (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). In its broadest form, CMC is the study of the use of computers to communicate (Santoro, 1995). During the 1980s, CMC research narrowed its focus to system design, empirical research, CMC in nontraditional settings, and privacy implications with CMC (Herring, 2002). This early research also considered how technology could alter social interactions and group processes to facilitate text-based correspondence using a computer (Herring, 2002; Lee & Oh, 2017; Carr, 2020). During what is considered the intervening years of CMC, the function of computers radically changed, allowing millions of people to begin communicating online using a variety of modes (i.e. email, listservs, newsgroups, chats, MUDS, instant chat, metaworlds, webcams, etc.) (Herring, 2012; Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004; Carr, 2020). This opened up new avenues for CMC research to explore the ways computers mediated communication (Carr, 2020). Current researchers in the field of CMC are grappling with the challenges of the increasingly invisible nature of technology. Thurlow, Lengel, and Tomic (2004) argued that technological advancements are causing computers to become invisible. The concept of invisible technology lends itself to the idea of a "tethered self," individuals always connected with technology (Turkle, 2008). Carr (2020) agreed with the notion and adds that computers are becoming difficult to isolate. He suggested that the study of CMC is becoming more challenging, as it is increasingly difficult to both identity and isolate mediation, as computers are no longer bulky desktops but rather appear in various devices (Carr, 2020). Many current CMC studies explore how changes in computers, and the Internet of Things, have influenced human communicative experiences and social interaction (Kim, 2016; Turkle, 2011; Carr, 2020).

CMC in the education field

Computers and the internet have had a revolutionary impact on education (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Technology has radically changed not only the way students learn but also the way instructors teach (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Universities used early technological advancements to store and share information, in the form of newsgroups (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Further technology developments offered opportunities to form learning communities and virtual classrooms, which were later coined as distance education (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Virtual classrooms have increasingly offered borderless classrooms, where non-traditional students could enter the academic world, regardless of work schedules, family responsibilities, or geographic location (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004).

In terms of mediated communication in virtual classes, several studies have found the CMC environment to be a great equalizer, as more students participated in discussion forums compared to campus-based class discussions (Warschauer, 1996; McPherson & Nunes, 2004). In a large-scale survey study, with over 15,000 U.S. college student participants, the use of the internet among college students was explored (Jones, 2002). The study revealed college students were early CMC pioneers, using the internet as a daily routine and using the internet for social communication in their personal and academic lives (Jones, 2002). Just as the scholar found emerging relationships between text-based communication and the formation of socialization, technology has changed and made many CMC studies outdated (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). By the late 90s and early 2000s, multimodal interactions, webcams, and newer technology ruptured the field of CMC and required new studies to explore, discover, and address how technology and social interactions might influence human behavior, especially in new online educational environments (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Interestingly, Dias (1998) argued

that CMC fostered a variety of roles and relationships that were unseen or unlikely to exist in campus-based settings. The constant changes and uses of technology make CMC research challenging, as scholars in the field fight an uphill battle to observe and describe patterns in users, but also to detail how users do things differently, based on their social spheres (Carr, 2020). Glassner (1980) noted that in CMC research, almost everything is different, and yet, the same. Hence, while CMC studies can generalize, researchers can never assume social interactions and the internet are true for everyone (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004).

Several scholars in the field have explored the use of roles in CMC educational environments. An early action research study, with 46 college students, explored student roles in asynchronous CMC environments (Abrams, 2001). It reported that, in asynchronous writing contexts, students participated online through multiple roles: attacker, challenger, supporter, and joker (Abrams, 2001). These findings suggest that, in CMC contexts, students can use diverse roles. This result might be due to the equalizing nature of CMC (Warschauer, 1996; McPherson & Nunes, 2004; Abrams, 2001). The study's author concluded that it might be possible that the concept of online spaces has an equalizing nature due to the requirements of students to negotiate their roles and co-create social discourse, as instructors do not provide clear social roles and expectations (Abrams, 2001). Nonetheless, the study focused on asynchronous learning, and its results might be clouded by newer technologies and modalities for online learning (Abrams, 2001). In a later meta-analysis study on online synchronous writing learning and CMC, it found that practitioners' roles shifted from sage-on-stage to guide-on-side (Huang, 2018). Unlike Abrams (2001) study, the researcher did not suggest instructors use more diverse roles, like students, but this could be due to the nature of the synchronous online environment, as compared to asynchronous online environment as well as constraints in traditional instructor roles (Huang,

2018). Overall, the study of CMC and education has evolved rapidly over the years. New insights into technologies, interaction, and roles shed light on the behavior of humans using CMC to learn and socialize. Yet, as tutors reside in a role that is in-between students and teachers (Gellin, 2012; Harris, 1995), studies differ in their findings related to tutor roles, especially when considering students and instructors roles in the online environment.

Use of CMC in online peer tutoring research

Online education is becoming increasingly interactive, and this is largely due to the development of online mentoring, tutoring, and educational outreach programs (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). An early study regarding online tutoring addressed the value of technology, paired with education, to provide students' access to educators (Katz & Rice, 2002). Online tutoring sites, such as Tutor.com, for students, and senior.net, for seniors, were early commercial sites that offered asynchronous online tutoring using the internet (Thurlow, Lengel, & Tomic, 2004). Since then, CMC has been slowly increasing in research, in light of peer tutoring. A grounded-theory study researched the experiences of 8 undergraduate writing tutors working at a college in Columbia (Herrera Bohórquez et al., 2019). The scholars argued that CMC is essential to view the collaborative nature of peer tutoring and the relationships generated between tutors and students (Herrera Bohórquez et al., 2019). The dynamic differentiation of online asynchronous and synchronous interaction, capitalized by CMC (Simpson, 2012), offers unique insight into the context of online peer tutoring (Herrera Bohórquez et al., 2019). Overall, the study's findings suggest that student autonomy is a critical factor that produces motivation and comfortability in the context of online peer tutoring. This finding is consistent with Thurston et al., (2009) work on autonomy and peer tutoring. For Thurston et al., (2009), online writing tutors' cultivation of autonomous learning influenced students' self-regulation, self-confidence,

and motivation in online tutoring sessions. Another interesting study on CMC and peer tutoring emphasized the importance of online peer tutoring on content, writing process, and higher-order skills (Jones et al., 2006). The case-study contained 16 participants, 5 were peer tutors and 11 were undergraduate students (Jones et al., 2006). The findings revealed that during text based synchronous tutoring sessions, online tutors focused more on content, writing process, and higher-order writing skills, as compared to campus-based tutoring sessions (Jones et al., 2006). This finding is a stark contrast to Salm's (2016) argument that writing tutors should use a differentiated approach, shifting between higher-order and lower-order feedback, based on students' needs. Overall, Jones et al., (2006) concluded that online and campus-based tutoring modes are not intrinsically better than the other, but rather, the different modalities serve different purposes, with online tutoring offering greater opportunities for students to explore higher-order issues and campus-based tutoring offering more opportunities for lower-order details and feedback (Jones et al., 2006). Interestingly, these findings deviate from a later study on peer online writing tutoring conducted by Servino and Prim (2016).

In Severino and Prim's (2016) study, peer writing tutors were perceived by students as providing lower-order support in online asynchronous feedback. Both Jones et al. (2006) and Severino and Prim's (2016) studies focused on online writing tutoring for Chinese students, and contained participants who were English language learners. Relatedly, both studies had small sample sizes. Notably, Severino and Prim's (2016) study had a single participant, while Jones et al., (2006) study contained 16 participants. The small sample sizes are challenging to generalize. Furthermore, both studies addressed tutoring roles and expectations largely from the voices of the students and researchers, rather than from the voices of the tutors. Clearly, while studies exist on peer tutoring and CMC, there is a lack of research about the use of CMC and peer tutoring,

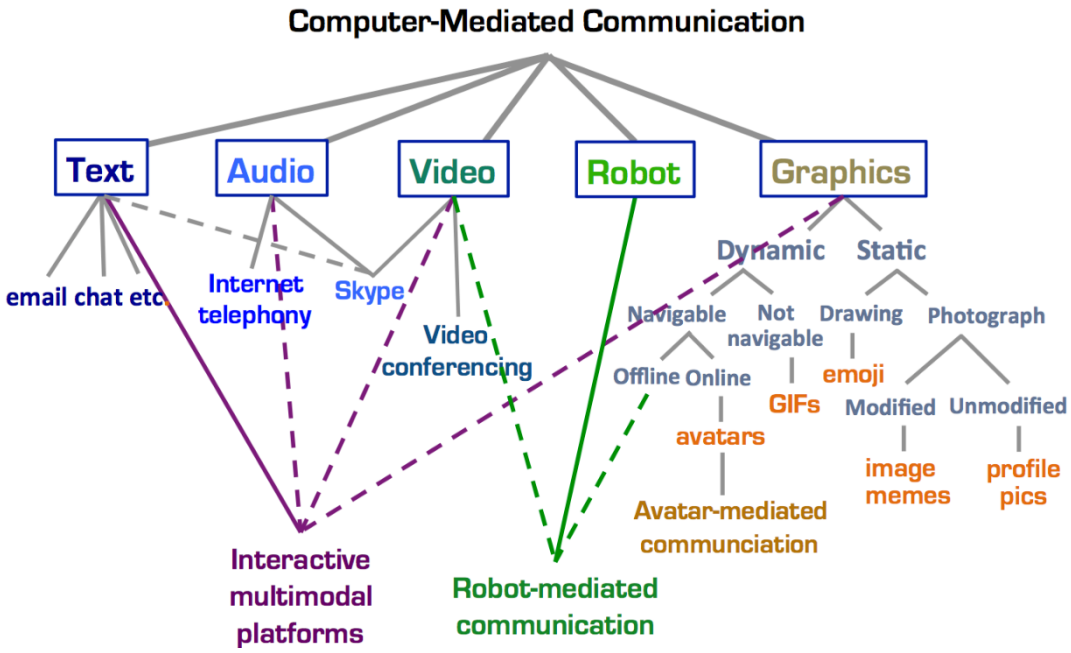
from the perspective of peer writing tutors.

Multimodal CMC Theory

Writing tutors interact, in various ways, with students in online tutoring (Simpson, 2012; Huang, 2018; Abrams, 2001). In asynchronous tutoring, online tutors mostly interact with students through text-based communication (Moberg, 2010; Hewett, 2015) or sometimes screencast recordings (Paiz, 2018); whereas, online synchronous tutoring is most commonly conducted through videoconferencing (Yeh & Lai, 2019) and less frequently through instant messaging (Hargis & Wilcox, 2008). Initially focused on text-based access, textual CMC has become increasingly supplemented by visual elements (i.e. audio, video, graphics) (Herring, 2019). Due to technological shifts, traditional theories of CMC have needed updating, and Herring (2019) proposed a reconceptualized model of CMC as entirely multimodal. For Herring (2019), text ceases to be the primary mode of communication transmission, rather it is one of many possible modes of transmission, which include audio, video, graphics, and even robots (see Figure 3). The value of this reconceptualized model of CMC is that it works regardless of the technology used to mediate it. In this way, the concept of computer-mediated discourse can continue to be explored in terms of structure, pragmatic meanings, interaction, and social behavior (Herring, 2019). Multimodal CMC has multiple characteristics that allow the facilitation of social distance and the ability for people to present themselves selectively, as compared to face-to-face communication. Additionally, language norms and social interaction will continue to evolve in all modes of CMC. Lastly, Herring (2019) argues that CMC can be analyzed within each of the five modes, based on structure, meaning, interaction management, and social behavior. Herring's (2019) model provides a unique perspective into understanding

the online structure, interaction, and social behavior of online writing tutors and connects nicely to frame the modes, interaction, and behavior included in the stages of role acquisition.

Figure 3. Herring's (2019) Multimodal Computer-Mediated Communication Theory



Summary

Studies that explore tutors' experiences are limited, especially in the area of online tutoring. Even less is known about peer tutors' roles in online environments (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Although few, studies reviewing the roles of tutors in asynchronous and synchronous environments finds that there is overlap in the roles of the "facilitator" (de Metz &Bezuidenhout, 2018; Ghadirian & Ayub, 2017) and the "socializer" (Severino and Prim, 2016: Yeh & Lai, 2019). Peer tutors, providing support in online synchronous environments, frequently find themselves offering technical and troubleshooting support for their tutees (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). This new role is largely absent in both asynchronous and campus-based tutoring environments. Similarly, studies on instructors' transitions, from campus-based environments into the online synchronous realm, reveal the

importance of embodying the role of a technologist. While mostly absent in asynchronous and campus-based literature, instructors in synchronous online environments should be able to use technological tools appropriately for teaching and learning as well as be equipped to offer technical support for students when facing hardware or software issues. Although the role of the technologist is consistent in both synchronous tutoring and instructor research, how tutors and teachers transition into the role of the technologist is largely unknown. In other words, scholarship indicates a role change happens, but it is unclear how either set of educators acquires the role of the technologist in online synchronous environments. Engaging in research that demystifies the role acquisition process for tutors by revealing their experiences in the online environment is an important step in filling in the gap of research on role-acquisition in the online realm (Walker & Shore, 2015). Additionally, the use of CMC to guide an understanding of the types of interactions and communication networks that occur in online tutoring will assist in formulating an understanding of the ways interaction happens and the ways in which tutors adopt or acquire roles in online environments.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively influenced educational systems around the world (Onyema, 2020); one of many ways it impacted higher education was the shift to remote work, or some form of remote work to combat the pandemic (Educause, 2021). In its 2021 report, Educause Horizon claimed that, with the shift online, both faculty and staff must work to discover and innovate with new technology and design to provide social and emotional support to assist students. For effective online learning, during and post pandemic, faculty training and support are essential to ensure skills and literacy and are aligned with technological advancements (Educause, 2021). Overall, the pandemic has significantly impacted higher

education campuses, requires shift online, and training and support are important factors for faculty to stay abreast of skills, literacy, and technological advancements. While faculty need training and support, it is unknown what type of support student tutors may need.

Research Gaps

Several literature gaps drove the focus of this research study. The gaps delineated in the following sections are used to frame this study's design.

Transition and transformation

Transition is a fundamental process that educators must engage with when shifting from campus-based to online learning environments (Shakeeb, 2020; Thanaraj, 2016; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Several studies on college instructors have revealed the challenges faced by educators when transitioning to online learning environments (Shakeeb, 2020; Thanaraj, 2016; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Some scholars see transition as a process that extends beyond simply transitioning from one delivery format to another, but also includes a transition in instructional strategies, engagement, role, and identity (Thanaraj, 2016). Others echo the sentiment of transition being highly complex and requiring the transition of multiple aspects of teaching that is embodied through a transition process, including pre-transition, transitioning, and post-transition (Shabeek, 2020). Studies on instructors' perspectives and experiences of their transition process are insightful, but the aspects and ways tutors' transition into online writing tutoring still remain unclear. Relatedly, recent reports suggest that instructors and staff need training and support to adopt and use technology (Educause, 2021), and it is not known whether student tutors need the same degree of support or not.

Akin to transition is the transformation that educators undergo while or after transitioning into the online environment (Thanaraj, 2016; Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Serdyukov, 2015;

Shakeeb, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Several studies have highlighted the transformation that takes place after instructors' transition online (Thanaraj, 2016; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). One study found that instructors had undergone a transformation in their teaching assumptions, beliefs, practices, roles, and identities (Thanaraj, 2016), whereas another study found that instructors perceived their transformation as being on a fluid continuum in that they believed they were constantly being transitioned and transformed with new technologies and different ways of teaching online (Cochran & Benuto, 2016). From this perspective, transition and transformation might be a perceptual phenomenon for some educators. Tutors may or may not have similar experiences, and further empirical research is needed to discover whether tutors simply adapt to or transform to meet the needs of their students. Hence, the purpose of this study focuses specifically on tutors' experiences of transitioning from traditional to online environments.

Context of roles

Role clarity is an important aspect of tutoring (Buck, 2018). Without role clarity, tutors can face anxiety with their expectations (Abbot et al., 2018), and their students can end up frustrated expecting one type of service and being offered something quite different (Buck, 2018; Harris, 2010). However, writing center studies on tutor roles have mostly focused on campus-based writing tutors (Fuches et al., 1997; Roscoe & Chi, 2004; Duran & Monereo, 2005; McDonald, 1994; Topping et al., 2003; Brown et al., 2014) and less is known about the roles of online tutors (Baumann et al., 2008). While online writing tutoring has increased in popularity (Thiel, 2010; Smith, 2018), little is known about peer tutors' experiences (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018) or roles (Baumann et al., 2008) in the online environments. For example, research related to instructors' transition to online environments revealed instructors were faced

with a variety of changes in roles, relationships, and even personality identities (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). It was also found that the way in which instructors interact with students can change radically, due to the nature of online communication (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). These points are consistent with Dias's (1998) argument that the CMC environment fostered a variety of changes to roles and relationships that were unlikely to exist in campus-based settings. While studies expose the changes instructors can expect to make in online environments, it is unclear what types of experiences tutors face. Relatedly, it is unclear how technology might influence tutors' behavior and roles interacting in online environments. One unique challenge that has not been detailed in literature is the potential shift in responsibility for tutors to create a welcoming and safe environment, as compared to a collective campus-based learning environment, among several related factors like role adoption, communication, relationship building, etc.

What's more, very few studies have illustrated the experiences of tutors from the voice of tutors (Abbot et al., 2018; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Giving a voice to tutors and their experiences not only validates their work but can also help to determine practices or strategies that might be effective or ineffective in online tutoring (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Consequently, this study seeks to describe the experiences of tutors as well as the types of roles tutors adopt in online environments via the voices of tutors. In gaining a greater understanding of tutors' experiences, this study could reveal how tutors perceive online tutoring sessions, and these perspectives might reveal pertinent information related to assumptions versus reality. Relatedly, this study's findings could drive training changes or policy creation and add to the field of online education with a greater emphasis on the ways tutors' transition from traditional to online environments, including how their transition could inform or influence their roles.

Research approach

Thonous (2001) issued a call for more qualitative research on tutoring, so that tutor training and theories would be responsive to evidence in the field, rather than anecdotal comments on what the field should be. While not specific to qualitative research approaches, several scholars agreed and issued an urgent call for more empirical research on tutoring scholarship (Tiruchittampalam et al., 2018; Driscoll & Perdue, 2012). This study seeks to contribute to the call for increased empirical qualitative research, as it focuses on peer online writing tutors' experiences when shifting from tutoring in campus-based to online environments. Consequently, this study will use a phenomenological perspective to obtain detailed, rich qualitative data from writing tutors.

Framework

The perspective of tutor roles has largely been described from the voice of practitioners (Hobson, 2015) or students (Jones et al., 2006) in studies that are mostly focused on campus-based modalities (Baumann et al., 2008). Even with extensive research on tutors' roles (Hobson, 2015), there is still a large gap in literature on tutors' views of the roles they play (Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019). Several studies have addressed the tension and challenges instructors face when transitioning their roles from campus-based to online environments (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018), but less is known about peer online tutors' experiences. In fact, few empirical studies have explored the interplay between role theory and tutoring in general (Sabrin & Allen, 1976). Moreover, while the concept of roles and role theory have been studied in length (Simpson, 1967), the process of adopting roles or the features common to the acquisition of diverse roles is not well understood (Yellin, 1999). While relatively new, Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition framework provides a basis to understand the role acquisition process for tutors as well as offers

a method for identifying common features of role adoption. However, it could be argued that Yellin's work focused on role adoption apart from online technologies.

The online environment can cause further confrontation with role adoption among instructors (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018), and this could inform tutors' experiences, which makes it essential to understand the dynamics and modes present in online environments (Herring, 2019). Consequently, in reviewing Yellin's (1999) theory in online environments, it is critical to consider her framework in light of computer-mediated communication (CMC). Like role theory, few studies have explored CMC and online tutoring (Herrera Bohórquez et al., 2019; Hsu, 2019). The CMC field has evolved over the years, but its core framework has remained relatively the same for the past 40 years (Herring, 2019). With the advent of new technologies, Herring (2019) proposed a new Multimodal CMC framework to address communicative modes in online environments. Her framework can be used to explore terms of structure, pragmatic meanings, interaction, and social behavior (Herring, 2019), which are critical elements that constitute role adoption (Yellin, 1999). Hence, this study seeks to merge Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition with Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC to provide a new framework to view the adoption of roles among tutors within the complex communicative modes of asynchronous and online synchronous tutoring.

Definition of target population

The definition of the term tutor, in the context of higher education in the U.S., is as an individual who has: 1) the same or near status as a student, and 2) provides collaborative and supplemental support to students outside the classroom (Outhred & Chester, 2010). In this light, tutors are often peers who provide support and guidance. In locations outside the U.S., a tutor is commonly defined as an individual who teaches or instructs students in large, small, or

sometimes private settings and who grades students' work or performance (Dawson, 2010; Hawkridge & Wheeler, 2010). For the purposes of this study's population, tutors are viewed as peers or near peers who provide support and guidance, or professional tutors who provide support and guidance but do not grade students' work or performance. Hence, individuals who teach or grade are not considered tutors in light of this study's context, and they were not included within this study's targeted population. Also, with few studies highlighting the diversity of tutors (Valles, Babock, and Jackson, 2017), this study will also help to add to research on tutor diversity by aggregating and describing tutors' context and demographics.

Summary

This chapter explored the history of writing centers in higher education institutions in the U.S. It also illustrated the history of writing tutoring and the benefits of tutoring in U.S. higher education as well as the characteristics of tutoring. The types of tutoring, importance of role-clarity function of roles in tutoring, and transition of instructors into online environments were covered. In addition, the connections between the constructs of role-theory, computer-mediated communication, and online tutoring, as cited in previous studies were reviewed. The empirical research reviewed in this chapter suggests that role-theory and CMC might uniquely play out in role acquisition for online writing tutors. The following chapter illustrates the study's methodology.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a qualitative method by employing an IPA approach to explore the lived-experiences of online writing tutors. The researcher collected data through a demographic survey, semi-structured interviews, and audio diaries. The collected data was analyzed idiographically (individually) for emerging themes that were crafted into subordinate themes, then collectively analyzed across participants to group items into superordinate themes in an attempt to better understand and interpret the phenomenon (Miller, Chan, & Farmer, 2018). The study aimed to understand the lived experiences of online writing tutors transitioning from campus-based to online learning environments. Through this process, the researcher sought to make sense of tutors making sense of their lived-experiences [i.e. double hermeneutic] (Miller, Chan, & Farmer, 2018). This study aids learning and writing center administrators and expands a limited body of research related to online writing tutoring from the perspective of tutors. Additionally, it adds to the growing literature on online learning and reveals how a unique group of educator's transitions to the online environment.

Research Design

The purpose of this IPA study was to explore writing tutors' lived experiences with online tutoring. Current research largely focuses on campus-based writing tutoring. Of the limited studies related to online writing tutoring, a majority of empirical research has focused on writing tutoring from the perspective of students and less is known about tutors' perceptions of their experiences with online writing tutoring. Additionally, there is limited research on tutor roles and the ways technology might inform the roles tutors adopt or acquire as they transition from campus-based to multimodal computer-mediated environments. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of empirical research exploring online writing tutoring.

The study's results benefit online writing tutors by providing learning and writing center administrators and practitioners with a deeper and richer understanding of tutors' perceptions of their work and the roles they play in online tutoring. Additionally, this study could indirectly benefit students if policies or training are changed, based on the study's results.

Qualitative Research

Thonous (2001) issued a call for more qualitative research on tutoring, so that tutor training and theories would be responsive to evidence in the field, rather than anecdotal comments on what the field should be. Though limited in scope, this project contributes to the effort to introduce increased empirical research to writing tutoring literature. More specifically, seeking to honor the voices of tutors and illustrate their lived experiences engaging in online tutoring sessions, a qualitative approach is the most appropriate (Maxwell, 2013).

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a type of research approach that focuses on investigating lived-experiences. While there are several types of phenomenologies, including hermeneutical (van Manen, 1990), existential (Heidegger, 1962), transcendental (Husserl, 1932), descriptive (Giorgi, 2009), empirical (Moustakes, 1994), and interpretative (Smith et al., 2009), among others, an IPA approach was selected because it offers researchers the ability to analyze each participant case before comparing patterns across all cases (Miller, Chan, & Farmer, 2018). This process allows researchers to gain a semblance of the variety of realities of each participant (Smith et al., 2009). Since tutors might have different experiences in online environments, it was essential to analyze each of the individual's experiences, using IPA, so that the researcher could best illustrate and honor their respective voices (Smith et al., 2009; Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

An IPA is a qualitative research approach that examines how people make sense of their life experiences (Smith et al., 2009). In order to give a voice to tutors, including answering the call to demonstrate the diversity of tutors (Valles, Babock, and Jackson, 2017), an IPA research design was used (Smith et al., 2009; Larkin & Thompson, 2011). An advantage of using a phenomenology design for this study was its focus on gaining an understanding of ways events invoke meaning for individuals in particular situations (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine & Walker, 2019). A phenomenology operates under the assumption that there are "multiple realities" and as such, subjects perceive situations differently (Ary, et al., 2019, p. 15), rather than making assumptions of participants, which has been a common approach in tutoring research (Abbot et al., 2018; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018).

IPA theoretical principles

A quality IPA study incorporates three theoretical principles: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Smith, 2001). To ensure a phenomenological-grounded study, participants should be selected who can richly describe their experiences (Smith et at., 2009). To ensure an idiographically-grounded study, the researcher must situate participants in their unique contexts, explore the participants' unique experiences, and conduct a detailed analysis of each participant case before moving on to a broader analysis and more general interpretations across all participant cases (Smith et al., 2009). Lastly, an IPA study must be hermentuallically-grounded, in that the researcher must engage in different levels of interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). Typically, interpretation progresses, as the researcher's analysis deepens (Smith et al., 2009). Overall, without the phenomenology and idiographic approach, there would not be anything to interpret; yet, without the hermeneutics, the phenomenon, and uniqueness of it,

would not be adequately revealed (Smith et al., 2009). Hence, a strong IPA encompasses the three theoretical perspectives to ensure quality.

Focus on meaning-making

An IPA approach provides an optimal framework to explore tutors' "meaning making" (Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018), related to their perspectives on the nature of online tutoring. While traditional phenomenological approaches focus on the essence of a phenomenon, as perceived by participants, an IPA approach examines the convergence and divergence of perspectives or experiences across a sample of participants (Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018); it does so by first analyzing each participate case individually, then analyzing the participant cases as a whole (Smith et al., 2009). This approach allows the researcher to gain that semblance on the variety of realities, prior to analyzing cases collectively (Smith et al., 2009). The focus first on the idiographic analysis of individual participants is important, as participants can experience parts of a phenomenon in similar ways but interpret their experiences in radically different ways (Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018). In IPA studies, researchers are encouraged to bring their diverse perspectives into their study, as compared to traditional phenomenological studies that encourage researchers to avoid their perspectives (Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018). Interestingly, the use of IPA has become increasingly popular in some education fields like counselor education (Dickens et al., 2016; Miller & Barrio Minton, 2016). However, very few studies have applied IPA in relation to tutoring (Wang, Li, & Pang, 2016). The utility of an IPA design might operate broadly within the scope of tutoring and provide a richer and more comprehensive approach than other methods could offer. The Data Analysis section details this approach in detail.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study aim to understand how online writing tutors perceive their experiences with online writing tutoring. Through interviews and audio diaries, the researcher attempted to understand the lived-experiences of tutors by gaining a semblance of the variety of realities of the phenomenon, in order to gain an insider perspective. The primary research question driving this study is the following: What are past and present lived experiences of tutors transitioning to online environments? The following sub-questions seek to provide a pathway to answer the primary research question:

1. How do tutors make sense of their transitioning process?
2. How do tutors make sense of their past, current, and/or future roles as tutors while tutoring in different delivery formats?
3. How do tutors make sense of online environments vis-à-vis their transition and roles?

Conceptual Framework

Role Theory

There is a leading consensus among scholars in the field that, like instructors, tutors enact multiple roles (Colvin, 2010). Interestingly, using role theory to understand peer tutors' roles has been in effect since the 1970s (Sarbin, 1976). One theory on roles and tutoring is Sarbin's (1976) role theory analysis. He theorized the differences in peer tutors' roles from teachers. More specifically, Sarbin's work analyzed peer tutors' abilities to build relationships with students through tutors' embodiment of friendship roles. Rather than using teacher-like authority roles, tutors can leverage their unique positionality to build rapport with students through a give-take relationship, which could explain peer tutors' abilities to foster relationships with students (Sarbin, 1976). While Sarbin's use of role theory analysis is informative, especially when

considering the interactions of peer tutors, his work includes several challenges. For one, his analysis focused on young children, rather than adult learners, and it is not known if role adoption is the same or different for adults. Furthermore, Sarbin's (1976) work exclusively focused on friendship as a role among peer tutors, but he paid little attention to the features common to the adoption of peer tutors' roles. An alternative theoretical context is needed to provide greater understanding related to the common features that inform peer tutors' role adoption.

Role vs. Identity

The focus on role, rather than identity was intentional. Firstly, tutor literature commonly references roles rather than identities (Gellen, 2013; Grimm, 1999; Abdullah & Mtsweni, 2014; Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019; Harris, 1995; Hobson, 2015). Secondly, the concept of role is considered smaller to the larger concept that is identity theory. More specifically, identity theory defines whom an individual is in relation to three bases for identities including: 1) their groups or categories that they belong to, which includes social identities, 2) roles they occupy, and 3) personal identities (Burke & Harrod, 2005; Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Burke, 2000, 2003; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Social identity defines a person to groups or categories, while roles are complementary to role partners [i.e. a student is complementary to the counter-role of professor; the role of a daughter is complementary to mother]; and, a person's identities are aspects that make an individual unique (Burke & Harrod, 2005; Stets & Burke, 2000, 2003; Stryker & Burke, 2000). This study did not focus on larger constructs of identity, but rather sought to address its efforts specifically on roles, per literature on tutoring roles. Speaking of roles and research related to roles, social scientists have explored role concepts in detail. Most studies focus on group research in relation to four areas: 1) role identity [the attitudes and

behaviors consistent with a role]; 2) role perceptions [an individual's view of how to behave in a specific situation]; 3) role expectations [other's beliefs of how one should act in a given situation]; and, 4) role conflict [situations that arise when two role expectations are contradicted] (Goodman et al., 1987). This study was interested most specifically on role perceptions of the role's tutors acquired in online environments.

Role Acquisition

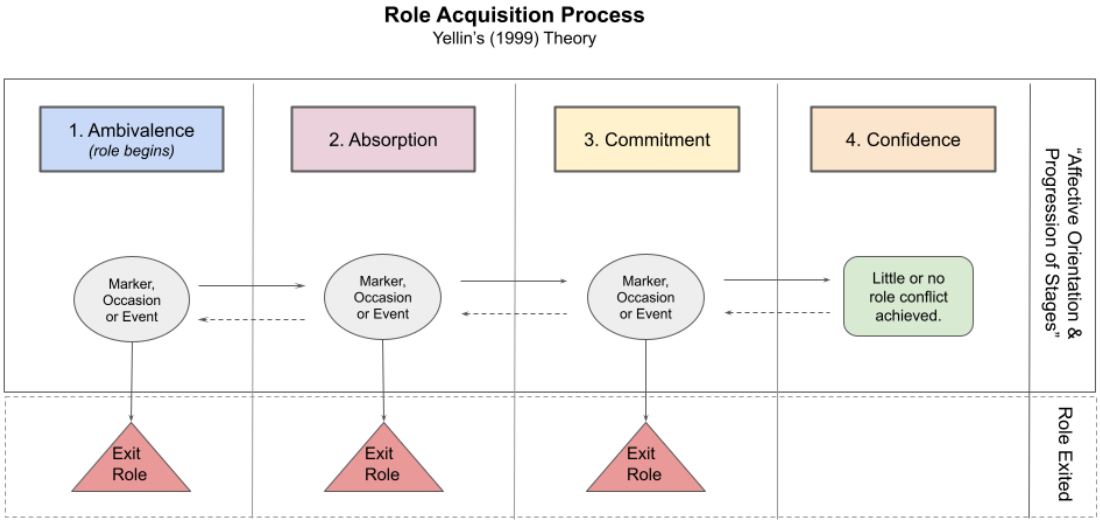
Role acquisition or adoption is a social process in which most individuals, who experience changes in their social status, enact roles that are associated with a particular status (Yellin, 1999). In this light, a role is defined as a set of expectations that are placed on a person occupying a particular social status (Gross, Mason & McEachern, 1959). These expectations are made of a number of "behaviors, attitudes, skills, or knowledge" that the status occupant is "socially expected to display, as perceived by role partners, others in the same role, the self, society, mass media, etc." (Yellin, 1999, p. 238). Role theorists have several conceptualizations of the definition of roles and role acquisition. However, this study adopts the view that role acquisition is likened to a person's process in learning to "perform socially prescribed role expectations" (Yellin, 1999).

Although relatively new, one framework using role theory is Yellin's theory on role-acquisition. Evolving from role theory, Yellin (1999) posits that a role is a series of expectations based on behavior (attitudes, skills, and knowledge) and that individuals are influenced by expectations through modification and negotiation. Yellin's theory may be the best fit for this particular study because it synthesizes previous role acquisition theories (Cogswell, 1967; Simpson, 1967; Zurcher, 1967; Thornton & Nardi, 1975) and offers a generic process of role acquisition that is sequenced and punctuated by events that signify the progression of role

adoption. Additionally, the model provides a framework to capture common features that play into role adoption of heterogeneous role types, social context, and other factors (Yellin, 1999). Clearly, the practice of using role-acquisition to understand tutors' experiences within an online environment has not yet been explored.

With theories regarding tutors' roles in online tutoring sessions in their infancy, Yellin's (1999) role acquisition was appropriate to explore the experiences of peer online writing tutors. Yellin's role acquisition model has four phases that make up the role acquisition process. The first phase is ambivalence. In this phase, individuals are exposed to a new social network. The second phase is absorption, which happens when individuals familiarize themselves with their new role through negotiation or performance. The third phase is commitment. In this phase, individuals receive positive feedback from others. The fourth and final phase is confidence. This phase is defined as when individuals plan to perform a role. A specific event between each phase signifies a transition into the next phase, until a role is adopted at the end of the fourth phase. The relationship between these stages is portrayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition Theory



Computer-Mediated Communication

In addition to role acquisition, computer mediated communication may play a part in tutors' role transition during online tutoring sessions. According to Herring (2019), computer mediated communication has a number of theories about specific periods including Pre-web (1983-1993), Web 1.0 (1994-2003), and Web 2.0 (2004-2017). During the pre-web era, scholars explored themes related to emailing, newsgroups, stand-alone clients, and text only content. The users during this period were mostly white males in the U.S. and U.K (Herring, 1996; Herring, 2019). During the Web 1.0 era, research has largely focused on webchat, blogs, video chat, and the spread of the internet to other countries (Herring, 1997; Herring, 2019). In the Web 2.0 era, researchers have focused on media-sharing, social networking, use of videos, audio, and graphics, and the convergence of media and text on multimodal platforms, and interactive online communication (Herring, 2007; Zelenkauskaite & Herring, 2008; Herring, 2019). The constant challenge of CMC research is the ever-changing nature of technology. Evidently, each decade of CMC research has focused on new, emerging technologies.

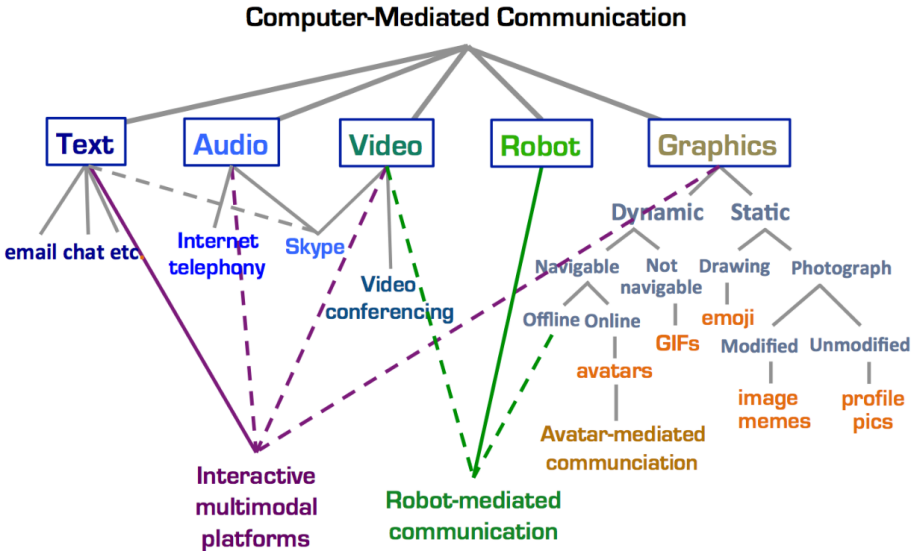
Although, since its inception, the conceptualization of CMC has not been substantially updated (Herring, 2019). In fact, most scholarship refers to CMC models that largely focus on a semblance of textual, single mode transmission (Herring, 2019). However, new technologies afford new modes of communication, making CMC increasingly multimodal than ever before (Herring, 2019). Herring's (2019) work reconceptualized CMC to illustrate the multimodal nature of communicative transmission. The theory of Multimodal CMC might be the best fit for this particular study, as it provides insight into three newer phenomena related to CMC: communication on interactive multimodal platforms (IMPs), graphical communication (AMC), and robot-mediated communication (RMC). In congruence with other CMC models, Herring's

(2019) model suggests the involvement of verbal language communication, mediated person-to-person communication, social interaction, and interaction produces computer mediated discourse.

Multimodal CMC Theory

Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC theory imagines CMC as inherently multimodal. Her model seeks to reconceptualize previous models of CMC and move away from text, as the primary mode of communication transmission (Herring, 2019). The model has five possible modes of transition that work regardless of the technology used to mediate it. In this light, scholars can use Multimodal CMC to explore terms of structure, pragmatic meanings, interaction, and social behavior (Herring, 2019). Herring's model also has several characteristics related to each of the five core modes. Herring's work provides a unique perspective into understanding online structure, interaction, and social behavior, which are characteristics that play into the transition and adoption of roles (Yellin, 1999). The modes and related technology used to mediate each mode are illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Herring's (2019) Multimodal Computer-Mediated Communication Theory



Multimodal CMC and Role Acquisition

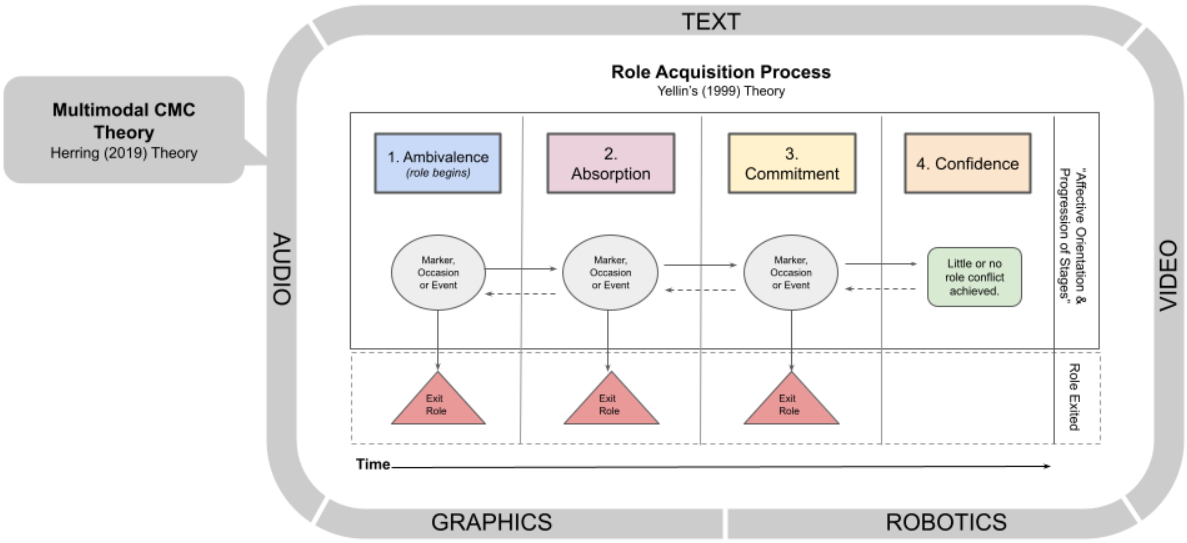
Few empirical studies have explored computer-mediated communication (CMC) and online tutoring (Herrera Bohórquez et al., 2019; Hsu, 2019), or role-theory and tutoring in general (Sarbin, 1976). To date, the researcher has not discovered studies that examine online tutors' transition from campus-based to online tutoring and the role adoption process tutors engage in during these shifts in modalities, whether asynchronous or synchronous. There is a need for research that addresses tutors' views of the roles they play (Ntuli & Gumbo, 2019). Writing center studies on tutor roles have mostly focused on campus-based tutoring and less is known about writing tutors' roles in online environments (Bauman et al., 2008). For example, one study found that the setting in tutoring sessions can greatly affect the negotiation of tutor roles, but this study reviewed different types of campus-based tutoring environments (Weighle & Nelson, 2004). Future research needs to demystify role acquisition for tutors (Walker & Shore, 2005) as they interact with students and engage in the CMC environments. Revealing tutors' experiences is an important step in filling in the research gap on role-acquisition in the online realm (Walker & Shore, 2005). Writing center theorists argue that tutors should construct themselves as peers, but this role adoption might not always be possible or desired (Weighle & Nelson, 2004). Understanding the experiences of tutors and their roles in CMC environments assisted in bringing role clarity, purpose, expectations, and communication to life and offered alternative ways for writing center staff to identify how to support tutors in their work (McFarlane, 2016).

For the purposes of this study, Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory and Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC theory were selected. To identify the stages in role-acquisition in the CMC environment, a new framework needed to be developed that blended the two theories (see

Figure 1) and illustrates how tutors could adopt roles through different computer-mediated modes. The framework considers each of the five modes in Multimodal CMC theory while housing the elements of Role Acquisition theory. Through this perspective, it suggests that role acquisition, and related stages, can take place through any CMC mode. In fact, role acquisition could take place through one or all five modes, depending on the setting, context, and individuals (Yellin, 1999).

Using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach was valuable to capturing the nature of role acquisition and the ways role acquisition takes place in online environments. Through the collection and analysis process, no assumptions are made related to the stages of acquisition. In other words, the researcher, only in retrospect, reviewed the framework to determine whether there is a match between tutors' experiences and this dual framework. In all, through an IPA perspective, this framework assisted in informing writing tutors' role acquisition process in online tutoring sessions.

Figure 1. Role Acquisition and Multimodal CMC Framework



Context and Participants

Study Setting

The study took place at a public university in the state of Hawai‘i. The university is the largest public university in Hawai‘i with eleven campuses around the island chain. The university contains several two-year, four-year, and graduate-level campuses, supporting undergraduate and graduate careers in a variety of fields. This university serves almost 50,000 students (as of 2019). The undergraduate population exceeds 44,000 students, whereas the graduate population is just over 5,000 students. Roughly 83% of the students enrolled in the university are from the state of Hawai‘i, with a little over 10% from the continental U.S., and 4% are international students, as of 2019 (UH, Institutional Research, Analysis, & Planning Office, 2019).

Each campus has its own unique culture. The student body, administration, and the way in which the learning or writing centers are positioned on campus influence the culture of each campus. Several campuses within the university offer online tutoring to students enrolled in various courses within the university system, whereas others, such as the main system-campus did not have a pre-pandemic history of online writing tutoring. Nevertheless, each campus writing and/or learning center is different in its approach to tutoring and the ways it provides online writing tutoring. Additionally, each learning and/or writing center is uniquely positioned within each campus. For example, some writing centers were positioned within the Department of English. Comparatively, a smaller university campus learning and writing center was positioned under Student Affairs. Positionality is important for writing centers, especially in relation to institutional dynamics, as positionality can influence how writing centers operate (Nordstrom et al., 2019) and might also inform how they might operate differently (Hubrig et al.,

2017). This study explored writing tutors providing online writing tutoring support for students in various levels of abilities and skills and enrolled in different university system campuses.

Participants

The study's 5 participants were online writing tutors working within learning or writing centers within one of eleven campuses a part of the university system. Consistent with IPA sample sizes (Smith, 2014), this study initially proposed to interview between 5-10 writing tutors, as the focus of IPA, from a phenomenological and idiographical lens, is to collect deep and rich information from unique cases and saturation is not typically part of IPA data collection or analysis (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). Due to recruitment challenges, 4 of the participants were writing tutors who had experience providing campus-based and online tutoring at a public university in the state of Hawai‘i, while 1 participant only had online tutoring experience. Nevertheless, the study focused on illustrating the depth of individual experiences, based on a homogeneous group (Rubel & Okech, 2017). It is also important to note that 1 of the study's participants was a participant in both a pilot study and the larger study. The reason this individual was selected to participate in both studies is due to challenges with recruitment.

Writing center scholarship has mostly looked at the outward characteristics and demographics of students visiting the writing centers or writing center directors, and it is rare to find a study focusing on writing tutor characteristics or demographics (Valles, Babock, and Jackson, 2017). Most research does distinguish tutors' academic year and work roles (Writing Census, 2017). Consequently, this study sought to identify a mixture of undergraduate tutors from two-year and four-year institutions as well as professional (including graduate students) tutors to participate, based on the common types of tutors working in writing or learning centers (Writing Census, 2017).

Participants were recruited through email using purposive-sampling. A snowball technique was also used to obtain a participant pool. A snowball sampling approach can be effective in reaching a large enough pool of participants, to ensure homogeneity (Alase, 2017). Based on the participant pool, participants were purposefully selected to participate in the qualitative research study (Crewswell, 2014) based on their experiences with the phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). By purposefully selecting the participants, the researcher could recruit individuals who could best assist the researcher to understand the problem as well as the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants in this study were initially required to meet the following criteria:

1. Work at a learning or writing center within the university system (community college or university);
2. Provide writing tutoring support to two-year, four-year, or graduate students in the university system (community college or university);
3. Work in a position providing writing tutoring such as a tutor, writing tutor, teaching assistant, mentor, specialist, or professional tutor;
4. Have had campus-based tutoring experience first, prior to online tutoring experience.

However, due to a limited number of individuals who met the study's initial criteria, the researcher revised the study's criteria in an attempt to gain more access to potential participants. In particular, the requirement to have campus-based tutoring experience first, prior to online tutoring experience was removed. This reduction was made due to many centers hiring individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic and starting tutors online prior to campus-based environments. The revised criteria contained the following details:

1. Work at a learning or writing center within the university system (community college or university);
2. Provide writing tutoring support to two-year, four-year, or graduate students in the university system (community college or university);
3. Work in a position providing writing tutoring such as a tutor, writing tutor, teaching assistant, mentor, consultant, specialist, or professional tutor.

The researcher contacted learning and writing center directors and staff members first and requested that these individuals forward the recruitment email to their tutors (Appendix B). Once participants were selected, an online synchronous meeting was arranged between the researcher (interviewer) and each interviewee at a time that was convenient for both parties. Prior to the meeting, the interviewees were asked to review and sign a consent form (Appendix C) that acknowledged their consent to participate in the study. The consent form was emailed to the participant in advance and signed electronically by the interviewee. Per IRB guidelines, the interviewee was informed of their rights and responsibilities, including being asked for permission to audio record the interview and participate in audio recorded diaries.

Instrumentation and Procedures

This study used the following materials: consent form, recruitment letter, demographic survey, interview protocol, interview questions, and audio diary prompts. The researcher developed and tested the instruments and procedures used in this study through a pilot study. Creswell viewed the researcher as the main instrument in any qualitative study, even when using an instrument with a specific protocol (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The following section highlights the study's materials in further detail.

Recruitment and Consent Materials

The researcher contacted potential participants with a recruitment email (Appendix B), after IRB approval had been granted. A recruitment email was sent out that included information related to the study and asked potential participants to complete a demographic survey. This survey assisted the researcher to determine that the participants had met the study criteria. The researcher then emailed the study's consent form to selected participants who expressed interest in participating and who met the study's criteria. The consent form included the study's title, scope, and objectives. It also included participant privacy and confidentiality information as well as outlined the risks, benefits, and rights of the participants. Overall, the researcher asked the participants to consent to an online demographic survey, audio-recorded interview, and audio diaries for the study.

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

An interview protocol was developed that contained an introduction of the study, informed consent, permission to record, ground-rules, focus of the three main areas of the study (Miller, Chan, & Farmer, 2018). The protocol contained open-ended questions related to the participants' perceptions of their lived experiences as well as questions on three areas: transition, roles, and the online environment. Each interview was conducted online using Zoom, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. During each interview, the researcher facilitated the interview and used a variety of interviewing strategies [i.e. probing, clarifying, and adjusting to the flow of the conversation] to gain information (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). The researcher also used a closing segment at the end of each interview to wrap-up the interview with interpersonal engagement and discuss the shared-experiences of the interview.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

IPA questions should encourage participants to reflect about the holistic experience of a phenomenon, which includes questions that connect to the affective, cognitive, bodily, and behavioral aspects (Finlay, 2011). Unlike traditional phenomenological studies and questions, IPA studies should include questions that are concerned about the how and what experiences of a phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). In IPA research, interview questions should be created based on theories identified in literature (Michie et al., 2004). Consequently, the researcher asked open-ended questions that allowed the participants the freedom to expand beyond the following constructs: the perception of experiences in online and traditional environments, the perception of role in different modalities, and the perception of the transition process.

Audio Diary Entry Prompts

Digitally recorded audio diary methods were used to collect data on the participants' feelings and actions of mundane tutoring sessions to gain greater insight into the general tutoring experience (Henderson, 2021). This method is flexible, heterogeneous, and offers the potential for collecting rich qualitative data (Mackrill, 2008). Audio diaries are valuable tools for enhancing participants' perceptions of their experiences, offer greater participant reflection, and are more dynamic and can be easier to capture rich and complex data as opposed to other diary modes such as written or photographic diaries (Dangeni et al., 2021). Collecting data via audio diaries provided the participants more flexibility to participate while also allowing the researcher to collect rich details over a short period of time (Henderson, 2021).

The researcher used short-term audio diaries as a way to research the participants when they were at their busiest (Henderson, 2021), during an academic semester when they were providing writing tutoring. The participants completed the diaries over a duration of two weeks,

which is a common duration for short-term diaries focused on capturing an ongoing phenomenon (Henderson, 2021). Additionally, for this study, diary entries represented a sampling of three online tutoring sessions, with most tutoring sessions lasting up to one hour in length. The diary entries were event-based, meaning that the participants were asked to record information as soon as the phenomenon of interest occurred, which, in this case, was after an online tutoring session (Barlett & Milligan, 2015; Henderson, 2021). Since the study took place during an academic semester, it was assumed the participants would complete at least one to two or more tutoring sessions per week.

The decision to collect up to three diary entries that were ten or less minutes long was purposeful. For one, the researcher identified that this population of participants was likely busy and asking for an additional 30 minutes of their time seemed reasonable. Additionally, the pilot proved that three responses were sufficient for this secondary data collection. Secondary data can be descriptive or analytical and is valuable for comparative review of longitudinal research (Pederson et al., 2020). For this study, the secondary data collected was descriptive and focused on comparing the information that was collected in the interviews and reviewing in what ways the details may or may not add to the primary study's findings (Pederson et al., 2020).

The researcher emailed the participants the audio diary protocol (Appendix E), and directed the participants to complete three diary entries in total, with each diary entry representing a different online tutoring session. The participants were directed to complete all the diary entries within a two-week time period. However, the participants were told that they could complete the recordings at their leisure within that time-span. The participants used a confidential audio recording tool that included the audio diary protocol and prompts via a private online website link (Appendix F). Each diary entry asked the same questions. Due to the

technological tool's recording constraints, the participants had a recording limit of ten minutes. The participants received instructions on how to record their audio prompts using the technological tool selected for the diaries. The audio diary prompts were also provided to the participants prior to the interview (Williamson et al., 2015). The participants were provided with directions to record in a private space in the recording protocol (Williamson et al., 2015). The initial diary entry prompts were also related to the participants' environment and were asked to assess if the participants were alone or not. Since only the participants provided their consent, per IRB policies, the researcher extracted any other individuals recorded.

Pilot Study

With no known available instrument, the researcher generated questions, based on the study, context, and nature of IPA research, and tested the questions through a pilot study (Malmqvist et al., 2019; Ary et al., 2019). A pilot was purposefully conducted to assess whether the interview questions adequately gain data on the phenomenon, ensure the participants were able to richly describe their experiences, and ensure that the researcher could competently interact with the research participants (Smith et al., 2009). Conducting a pilot study also assisted in analysis checking and validation, which enhanced the study's internal validity (Mole et al., 2019; Malmqvist et al., 2019). The pilot study was smaller in scale and assisted in validating the interview methods, protocols, technological software, instructions for the interview, semi-structured interview questions, and audio diary prompts. During the pilot and study, the researcher audio recorded each interview. Based on the results of the pilot, some of the semi-structured interview questions and audio diary prompts were revised. Once the pilot was completed, and the interview questions and diary prompts were established, the larger study was conducted.

Technological Tools/Software

An online technological tool and website, FlipGrid, was used to allow participants to record audio diaries (Gibson, 2005). The technological tool was integrated into the pilot to store a series of prompts for the participants to complete. An online synchronous application, Zoom, was used to conduct the interviews. YouTube was used to transcribe the data.

Data Collection

A multifaceted data collection approach took place to obtain data about tutors' past and current experiences. Creswell's (2007) processes were used to guide the data collection for this study. Since there was uncertainty about tutor diversity (Valles, Babock, & Jackson, 2017) and experiences with technology, an anonymous demographic survey was sent out to the participants to gain a better understanding of who they were, including experiences with technology, years of tutoring experience, etc.

The researcher conducted online interviews. The semi-structured interviews focused on two areas: past perceptions of and cumulative experiences with online writing tutoring. In addition, the participants also completed online audio diary entries by answering a series of prompts. Audio and video recorded diaries have become commonly utilized in social sciences and can assist in accessing sense-making, especially during periods of change and flux (Crozier & Cassell, 2015). Another added value to these types of diaries is that this instrument can allow the researcher to capture a phenomenon as it unfolds, which can assist in immediacy and accuracy of data capturing (Monrouxe, 2009). Audio and video recorded diaries are also considered to be beneficial for participants, as this approach is often easier to complete and can reduce participant attrition (Markham & Couldry, 2007).

Whenever possible, Creswell (2007) recommended interviewing participants online, to increase access and allow participants to be interviewed in a space that is comfortable to them (Creswell, 2007). Hence, with Creswell's recommendation and IRB suggestions for the COVID-10 pandemic, online interviews were conducted with participants using an online synchronous tool with audio recording features. The interviews will be semi-structured in nature, which is a common interview type for IPA studies (Smith et al., 2009). General interview questions asked tutors about their experiences with campus-based tutoring before tutoring online and tutoring experiences through the transition process from campus-based to online environments. The interviews were audio-recorded to increase the confidentiality of the participants. Additionally, the audio interview transcripts as well as the audio diary transcripts did not use the names of the participants (Creswell, 2007). The collected data were stored in a confidential, password-protected laptop.

Data Analysis

This study borrowed Smith et al.'s (2009) guidelines for data analysis. A systematic yet fluid set of procedures was followed (Smith et al, 2009). The following section includes the broader steps in the analysis as well as the specific analytic procedures.

Analysis Procedures

An IPA approach utilizes a flexible guideline for analyzing data, which encourages researchers to be iterative in their analysis and document how the analysis unfolds (Noon & Hallam, 2018). Reflexivity is important throughout the analysis, and the researcher took notes to reflect on this process while also acknowledging preconceptions and documenting them in a reflexive journal used consistently throughout the study (Larkin & Thompson, 2011; Smith, et al., 2009). Reflexive journaling might also assist in reflecting on the positionality of the

researcher and “emotional or intellectual reactions” from the study’s participants related to the phenomenon (Chan, 2018, p. 248). That said, the following steps were meant to be fluid rather than linear. Consequently, the researcher moved back and forth between the following steps:

Step 1. Reading, rereading

The interview audio recordings were first transcribed, using computerized software, then manually cleaned. An analysis of each participant was conducted in consecutive order. For each case, the researcher first immersed herself within the original data by reading and rereading the original data.

Step 2. ***Initial and exploratory noting***

While immersing herself in the data, the researcher began taking initial notes, which were characterized by free association and exploration of semantic content within the transcript [i.e. writing notes in the margin]. The researcher began reviewing and notating descriptive comments throughout the manuscript. The descriptive comments focused on the things that seemed to matter to the participants (i.e. relationships, processes, places, events, values, and principles) as well as what those things meant for the participants by looking at the language used, the context, and identifying abstract concepts.

After the research analyzed the transcript from a descriptive lens, the next analytical process was to analyze the entire transcript through a linguistic perspective. The researcher spent considerable time generating linguistic comments that focused on items such as key words, phrases, or explanations of things that matter to the participant. These comments explored specific use of language by the participant such as pronoun use, pauses, laughter, function aspects of language, repetition, tone, etc.

A third and final analytical annotation part of this process was conceptual comments. The researcher reviewed the document again and focused solely on conceptual analysis. This stage was highly interpretative and focused on viewing the transcript data from a conceptual lens. The researcher paid special attention to the participant's overarching understanding of the phenomenon, as well as including her own personal reflections and experiences to assist in the conceptual noting. Many of the researcher's conceptual notes were built around questions, based on various elements in the transcript, as recommended by Smith et al. (2009).

Throughout each analytical round of analysis, the researcher was careful to tie everything to the text and include reflective documentation throughout each process. Additionally, the researcher often moved back and forth after completing three rounds of analysis by re-reading the transcript and including more descriptive, linguistic, or conceptual comments, until the researcher reached comment saturation.

Step 3. Developing emergent themes

In this step, the researcher developed emergent subordinate themes. To do so, the researcher first reviewed the comments built from the previous section and worked to identify emergent phrases or statements that could be developed into themes. This process included focusing on chunks of the transcripts and analysis of notes to create subordinate themes. The researcher spent tremendous time in this step and moved back and forth between building emergent themes, then shifting back to step 2 and tweaking or creating more comments, then shifting back to step 3 and generating more emergent themes. This process was highly iterative and time-consuming.

Step 4. Searching for connections across emergent themes

After generating emergent themes, the researcher's next step was focusing on abstracting, conceptualizing, numerating, functionalizing, and integrating the subordinate themes to generate superordinate themes. The researcher searched for connections that arose across the emergent themes and brought the themes together through organizing and exploring patterns and connections. Like the previous steps, this process was highly iterative and time-consuming. The researcher spent extensive time moving between steps 3 and 4. Overall, at the end of this step, the researcher created a graphic representation of the structure of the emergent themes. The graphic included the page number and line, so the researcher could access the transcript data.

Step 5. Moving to the next case

The researcher replicated steps 1-4 with the next case and so on until each participant case had been individually analyzed. Extensive reflective notes were documented regarding the researcher attempting to bracket previous themes from earlier cases analyzed and attempting to keep an open mind and bring justice to each participant's case. The researcher found it most ideal to take breaks between each participant's case to try to reduce some of the elements in her working memory. In particular, the researcher took a week break between each participant case, with a larger gap during recruitment. These purposeful and sometimes not so purposeful breaks assisted the researcher in attempting to further bracket herself.

Additionally, after the analysis of each case was completed and before looking for patterns across cases, the researcher had two inter-coder reviewers to conduct their own independent reviews and coding development of the transcripts. This collaborative process allowed the researcher to gain alignment with the coders. Additionally, while recognized in hindsight, the researcher used one of the inter-coders coding framework to compare her own

coding framework. The researcher used Cohen's kappa to analyze her codes with the codes of one of her fellow inter-coders to determine alignment. Once the researcher was satisfied with the coding framework,

Step 6. Looking for patterns across cases

After each participant's case was analyzed, the researcher began to search for patterns across cases while notating any idiosyncratic instances that arise (Finlay, 2011). The researcher focused on identifying shared higher-order patterns of qualities across all the cases. The researcher spent extensive time noting idiosyncratic instances. The researcher also worked back to step 1 and tried to read and reread each participant's case to refresh her memory of their unique stories and experiences. After spending time in each participant's transcript, the researcher pulled all the superordinate and subordinate themes together and tried systematically organizing and identifying patterns or emergent themes that could be grouped together (Smith et al., 2009). Each superordinate theme identified was based on subordinate themes and was guided by a purposeful inclusion process (Smith et al., 2009). Once complete, the researcher organized the superordinate and subordinate themes in a way that clearly traced the data to the interviewer (Smith et al., 2009).

Step 7. Taking interpretations to a deeper level

Lastly, the researcher spent considerable effort focusing on hermeneutics by taking her interpretations to deeper levels and diving further into the analysis. This step parallels Finlay's (2011) second-order analysis process. The researcher utilized metaphors and references, and integrated theories into the analysis as a lens to view the analysis (Smith et al., 2009).

The study's results illustrate descriptive and interpretive findings (Smith et al., 2009). The results of the data were reported using visual elements as well as extensive raw data such as

quotes and excerpts from the participants (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). For example, a type of hierarchy was created with the guiding concept at the top, followed by the superordinate themes, followed by the subordinated themes (Jeong & Othman, 2016).

Additional step: member checking

Smith et al. (2009) recommended conducting member checks to ensure the IPA data analysis accurately represented and reflected the participants' experiences. While the data was being analyzed, the participants had access to the data and provided feedback. More specifically though, the researcher wanted to ensure member checking through the data analysis process. The researcher facilitated several individual member checking reviews. Each participant was asked to review and provide feedback and cascade any issues or problems they had with the data or interpretation of the data. Member checking was conducted whenever the researcher had questions about what the participants thoughts or feelings might be in relation to the analytical process. For example, the first review was the transcript review. The participants were each mailed a cleaned transcript that included all the data they had provided the researcher. The participants were asked to review the transcript and confirm whether or not the information was correct and accurately reflected what they said and their experiences. The second review was coded data. The participants were asked to review the final draft of their completed individual case analysis and asked to determine whether the information and codes correctly and accurately reflected their experiences. The third member checking review focused on asking the participants to detail whether or not they were comfortable with the researcher highlighting a few external factors that were identified from the collected data. The researcher implemented any revisions that were suggested by the participants to ensure all data and interpretations were consistent with the participant’s experiences.

Data Management

The audio from the interview sessions was recorded using a Zoom audio feature. Similarly, the audio from the audio recorded diary entries was recorded using FlipGrid. All audio recordings were saved onto the researcher's computer and a secure cloud in a .mp4 format. To transcribe the data, the audio files were uploaded to YouTube's video editing application, and, to ensure confidentiality, the application was set to "private" to prevent any searchability. The private mode ensured that the audio recordings were only visible to the researcher. The YouTube application transcribed the audio; however, the researcher conducted a review and edited any mistakes in the application transcription before downloading the completed transcripts. Once downloaded, each transcript was copied and pasted into a word processing document to allow the researcher to edit and revise, as needed. Once all the audio files were fully transcribed and the transcription data had been downloaded, all the audio files were deleted from the YouTube editing application.

In line with an IPA study, the researcher created a number of notes during and after the interview and data analysis phases. The researcher's notes were built in a digital format and stored on a password-protected Wi-Fi computer connection known only to the researcher. Backup notes and transcriptions were also stored in a password-protected cloud-based account that was only accessible by the researcher. No handwritten notes were made during the study. No identifying information was attached to the collected data. For instance, pseudonyms were used to ensure the participant data remained anonymous and confidential. Based on the guidelines of the Office of Human Research Protections guideline title 45 CFR 46.115(b), data from this study will be kept for a minimum of three years, following the completion of the study.

Rigor

For qualitative research, rigor is an important element in the credibility of a study (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Several strategies were used to enhance the study's internal validity. For one, triangulation took place by collecting information from multiple sources (Alase, 2016; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Ary et al., 2019). Additionally, Guba and Lincoln (1985) generated four criteria that must be met to ensure a study's trustworthiness. The four criteria include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To enhance the study's credibility, the researcher self-disclosed assumptions, beliefs, and biases and acknowledged their positionality early in the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000), as outlined in Chapter 1. To assist in enhancing dependability, inter-coders were utilized in the data analysis (Ary et al., 2019). To assist in conformability, an audit trail was implemented that established the context and revealed vivid data about the interaction between the study's participants, such as documenting each step in the data analysis process (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Bracketing was also used in an attempt to avoid researcher bias and ensure the study's findings are based on the participants' responses (Moustakas, 1994; Alase, 2016; Creswell & Miller, 2000). The small sample size of an IPA study inevitably raises concerns related to the transferability of findings. The nature of IPA research suggests the need to focus on theoretical rather than empirical generalizability (Smith & Osborn, 2013); as, the nature of IPA research seeks to examine a greater depth of lived-experience, rather than a broader understanding of many individuals (Noon & Hallam, 2018). Consequently, when considering transferability, scholars should not draw upon IPA studies based on all settings, but rather focus on the perceptions and understandings of participants in their unique setting (Noon & Hallam, 2018); the researcher draws on this recommendation in Chapter 5.

Unlike other types of qualitative research, the intention of an IPA is to learn and interpret the lived experiences of a research participant by understanding the perspective of the participant and amplifying the individual's experiences (Alase, 2017). As such, Alase (2016) argues that IPA studies should include mechanisms for trustworthiness, member-checking, triangulation, and auditing as well as quality verification. Quality and authenticity are essential to qualitative research, especially in an IPA (Alase, 2017). By selecting an appropriate research design, breaking the researcher's personal experience from the participants' lived-experiences, and thoroughly investigating the phenomenon, as perceived by participants, an IPA research study can produce transferable and verifiable research findings (Alase, 2017). Table 1 depicts the qualitative standards aforementioned.

Table 1. Strategies to Ensure Study Rigor

Quality Standard	Issue Addressed	Criterion	Strategy
Credibility	Truth Value	Control of Bias	Audit Trail; Reflective Notes; Self-Disclose Positionality
		Consensus	Peer Review/Debrief
		Referential or interpretative adequacy	Member checking
Transferability	Generalizability	Similarity	Describing limitations
		Limiting reactivity	Detailed description of methods
		Descriptive Adequacy	Thick, rich descriptions

Dependability	Consistency	Thematic Coding Agreement	Intercoder
Confirmability	Neutrality	Control of Bias	Bracketing

IPA Quality Evaluation Guide

Smith (2011) developed an IPA-specific tool that acts as a guide to assist in IPA quality. Smith (2011) has deemed the following IPA Quality Evaluation Guide "acceptable", and its criteria is used in the study to enhance its quality. Table 2 depicts the aforementioned IPA guide.

Table 2. Smith's (2011) IPA Quality Evaluation Guide

Criteria	Study Design
Uses Phenomenological, Hermeneutic, and Idiographic Theoretical Principles	Phenomenological - Identify and select participants who can provide detailed information about the phenomenon being reviewed (Smith et al., 2009).
	Idiographic - Review each participant case comprehensively, prior to reviewing cases as a whole and creating generalizable claims about the whole (Smith et al., 2009; Noon & Hallam, 2018).
	Hermeneutic - Engage in fluid and interactive analysis and interpretation process that includes different levels of analysis (Smith et al, 2009).
Transparency	The researcher will select themes based on their prevalence and relevance to the text, and the researcher will be transparent and detail the decision-making process throughout the data analysis via reflective journaling (audit trail), bracketing, member checking, and peer review (Smith et al, 2009).
Coherent, Plausible, Interesting Analysis	The researcher will conduct a detailed analysis and utilize quality rigor standards, as outlined in table 1, to ensure the study's analysis is coherent, plausible, and interesting (Smith et al., 2009).

Sufficient Sampling for Each Theme	Following Smith (2011) guidelines for subordinate themes, if there are 1-3 participants, there must be an extract from every participant for each theme. If there are 4-8 participants, there must be extracts from at least three participants per theme. If there are 8 or more participants, there must be extracts from at least three participants + measure of prevalence of themes, or extras from half of the sample for each theme. Based on the number of participants selected for this study, the study will follow the guidelines for cross-case analysis of themes.

Limitations

This study had several limitations. One limitation is the purposeful lack of randomness in the sampling of participants. The research purposefully selected individuals who have different experiences and could speak to their experiences, which is aligned with IPA participant selection (Smith et al., 2009). Relatedly, another limitation was the limited number of organizations studied, which meant that this research cannot be generalized. Although not typically generalizable, qualitative research can still add to the body of knowledge because it enables researchers to explore the experiences and perceptions of selected individuals; plus, it can allow researchers to produce new concepts and add to existing research as well as offers a holistic understanding of a phenomenon under review (Nawaz, Ali Jariko & Mushtaque, 2017). Another limitation was the accuracy of the descriptions. The study beckoned a retrospective viewpoint, meaning that participants discussed experiences that had already passed. Since time has elapsed, the description of the experiences might not be entirely “accurate” (Hycner, 1985, p. 296). Another possible limitation was that the participants might not always be truthful, for various reasons (Cypress, 2017). Yet another possible limitation was the potential for researcher influence on the participants. The study’s validity was another potential limitation, as it can be challenging to assess if the study’s data accurately represented the phenomenon being reviewed

(Hycner, 1985). Lastly, the study did not deeply analyze specific levels of multimodal communication, since it was not in the study scope. However, future research, even perhaps with the same data set, might be able to answer questions more intimately related to communicative modes.

Pilot

Prior to conducting the larger study, the researcher implemented a small-scale pilot to test the appropriateness and feasibility of the research instruments and procedures. The following section details the results of the pilot as well as the changes to the study's instructions and procedures.

Pilot Study Results

Two writing tutors participated in the pilot study (Participant A and Participant B). These participants met the sampling criteria, signed a consent form, and completed an interview that lasted 60 minutes as well as three audio diary entries lasting approximately ten minutes each. Each interview and diary entry included all the study's instruments. The pilot study was beneficial, as it assisted the researcher in revising several instruments. After collecting and analyzing the data, several themes emerged from the pilot study.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted online using Zoom. The interviews were valuable, as they assisted the researcher to practice researching techniques such as practicing asking follow up questions (Creswell, 2007) and attempting to remain as neutral as possible by avoiding strong emotional reactions (McNamara, 2009). Additionally, the researcher practiced reflexivity throughout the pilot study, which is an important element in IPA research (Alase, 2017). The interviews and audio diary reflections focused on key areas related to the research questions (see Table 3).

Table 3. Pilot Instruments and Research Questions

Research Questions	RQ1. Make sense of transitioning process	RQ2. Make sense of past, current, and/or future roles as tutors while tutoring in various modalities	RQ3. Make sense of online environments vis-à-vis their transition and roles
Interview Questions	5 questions about the transitioning process with freedom for participants to elaborate and allow follow-ups	5 questions about roles with freedom for participants to elaborate and allow follow-ups	3 questions about the online environment with freedom for participants to elaborate and allow follow-ups
Audio Diary Questions	2 question about transitioning process with freedom for participants to elaborate	2 questions about roles with freedom for participants to elaborate	2 questions about roles with freedom for participants to elaborate

IPA Analysis Process

The IPA research process was fluid and intense, and the following details provide transparency on the pilot study's participant selection, interview schedule, and steps of the analysis. Participants were selected based on their responses to the survey and alignment with the research criteria. In total, three individuals completed the survey, and they were invited to complete the qualitative portion of the study (interview, audio diaries). In the end, two participants signed the consent form and agreed to participate in the qualitative portion of the pilot study. Both participants were interviewed in the same week during April 2021.

Consistent with IPA idiographic standards, Participant A's case was analyzed first, before analyzing Participant B's case. The researcher followed the same procedural process for analysis, as recommended by Smith et al. (2009). The researcher first uploaded the online interview recording to YouTube, in private mode, to obtain a transcript. The researcher downloaded and edited the transcript to make corrections, and then the recording was deleted from YouTube. Once the transcript was edited, it was shared with the participants for review. The researcher

then read the transcript in its entirety. Aft wards, the researcher began initial noting using descriptive comments. The researcher then re-read the transcript and placed linguistic comments throughout. The researcher then re-read the transcript and placed conceptual comments throughout. After the comments were completed, the researcher downloaded the comments and worked in a new document to analyze the comments and generate emergent themes, based on the analysis of the comments and transcript. After emergent themes were created, the researcher searched for connections across emergent themes and grouped them together to create subordinate themes. Next, the researcher reviewed the subordinate themes and brought them together to generate superordinate themes. This process was followed in a linear fashion for both participant's data.

After completing this process for each participant individually, the researcher looked for patterns across all participant cases to generate the final superordinate themes for the pilot. However, in the final stages of looking for patterns across participant cases and taking interpretations to a deeper level, these parts of the analysis were fluid. The researcher went back and forth between emergent, subordinate, and superordinate themes to identify the final synthesis of themes between the participants. This is consistent with Smith et al.'s (2009) suggestions that while an IPA data analysis can follow a prescriptive analysis approach, researchers should expect nonlinear iterations to arise when attempting to interpret and uncover rich descriptions of participants' lived experiences.

IPA Analysis Themes Corresponding to the Research Questions

An IPA approach of the data revealed three superordinate themes. Both participants signed the consent form and completed the requested data collection items that focused on questions related to the study's research questions. A voluntary coder was used for intercoder

reliability. The coder was sent portions of the interview and diary transcripts and coded the materials. After which, the coder and researcher met to compare the codes/themes to determine an agreement on the codes/themes. The findings from the interview transcripts and audio diary reflection transcripts are illustrated in the following table.

Table 4. Pilot Results Revealing 3 Superordinate Themes

Research Questions	Superordinate Themes
RQ1: Make sense of transitioning process	Transition process as complex and unending
RQ2: Make sense of past, current, and/or future roles as tutors while tutoring in various modalities	Past roles as fixed, present and future roles as unfixed
RQ3: Make sense of online environment vis-a-vis transitions and roles	Online environment as vehicle for change

Research question 1

The transition process for both participants was seemingly never ending. While one participant started tutoring online several years before the other, regardless, both participants mentioned the challenge of constantly switching delivery formats between asynchronous and online synchronous and the role switching that was needed to constantly accommodate learners in each delivery format. The participants also discussed the transition process as being multifaceted in that they needed to transition psychologically and environmentally as well as transition communication and tutoring practices. These transitions did not happen at once, but rather, they happened over a series of time. For Participant A, the need to psychologically transition happened when they first started tutoring, but they stated that they had to transition again with the pandemic. For Participant B, the need to psychologically and mentally transition

happened after the start of the pandemic. Nevertheless, support practices evolved and were continuing to change because of the pandemic and shift online.

The participants also discussed moving through phases of the transitioning process from the pre-transition, to initial transition, and more. The participants mentioned going through psychological distress at the beginning or shortly after their transition online. The participants experienced feelings of fear and loss and attributed those feelings to the lack of access to campus-based communities and relationships with colleagues and students in and out of the writing center. They felt the loss of their campus environments, but they differed in the magnitude of their feelings of loss. For example, Participant A felt a deep sense of despair at the loss of her campus writing center, whereas Participant B, while they would rather meet with their students on campus, they felt like the online environment worked.

Lastly, the participants also noted that they always felt like they were in a state of flux and were never fully transitioned online. Participant A stated that they were always re-learning, always feeling they were moving back and forth from one delivery format to another. Participant B said they were partly transitioned and partly not transitioned. For this participant, they felt like they were able to transition their role online, but they had not fully transitioned because they still felt they had so much more to learn about online delivery formats and how to implement educational strategies in the online environment, since they believed campus-based strategies did not always work online.

Research question 2

This research question had several overlapping themes. For one, both participants utilized a number of the same roles including indirective (tutor), collaborator, mentor, cheerleader, coach, directive (teacher), and tech support. They talked about playing non-directive and

collaborator roles when they were on campus. Both the participants saw these roles as fixed and unchanging in the campus-based environment. The participants worked and were trained in the same campus-based writing center and both described their roles as non-directive in campus-based environments. Interestingly, both participants recalled their extensive campus-based tutor training experiences, and these experiences seemed to have shaped their perception and use of roles in traditional campus tutoring sessions. They believed that they had to be non-directive tutors.

However, online, both participants indicated that their roles were unfixed and utilized across modalities. Both participants related their positionality as teachers and administrators to the online space and noted that their different positions influenced their work as tutors online. Participant A and B also mentioned that it was not possible for them to compartmentalize their fixed roles into their work online, which could explain why they both used roles as teachers and tutors in some of the same online sessions. In relation to online settings, both participants repeatedly mentioned that they had to switch roles constantly. They also both mentioned a new role as tech-support that they had to acquire, because of their transitions online. The participants discussed the need to provide troubleshooting support and also directions and guidance for students using synchronous and another online tool usage. Also, Participant A mentioned that they were unsure what future tutoring roles might look like, while the Participant B pointed out that they imagined tutor roles in the future to require more pivoting or role switching.

Research question 3

Both participants recalled a number of challenges with the online environment related to social elements. The participants mentioned that when transitioning online, they experienced a loss of community. This loss of community was difficult and brought feelings of isolation. Both

participants also discussed the initial challenges of the online environment as a new space, upon transitioning online. They compared their campus environments as being home-like; this was defined as having access to a space with community. They initially viewed the online environment as the antithesis of the campus environment; online was empty and void of community. Participant B overcame the loss community and navigation of space through the creation of a new online community with learners. The participant initially felt lost in the online space, but through increased use, they began to navigate the online environment and discovered tools, like Discord, to help build out a space for community building online; whereas, Participant A was still trying to navigate the online space and cope with the loss of community. For this participant, the online environment as a space was empty, disembodied, and its use and function were only for writing work and not community or relationship building.

Both participants also described the need to change their roles in the online environment. Participant A noted that they needed to provide more warmth and energy when working with online students. Participant B talked about using warmth to create a new sense of presence online by making themselves more available to their learners. These actions seem most closely related to the role of the socializer. However, Participant B seemed to socialize purposefully, citing their desire to foster "talk story" among students, as compared to Participant A. Both participants also discussed the need to communicate more casually with emojis or through talking story, a cultural term in Hawai‘i defined as talking informally (Watson, 1975). However, the motivation behind this communication differed. Participant A noted that the communication change to a more casual form of writing was focused on decreasing students' anxiety about being judged by tutors based on their synchronous chatting. However, Participant B noted that the communication change was focused on building and maintaining relationships with students online. The

participants also discussed the challenges with the loss of verbal/nonverbal communication during asynchronous and online synchronous chat sessions. Specifically, they both relied on verbal and nonverbal cues to assess students' needs in campus-based sessions, and the lack of verbal/nonverbal communication in some online sessions was difficult. For Participant A, this meant reassessing the strategies they used to tutor online. For Participant B, this meant requesting online synchronous audio and/or audio and video meetings when they were unable to determine or assess student needs in asynchronous or online synchronous chat-based sessions.

Lessons Learned and Modifications to Full Study

Recruiting

Recruiting participants was challenging, and self-reported budget cuts significantly reduced the number of tutors within some learning or writing centers. The researcher sent recruitment emails to learning/writing center coordinators and staff within half of the institutions within the university-system. The researcher learned that the centers contacted for the pilot study had significantly fewer tutors as compared to the centers and programs that were not contacted to participate in the pilot study. All university system centers were contacted for the larger study.

Criteria clarification

The researcher also noticed that no two-year college tutors were willing to participate in the pilot study. This might have been due to the wording of the criteria, as it focused on “university-system.” The study’s selection criteria were revised to include community college or university to provide clarity on the criteria for potential participants. For example, the reworded criteria states: Work at a learning or writing center within the university system (community college or university). The researcher also reformatted the recruitment emails to make them

easier to read. Per the literature review, the researcher also included another type of tutoring role within the study criteria. This added role was titled as mentor.

Sampling

In terms of sampling, the pilot study participants had experience as tutors, teachers, and learning/writing center coordinators. While these positions aligned with literature, it was beneficial to obtain participants that represented a homogeneous variety of learning and writing center individuals. Consequently, aligning with the nature of IPA research, the study used a purposive sampling technique. This technique allowed the researcher to select individuals from populations that appear to the researcher as representative of that population, based on the researcher's knowledge and discernment (Smith et al., 2009). This strategy was used in addition to snowball sampling. In terms of snowballing, during online interactions with the participants, both recommended different people to reach out to. This process opened more opportunities to reach out to previously unknown participants. These potential participants were contacted for the larger study.

Coding reliability

While not initially planned, inter-coder reliability was utilized in the pilot to compare themes generated. The inter-coding process was informative, as the researcher was able to compare and determine how consistent and aligned the codes/themes were with another researcher's interpretations. Overall, the major themes identified were similar with some differences in subordinate themes. In total, the coder and researcher agreed on 60% of the themes. The 40% of themes that were different were mostly due to categorical differences. For example, the coder suggested that the subordinate themes for research question two should be placed within categories based on delivery formats, whereas the researcher focused the

subordinate themes on roles separate from delivery formats. Upon deliberating with the coder, the researcher agreed to reorganize subordinate themes into categories (i.e. campus, asynchronous, and online synchronous) to better align to the second research question. The researcher also agreed to remove one subordinate theme that did not seem to align with research question three. The volunteer coder also recommended trying to operationalize terms of interest within future interviews using follow-up questions. This strategy was used in future interviews. Based on this experience, the researcher used inter-coding for the larger study. Additionally, for the full study, the researcher used a statistical approach for coding quality criteria (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020).

Interview protocol

Both participants were PhD students, and they stated that the questions were very good and helped them to reflect on their experiences with tutoring and transitioning online. However, the researcher revised several questions within the interview protocol. The revisions focused on removing leading questions. For example, one question assumed that a tutor had imagined what online tutoring would be like prior to starting. To remove the assumption, the question was reworded as the following: Before you began online tutoring, to what extent did you imagine or not imagine what your role would be like as an online tutor? Additionally, Participant A suggested that the researcher ask a place-based question. The researcher utilized reflexivity to consider this suggestion. Through this process, the researcher formulated and considered the question: What does placed-based tutoring mean online? Culture is a framework for meaning-making (Much, 1995), and this research attempted to reveal a person's positionality in relation to online tutoring via their experience, their culture, language, and locale (Smith et al., 2009). IPA research is partly an inquiry into the cultural position of a person, which requires the researcher

to have a degree of cultural competence (Smith et al., 2009). When writing the study, the researcher captured unique aspects of each participant's story, context, and culture, using an idiographic approach, while also identifying patterns that connected and resonated with each participant. That said, in further reflection, a question that is specific to place-based concepts was not within the specific scope of this research study. Consequently, the question was not included. This is an area that should be explored in future research.

Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on participants

Both participants referenced the COVID-19 global pandemic repeatedly. The pandemic seemed to have affected both of them in profound ways, and they referenced online tutoring in relation to the pandemic. For example, Participant A's perception of online tutoring changed drastically because of the pandemic. This participant saw less value in online tutoring post-pandemic, and viewed online tutoring as having more value prior to the pandemic. Participant B's perceptions of online and learning were also framed in light of the pandemic. This participant never expected to transition online, and the pandemic "forced" them to engage in the online environment to do their work. However, having worked online for a time, the participant gained a more favorable view of online tutoring and learning. In fact, now that the participant experienced what online tutoring could offer themselves as well as their students, they viewed it as more positive than negative.

The researcher anticipated the global pandemic might have an influence on the participants' experiences of online tutoring, but the researcher did not anticipate the extent to which the participants referenced and perceived online tutoring in light of the pandemic. Based on this discovery, the researcher included more details on the COVID-19 pandemic within the literature review and study's context.

Summary

Overall, this interpretative phenomenological analysis sought to gain a deeper understanding of writing tutors' perceptions of their experiences with online tutoring including their roles. This included investigating participants' perceptions of online tutoring prior to and after transitioning to the online environment. With lessons learned in a pilot study, the study's instruments were tested and confirmed to provide adequate information to answer the research questions. Consequently, with the guidance of research questions, semi-structured interviews and audio diary recordings, the researcher conducted a larger study.

The study collected data from tutors from the targeted population. The data was analyzed for subordinate and superordinate themes. The results of this study offer insight for administrators, practitioners, researchers by revealing an insider-perspective on online tutoring. The following chapter highlights tutors' voices about their experiences with their transition online including roles and communication, among other unique aspects as a result of their researcher's interpretation of the participants' meaning-making.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to gain a richer and deeper understanding of tutors' lived experiences with online tutoring via five college writing tutors. The study's five participants were university students from a large public university in Hawai‘i, with diverse positions in campuses around the state. This chapter presents the results of the phenomenological inquiry with a specific IPA approach. Through my analysis, several themes emerged and were guided by the study's central research question: what are the past and present lived experiences of tutors transitioning to online environments? The study's sub-questions were:

1. How do tutors make sense of their transitioning process?
2. How do tutors make sense of their past, current, and/or future roles as tutors while tutoring in various delivery formats?
3. How do tutors make sense of online environments vis-à-vis their transition and roles?

Collectively, the participants' stories provided rich details expressing their lived experiences with online tutoring. The study includes data collected from audio recordings of one-on-interviews and audio-recorded diary entries. The interview and diary entries were transcribed verbatim, then coded through a six-step process unique to IPA (Smith et Al, 2009). The researcher coded each individual case, before moving on to the next case. Each case was coded through six rounds of analysis. The first coding round focused on descriptive codes that noted high-level, descriptive notes on what the participant did, felt, or saw. The second round consisted of linguistic codes, which focused on highlighting unique linguistic features of the data. The third round consisted of conceptual codes, which focused on asking questions about the data and moved past surface-level descriptions to deeper, more conceptual possibilities. The fourth round included creating emergent codes, based on the descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual codes. The

fifth round of coding synthesized the emergent themes into more comprehensive codes. During the sixth and final round, the researcher synthesized the codes and themes further and took the analysis to a deeper level, with an emphasis on hermeneutical interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). Respecting the participants privacy and to maintain confidentiality, each participant was assigned a pseudonym. Additionally, information that could make the participants identifiable, such as the specific campuses within the university-system have been generalized to two-year, four-year, or graduate-campus to further protect the participants and their privacy.

The findings for this study are presented in two sections. The first section provides a demographic overview of each participant, including their past tutoring experiences and external factors related to their lived experiences as tutors. After highlighting each participant and their unique contexts, this chapter's second section presents the study's findings using a narrative approach to illustrate common themes discovered in the data analysis. IPA studies are inherently interpretive and hermeneutical, and researchers are encouraged to take interpretations to a deeper level, to avoid producing analyses that are too descriptive (Smith et al., 2009). One strategy IPA scholars have used to dive deeper with their interpretations is the use of metaphors to capture the experiences of participants in illuminative ways (Smith et al., 2009). To extend this study's engagement with the participant's meaning-making, accept the hermeneutic task, and illustrate deeper levels of interpretation, the latter section of this chapter focuses closely on the central themes of the participants' accounts by framing their experiences using the metaphor of a Bildungsroman, which is explained more fully in a latter section of this chapter.

Participant Profiles

This section offers a concise background of each participant and their experiences prior to transitioning online. The participants tutored in various learning or writing centers across the

university-system. Some participants had experiences tutoring in more than one university-system writing or learning center. The pseudonyms and demographic data of the participants are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Participant Pseudonyms and Demographic Data

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Race/ Race / Ethnicity	Years campus Tutoring	Years Online Tutoring	Academic Status	Campus
Alana	F	25	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, Native Hawaiian, Japanese	6	1	Undergrad	Two-year
Parker	M	22	White	2	1	Undergrad	Two-year
Otto	M	23	White	2.5	1	Graduate	Four-year
Nani	F	28	Japanese	4	7	Graduate	Four-year;Graduate
Joy	F	22	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish, Korean, White, Japanese	0	0.5	Graduate	Four-year;Graduate

Alana

Alana worked in two different writing centers. She began college at a two-year campus and applied to work as a writing tutor at her local campus writing center. Once hired at her first center, she tutored in predominantly campus settings as a writing tutor. The campus environment in her first center was very rigid and strict. Her body language, messaging, and tutoring strategies were constantly observed by supervisors, and she was offered continual support and training to develop her skills, along with her peers. After gaining more tenure, Alana was trained to become an online writing tutor. Online tutoring, at the time, was not as popular, and, of all her tutoring sessions, online tutoring accounted for 5%. Even though she tutored students online in her first center, she did not count this initial experience as her true first introduction to online tutoring, as

her sessions were so infrequent and focused more on trying to help students learn how to use the technological tools rather than tutoring writing.

She eventually moved to another island within the Hawaiian island chain and joined a different campus. At her second campus, Alana again applied to her campus's writing center and was hired as a writing tutor. Her second writing center experiences were much different than her first center. Alana's actions were less regulated, and she had more freedom and flexibility to act as a mentor, more than a tutor, which was a role she preferred. Alana provided writing tutoring support to undergraduates, while she worked towards earning her Bachelor's degree. During slower summer periods, she spent time in training and also supported other areas of the center by working as a secretary.

Alana's second introduction to online tutoring was caused by the pandemic. Her second writing center did not offer online tutoring, but the pandemic forced it to shift online. Alana always felt hesitant about the online environment; she called herself an "old fuddy duddy" and felt that she lacked technological literacy skills she deemed necessary to transition online. While Alana did not necessarily want to transition to online tutoring, she also recognized that she had no choice, due to the global pandemic and campus closure.

Alana's past tutoring positions included being a writing tutor, consultant, and mentor. She has tutored in online synchronous settings, providing support to students with video and audio tutoring, audio-only, and text-based chatting. Alana has not provided asynchronous tutoring, as her center did not offer asynchronous tutoring services.

External factors related to Alana's lived-experiences

Alana noted several external factors that were directly or indirectly related to her lived-experiences. These factors were shared in both the recruitment survey as well as the interview and are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6. External Factors Related to Alana's Lived Experiences

External Factors	**Details**
Pre-Pandemic Online Support	The center they worked in did not provide any online tutoring pre-pandemic. If students' wanted help online, they were referred to tutor.com.
Tutor Training	Alana was provided ongoing tutor training while working as a campus-based tutor. However, she was not formally trained, prior to tutoring online. Supervisors who teach tutor training did not offer or provide any online tutor training. To date, Alana has not had any "real set training on what to do online."
Technology	Center uses Zoom and encourages students to use Google docs to share essays during online tutoring sessions; given head-sets. Lacked ability to email students and can only communicate asynchronously with students using center's email, so asynchronous communication is limited and not really feasible, based on the structure of center and access to center email account.
Tutee Volume	Limited number of students visit the center during the summer.
Tutor Volume	The number of tutors is unknown, but Alana mentioned that she did have fellow peer tutors.
Staffing Issues	The center has had difficulties finding tutors and staff. Tutors have been asked to perform other roles like secretarial tasks and teacher's aid to mitigate staffing shortages.
Center Admin	Alana is managed by supervisors.
Center Budget	Unknown.
Impacts of Pandemic	Global pandemic forced center online (no online tutoring, pre-pandemic; instead, referred students to use tutor.com, if they wanted online tutoring).
Campus	Supports both a two-year campus and four-year campus body on a specific island.

Parker

Parker was transitioning into his sophomore year when he was hired to work as a writing tutor. During his high school years, Parker recounted how he would casually tutor his friends and worked for food as opposed to money. Parker enjoyed tutoring and helping others. When he started college, Parker did not think about working as a writing tutor. It was not until he decided to quit a previous job while still in college, that he thought about a campus position and felt he might be a good candidate for writing tutoring. With little tutoring experience, Parker was hired and thought working as a writing tutor would provide additional income but also might be "something good" for him, which he later confirmed. Parker discussed how much he enjoyed working as a campus-based writing tutor. Interestingly, he had only tutored in the campus environment until the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Facing a closing campus, Parker and his learning center transitioned completely online. The center had not previously offered online tutoring, and Parker was heavily involved in supporting his center's transition from campus to online tutoring. One of the reasons for his heavy involvement had to do with technological literacy. Parker was very comfortable with using technology, and he was eager to help and support his center in the transition online. Parker was responsible for testing different synchronous software and supporting the strategy for ways to use synchronous software to facilitate a virtual center and individual tutoring sessions.

Parker's past tutoring positions included being a writing tutor. He tutored in online synchronous settings and offered support to students using video and audio, audio-only, and text-based chatting. Parker had not provided asynchronous tutoring, as his center did not offer asynchronous tutoring services.

External factors related to Parker's lived-experiences

Parker noted several external factors that were directly or indirectly related to his lived-experiences. These factors were shared in both the recruitment survey as well as the interview and are illustrated in Table 7.

Table 7. External Factors Related to Parker's Lived Experiences

External Factors	**Details**
Pre-Pandemic Online Support	The center they worked in did not provide any online tutoring pre-pandemic. If students' wanted help online, they were referred to tutor.com.
Tutor Training	Parker was provided ongoing tutor training while working as a campus-based tutor. However, they were not formally trained, prior to tutoring online. Supervisors who teach tutor training did not offer or provide any online tutor training. Parker created their own manuals to help support other tutors in their center learn how to use Zoom for online synchronous tutoring sessions.
Technology	His center uses Zoom and encourages students to use Google docs to share essays during online tutoring sessions. Was given a "cheap head-set," and decided to invest in a better headset. Lacked ability to email students and can only communicate asynchronously with students using center's email, so asynchronous communication is limited and not really feasible, based on the structure of center and access to center email account.
Tutee Volume	Unknown, but they noted that they see less tutors online than campus.
Tutor Volume	The exact amount is unknown, but Parker noted that he trained his fellow peers to pivot online.
Staffing Issues	Unknown.
Center Admin	Unknown.
Center Budget	Unknown.
Impacts of Pandemic	Global pandemic forced center online (no online tutoring, pre-pandemic; instead, referred students to use tutor.com, if they wanted online tutoring).
Campus	Supports both a two-year campus and four-year campus body on a specific island.

Otto

Otto began working at his tutoring center shortly after starting his college journey. Initially, he was hired and worked as a subject tutor (math and business) before adding writing tutoring to his list of tutoring areas. He was trained in both campus and online tutoring prior to tutoring in any delivery format. However, his first tutoring sessions were on campus and shortly after he began tutoring online. Even though Otto felt relatively technologically literate, he still felt more nervous tutoring online than in campus-based settings. While online tutoring was nerve-racking before he started, Otto felt even more nervous and unsure about asynchronous tutoring compared to synchronous tutoring. After beginning tutoring, Otto found that he did not tutor online as frequently as campus. In fact, he stated that he did limited online tutoring before May 2020.

During May 2020, his campus closed and his tutoring center was forced to shift online, with the rest of his campus services. The pandemic marked an absence of campus-based tutoring and a complete shift to the online space for Otto.

Otto's past tutoring positions included being a writing tutor, tutor, and professional writing tutor or consultant. He tutored in online synchronous settings, providing support to students with video and audio, audio-only, and text-based chatting. Otto also provided asynchronous tutoring via email and text-based comments on word-processed documents, as his center offered both synchronous and asynchronous online tutoring services.

External factors related to Otto's lived-experiences

Otto noted several external factors that were directly or indirectly related to his lived-experiences. These factors were shared in both the recruitment survey as well as the interview and are illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8. External Factors Related to Otto's Lived Experiences

External Factors	Details
Pre-Pandemic Online Support	The center that Otto worked at offered both campus-based online support prior to the pandemic. The center offered asynchronous and synchronous online tutoring support services.
Tutor Training	Otto received extensive campus-based and online tutor training prior to his first experiences providing tutoring support.
Technology	His center uses Zoom and encourages students to tutor students online synchronously. Asynchronously, his center uses email to provide text-based tutoring support to students.
Tutee Volume	Unknown, but they noted that they see less tutors online than campus.
Tutor Volume	The exact number is unknown, but Otto did mention that his center has several peer tutors.
Staffing Issues	Unknown.
Center Admin	Otto was managed by supervisors. Currently, he is managed by a director.
Center Budget	Unknown.
Impacts of Pandemic	Global pandemic forced the center to stop all campus-based tutoring services and transition to providing exclusively online synchronous and asynchronous tutoring support.
Campus	Supports both a four-year campus body including students located on different islands.

Nani

Nani had a wide-range of experiences with tutoring. She first started tutoring eight years ago, as an undergraduate student. During her sophomore year, she enrolled in a course focused on tutoring. The course was geared towards campus tutoring, and Nani gained extensive insight into research, literature, and best practices of campus tutoring. Although the course had a unit on online tutoring, it was mostly skimmed with little focus on online tutoring. Nani's instructor justified skimming over online tutoring, as she did not feel online tutoring was relevant, since the

campus's writing center did not offer online tutoring. However, Nani was introduced to online tutoring through one of her peers, who had been working as an online peer writing tutor. Her peer shared the similarities and differences between online and campus tutoring during a class presentation, and Nani was intrigued with the idea of online tutoring, but she was unsure if online tutoring was feasible. After completing the course, Nani began work as a campus tutor, but, the following semester, a position opened for an online tutoring position, and Nani left her writing center to join an online tutoring center connected to her campus. Nani was excited and curious about the idea of online tutoring.

Nani's past tutoring positions included being a writing tutor, graduate tutor, teaching assistant, and writing center coordinator or administrator. She tutored in online synchronous settings, providing support to students with video and audio, audio-only, and text-based chatting. Nani also provided asynchronous tutoring via email and text-based comments on Word docs, as her online center offered synchronous and asynchronous online tutoring services.

External factors related to Nani's lived-experiences

Nani noted several external factors that were directly or indirectly related to their lived-experiences. These factors were shared in both the recruitment survey as well as the interview and are illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9. External Factors Related to Nani's Lived Experiences

External Factors	Details
Pre-Pandemic Online Support	The center provided online tutoring support prior to the start of the pandemic.
Tutor Training	Nani received extensive campus-based tutor training but limited online tutor training.
Technology	Nani's center uses My Writing Center for synchronous tutoring and email for asynchronous tutoring.

Tutee Volume	Unknown.
Tutor Volume	The exact number was not mentioned, but Nani indicated she had a few peer tutors working for the center.
Staffing Issues	Nani indicated that the center has limited staff, but the reason is unknown.
Center Admin	Nani is the center administrator and also serves as a writing tutor
Center Budget	The exact amount is unknown, but Nani did mention a limited/sparse budget.
Impacts of Pandemic	Unknown.
Campus	Supports a range of students from high-school to graduate across multiple islands

Joy

Joy never worked as a campus tutor. She joined a graduate program and applied and was hired as a graduate tutor during the global pandemic. When Joy accepted the position as a graduate tutor, she did not realize that the position would be online, as the campus writing center was closed, due to the pandemic. Joy was surprised to learn that tutors could do their work online. She was genuinely concerned about the online environment and worried it was not feasible for learning or tutoring.

In fact, during her new hire orientation, Joy was terrified. She felt her technological literacy was too low for her job requirements and questioned whether or not she could do the work of an online tutor.

Joy's past tutoring positions include being a graduate tutor. She tutored in online synchronous settings, providing support to students with video and audio, audio-only, and text-based chatting. Joy had not provided asynchronous tutoring, as her center did not offer asynchronous online tutoring services.

External factors related to Joy's lived-experiences

Joy noted several external factors that were directly or indirectly related to their lived-experiences. These factors were shared in both the recruitment survey as well as the interview and are illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10. External Factors Related to Joy's Lived Experiences

External Factors	Details
Pre-Pandemic Online Support	Joy's center did not provide online tutoring prior to the start of the pandemic.
Tutor Training	She received some training, mostly synchronous tool navigation, prior to starting online tutoring.
Technology	Joy's center uses an online synchronous tool.
Tutee Volume	Unknown.
Tutor Volume	The exact number is unknown, but Joy referenced working with other peer tutors.
Staffing Issues	Unknown.
Center Admin	Joy was managed by a supervisor.
Center Budget	Unknown.
Impacts of Pandemic	Global pandemic forced center online (no online tutoring offered pre-pandemic).
Campus	Supports both four-year and graduate campus populations.

Summary of Participants

All the participants provided tutoring support to college students. Participants reported differing degrees of feelings of preparedness and comfort prior to transitioning online. Some participants struggled with technological literacy, while others did not. Half the participants were forced to tutor online, due to the global pandemic, while one participant started tutoring online because of their center's hybrid tutoring expectations; another participant willingly tried online tutoring. The participants had varying experiences regarding the type of online tutoring they

provided. For example, three participants had synchronous online tutoring experience, while two participants had synchronous and asynchronous online tutoring experience. Additionally, while most of the participants received some form of tutor training, their experiences with online tutor training were limited. Some participants were directly supervised, one had no supervisors, and it is unclear who supervised one other participant. Almost all the participants had no understanding of campus budgets. Tutee volume addressed by some of the participants, with online tutoring seeing lower rates of tutees compared to campus-based settings. The participants also supported a range of student populations, with the most popular group of support being 4-year students, then 2-year students, then graduate students.

Coming of Age Online: A Bildungsroman Structured Analysis of Findings

Metaphorical Approach to Findings

Seeking to make sense of the participant's experiences, it became readily apparent through an analysis of each participant's case, that they all embarked on a journey into the online environment. Through further and deeper analysis, the participant's journeys, while different, had several stages of linear convergence, making their journeys even more intriguing. To best capture their journey, while also further interpreting their making-making, the narrative metaphor of the Bildungsroman seemed most appropriate to describe the study's results, rather than a fragmented collection of themes around each research question.

While focused on a single narrative, one study identified a three-step process for framing a metaphor around data analysis. The theoretical study suggested that when using a metaphorical approach to frame findings, researchers should search for repetition, elaboration, and relatedness of key topics from the text that relate to the metaphor (Steger, 2006). They should also consider the wider context of the text to determine and reason how it might fit within the metaphor via

free-forming associates (Steger, 2006). Lastly, researchers should ensure the metaphor fits the participant's context to ensure that their point of view is coming across while, at the same time, allowing the researcher's creativity to illustrate the participant's point of view from a deeper, richer perspective, as metaphors can be used to express unexpressed values, beliefs, and assumptions (Steger, 2006). While this study focused on a single participant case, the framework was experimented within this study. It is important to note that the researcher did not begin the data analysis process with the intention of a metaphorical analysis. However, when conducting the participants' cross-case analysis, signs of a metaphor repetition, elaboration, and relatedness to the Bildungsroman metaphor began to emerge. Following Steger's (2006) step-by-step process in retrospect, the researcher identified the Bildungsroman metaphor and used it to provide a deeper, richer illustration of the participants' lived experiences.

This unique approach is largely due to the overlap and non-linear themes related to the participants overall experiences as well as the embedded context of the sequential, linear themes within each step of the participant's unique journeys. Although a majority of themes are linear, several themes are not. Linear themes are defined as themes that project a participant's growth forward to the next stage or sequence. Non-linear themes are defined as themes that occur in one stage of the participant's journey, then reoccur in another stage. Non-linear themes can occur in two or more stages, and they were defined as non-linear with contextualization on their placement and purpose in each stage of the Bildungsroman framework. Framing the results around a metaphor, while atypical in most methodologies, is not uncommon in an IPA approach (Smith et al., 2009).

Bildungsroman

The term Bildungsroman is traditionally considered a type genre encompassing a "formative narrative" schema or a "novel of formation" that has diverging transitions in Germany and the larger English-speaking world (Boes, 2006) and contains a structure of distinct parts that emerge from human experiences (Brantlinger & Thesing, 2008). The Bildungsroman genre is synonymous with the development of an individual in an English-speaking context; it focuses on a person's flux and change, akin to a journey of growth, but its German roots more commonly connect with the concept of self-cultivation or self-formation (Salmon, 2015). Canonically, the traditional Bildungsroman has four common narrative features: 1) a person, who is often young but not always, suffers loss, 2) they begin a journey to better understand their loss and/or their world, 3) they experience hardship, conflict, and struggle, which can be psychological, 4) and they overcome hardship, gain insight or epiphanies, and reach maturity over a period of time (Buckley, 1974). Self-reflection in more contemporary common of age stories is also critical to the genre (Jeffers, 2005).

There are a number of types of interpretations of the Bildungsroman. One example is a cyclical novel that is age-orientated and follows a protagonist from childhood, adolescence, and eventual adulthood or maturity (Bakhtin, 1986). Another example is a cyclical novel that repeats a formative process; an individual has a youthful idealism that matures into moderation and practicality (Bakhtin, 1986). The later interpretation of the Bildungsroman focuses on life or the world as a school, which requires a person to experience, leading them to maturity (Bakhtin, 1986). It is the later interpretation of the Bildungsroman that the researcher detailed the study's participants and their meaning-making processes.

The following section uniquely highlights the study's superordinate and subordinate themes that emerged from the study's individual and cross-case comparisons. The analysis depicts transcripts from the participant's interviews and audio diary entries. Borrowing elements from the traditional English and German Bildungsroman narrative features, the study illustrates four superordinate themes, loss, journey begins, faces conflict, and grows, that are all important elements in the participant's episodic journey.

Episode 1. Loss

This story begins with five individuals from different backgrounds and experiences who were told that they were going to begin tutoring students online. One participant had been tutoring for a semester, when they willingly decided to make the move online several years ago. Another participant was told that they were required to tutor in campus-based and online sessions when they were hired to tutor a few years ago. For three participants, their notification about transitioning to tutoring online was at the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Even though their stories differ, each participant's journey had tremendous overlapping experiences. When each of the five individuals were first told about online tutoring, the concept was either unimaginable or not feasible to them. Several believed that learning and online were not compatible, like oil and water. And yet, the stories of five unique people transitioning into the online environment enfolded with each participant facing the reality that they had to make online tutoring work. As their story began, each of the participants faced a sense of perceived loss.

Loss is a critical element in the traditional Bildungsroman, and, like the participants, loss can transcend in a variety of ways; literary examples include loss or conflicts in childhood, with society, or feelings of alienation, to name a few (Buckely, 1974). In this sense, loss can be multifaceted, and it certainly was for all the participants. Loss was the first superordinate theme.

It manifested itself psychologically and socially for the participants. Specifically, the study's participants experienced loss in their initial transition in at least one of three ways: loss of learning, space, and comfort. For all five participants, their online transition began, in part, with an individual realization of loss.

Even though all participants transitioned to online tutoring, they transitioned at different time periods. Nani and Otto began tutoring in the online environment before the pandemic, while Alana, Parker, and Joy were forced to transition online, due to the global pandemic. Regardless of the time period of their transition, each participant began to personally reflect on their future. After being faced with the reality that they would need to transition online, the participants started by wondering about an "unknown" online environment.

For the participants, the transition online was almost unimaginable. Alana said, "I had no idea what it was gonna entail," and Parker echoed those sentiments stating, "I really had no thoughts about it at all." He had never thought about online tutoring and could not quite picture what it would mean to tutor online. Like her peers, Nani "could only conceive tutoring working in campus settings." And, Joy questioned why she had to transition online in the first place, asking "why can't we go to the physical center?" Otto reflected on tutoring online and imagined "online as really daunting." Their story begins with an imaginative preconception of loss.

Loss of Learning and Tutoring

After being informed by their supervisor or center staff member about the expectation of transitioning online, the participants quickly began to imagine what that experience would entail. In their imaginations, some of the participants envisioned a loss of learning. The Loss of Learning superordinate theme was linear for Nani, Otto, and Joy, meaning that this theme occurred during this particular period in the participants journey to transition online. Although

several participants imagined loss of learning, as a result of the transition online, they viewed a loss of learning in different ways. Nani and Joy reflected on their perceptions about the loss of learning and tutoring. They both viewed loss of learning holistically in that they believed that the online environment was not as conducive for learning. Whereas, Otto worried about the loss of learning with regards to a specific delivery format. In considering online and the loss of learning, Nani noted:

> I could only conceive of tutoring working well in face-to-face settings. And that's what I had been, we had kind of been led to believe that; just because the writing center pedagogy we were learning was mainly face to face.

When Nani was first faced with the potential to shift online, she was concerned and worried about the online environment as not being adequate for writing center pedagogy. She was concerned that tutoring online was not feasible for both tutoring and learning, and this possibility worried her. Joy felt similar and stated,

> I was totally against it. Like, I was like: why, why, can't we go to the physical center and actually do this? Because, I always figured that if you're not in a, you know, like if you're not in a classroom, it's harder to learn, sort of thing.

She questioned why tutoring had to shift online and imagined online learning as being far inferior to the campus learning experiences. For Nani and Joy, the online environment invited a loss of learning and tutoring pedagogy that troubled them. While Nani's training influenced her hesitation with the online environment's capacity for valuable learning and tutoring, Joy's perceptions of the loss of learning online seemed to stem from a belief that the campus learning was best.

Interestingly, Otto's perceptions differed. He was not as concerned about a loss of learning within the synchronous online environment, but he did worry about asynchronous tutoring. He made the following statement about his concern:

> Um, there's no, no, like back and forth between the student [asynchronously]. I don't necessarily know how the students can interact at all, so, um, all of that before I started doing it was very daunting. I'm like: how am I going to provide good service?

For Otto, the loss of immediacy of feedback and interaction in asynchronous tutoring, as opposed to his experiences with campus tutoring concerned him. He questioned if he would be able to help students or not, due to the loss of interaction in asynchronous tutoring sessions. Nani felt similar. When she learned about asynchronous tutoring, she was “surprised that asynchronous tutoring was still a thing.” She did not believe asynchronous tutoring was ideal, due to its lack of immediacy and dialogue with students. Otto and Nani’s campus tutoring experiences seemed to influence their perception of the importance of interaction during tutoring sessions. And, this perceived loss of interaction seemed to shape their initial concerns about the feasibility of tutoring and learning asynchronously. Interestingly, from a broader interpretation of each of the participants' experiences, it seems the participants' fear was based on imagined perception, rather than experiential evidence. Their perceptions influenced the creation of a major fear - that the online environment, whether synchronous or asynchronous, was not conducive to learning.

Loss of (Campus)Space

For some participants, they compared the campus-based environment with their perceptions of the online environment, which resulted in concern. Alana, Nani, and Joy all imagined the type of loss of elements in the campus space they would experience, as they transitioned online. The theme of Loss of Space was non-linear and occurred and recurred during several different time periods of the participants. However, the worry about loss of space was a concern in a variety of ways during this time period for the participants. Hence, it has been highlighted in this part of the participants journey. Loss of space in this context was focused more on assumptions of loss or imagined loss of aspects embedded in the campus space (i.e.

people, resources, physical seating, etc.). Although the participants viewed loss in different ways, they seemed to overlap in their perceived loss, with one being a perceived loss of people in the online space. For example, Alana's feelings about the loss of space meant more than a physical loss but a relational one. She believed that:

> Online is a little more not as personable. That's definitely how I feel. [...] I feel when you're in person with the student, they're a lot more focused with you. They're a lot more present with you, so you build a better connection that way. I think. I'm not too sure.

Although she hesitated, Alana seemed to imagine a friction about the online space that could influence her relationships with students. She valued students being "focused" on herself and felt they were more "present." For Alana, the ability to be focused and present allowed her to "build a better connection" with her students, and she feared she would lose out on relationships. She worried whether or not students could be focused and present online.

Joy was also concerned about the loss of space, but she was concerned about professionalism more than relationships. She was worried about the loss of the center and the potential loss of professionalism online. Joy noted,

> It was just like the idea of working and, and, of, of representing, and, like, a writing institution just absolutely freaked me out that I would have to, that I have to maintain like a professional atmosphere.

Joy felt a unique burden to take on a larger role "representing" her entire campus-based center through her online sessions. This weight, she said, was an added and "unexpected" pressure and "freaked" her out. She questioned whether or not she could "maintain" a professional atmosphere. Joy's biggest fear with the loss of the campus center, was attempting to be the center for each of her students, which was a heavy burden to bear, especially for a person who had never tutored before.

On the other hand, while Nani was excited and admitted to wearing “rose-colored glasses,” which she later defined as a naïve excitement, she was concerned about the potential loss of community she might face. Nani perceived a difference in programming before her training experiences that made her “very worried” about the “lack of tutoring support” online. She viewed the campus center as a “comfy homey” space with an abundance of peer and supervisor support, and she worried about the potential loss of the campus community prior to transitioning online.

Although seemingly different, a larger reading of the participants perceived loss of space seems connected to a loss of people and relationships, more than a loss of physical comfort. Alana worried about the loss of relationships with students, while Nani feared loss of staff connections, and Joy worried about being viewed as the new center, with the campus center closed. The centralized theme though, is a loss of people. Nani and Alana both discussed their value of people and community in their campus centers, which might have informed their perceptive fear of loss. On the other hand, without campus experiences, Joy’s fear of loss of the campus space seems to be influenced by the idea that she would embody the center for students; the load of representative responsibility was overwhelming. That said, the loss of people is more unique to this period in the participants journey, but it does rupture again later in some of their journeys. Nonetheless, the participants feared a loss of people, a loss of connection, a loss of space and representation and felt the online environment was to be blamed for that potential loss.

Loss of Comfort

An overarching loss of comfort was experienced by all tutors prior to their first online tutoring sessions. This theme was non-linear, as tutors experienced a loss of comfort throughout

their journey. For example, Alana's anxiety prior to her online session and her issues with computer-mediated video projection made her uncomfortable. She stated:

> I think the biggest feeling was mostly like the, the nervous anxiety of *[*pause*]*. I think it was more for me seeing myself on camera because you had to like see yourself and the student.

She was uncomfortable at the thought of seeing herself on camera. Perhaps her "nervous anxiety" was not just that seeing herself and the student she was tutoring was unlike her campus tutoring experiences, but it might reflect a deeper worry. Alana continuously talked about her concern about performance online; perhaps" seeing herself on camera" perform for the first time caused greater discomfort in an already uncomfortable setting. Viewing herself in a type of mirrored setting was unlike anything she had experienced and this view of self was disconcerting. Otto also seemed to slightly panic about his ability to perform online. He continually questioned himself and was worried about if and how he was going to "provide good service" to students. Like Alana, Otto frequently discussed his performance and ability to perform online, and he worried that the shift online would impact his ability to successfully perform. This fear brought him great discomfort and feelings of uncertainty.

Relatedly, Parker was also concerned about his performance but was largely worried about online constraints and technological challenges. He said,

> I think, yeah, definitely my biggest apprehension was just concerns about the tech problems, and not only internet access, but also what if I have a student; you know, a whole new problem is, what if I have a student now that isn't really tech capable? Like, they don't know how to turn on their mic or they're not sure how to use the chat function. It can be a slower process sometimes, um, but I was not, I don't think that, you know, it was not really like a big deterrent; it was just something that I did start thinking about really early on.

Parker's worry was in part around performance, but in part focused on their future students' technical literacy skills. Parker worried about technology as a barrier that needed to be overcome

before tutoring could even begin. He worried about being able to help students and this new concern, not previously experienced in campus tutoring sessions, caused discomfort. From a broader perspective, Parker, similar to other participants, worried about what he would do online. His ability to perform and help students navigate difficult technology problems was a problem Parker foresaw and an added layer of worry and concern.

Unlike her peers, Nani's worry focused on power and authority, especially in asynchronous sessions. When considering online tutoring, she said:

> I was also worried about power and authority when it came to letter writing because it would be like here, here, I am as a tutor being very directive and telling the student what to do without getting feedback from them.

Nani did not like the idea of not being able to interact with students, and she did not like the possibility of having to be "directive." She was trained to only tutor students in a non-directive approach because that was the best tutoring pedagogy, according to her center and training. The idea of being directive made her feel like she would embody more "power and authority" over students, which she also feared, as she was trained to be a peer tutor. And, according to her center and campus training philosophy, peers try their best to "reduce power" differentials. The potential to employ more power during asynchronous sessions made her uncomfortable; she was concerned about the type of performance she might be forced to deliver by way of the environment. It was a type of performance that did not please her.

Perhaps most unique was Joy's perceived loss of comfort. When faced with the reality of becoming an online tutor, Joy freaked out. She declared.

> Like, even during the pandemic when I, um, when I became a [tutor], I did not realize that it would be online, and it freaked me out. So, I know that doesn't really answer your question about roles, but I did not even like the idea of being an online tutor; did not even like was it did not even come, come to me. Like, I did not even realize that was an option.

Joy was decidedly against the online environment. She "hated it," a comment she had made

earlier, and had no wish to tutor online. When she was hired, she thought the position meant working on campus and did not realize the tutoring position was online. After discovering that she was going to have to tutor online, Joy “freaked out,” expressing high levels of stress, worry, and fear. The online environment was an unknown and uncomfortable space, and she worried if she could perform at all.

In analyzing the participant’s experiences with loss of comfort, their stories related to psychological distress that is specifically rooted in preconceived notions of the online environment. Their psychological distress manifested itself in different ways such as nervousness, anxiety, stress, and concern. Interestingly, each participant's fear and worry, from a surface level, seemed to diverge more than converge. But, from a conceptual analysis, their distress might all be tied back to performance. In fact, each tutors’ account seems closely tied to performance concerns. Alana worried about watching herself perform, and Otto, Parker, Nani, and Joy were anxious about their own ability to perform. Overall, a psychological fear regarding performance ability was an overriding fear connected to loss of comfort for the participants.

Summary of Episode 1

While all the participants' lived experiences are unique, they each experienced loss in different ways and to varying degrees after being introduced to the idea of online tutoring. The concept of loss in Bildungsroman narrative may be likened to a place that was once comfortable, or “homey,” as suggested by the participants, but the protagonist faced an initial conflict that formed a type of constraint, influencing thoughts or feelings about one’s environment (Standford, 2019). When introduced to the idea of online tutoring, the participants almost immediately felt a conflict. Even though all the participants, aside from Joy, had some degree of experience in tutoring, the thought of tutoring in a new environment was uncomfortable. This

conflict caused the participants to imagine what the online environment might be like and almost immediately compared it with their campus experiences. The participants compared their "provincial" campus space with their imagined perceptions of the online world and conflict began to fill their psyche with stress and anxiety. Specifically, when the participants were informed of their expectation to tutor online, they began to make comparisons between their perceptions of their campus tutoring reality and their imagined perceptions of online tutoring.

After comparing and attempting to "imagine" how online tutoring would work, the participants began to experience feelings of loss, which invoked greater worry and concern. Loss for Nani, Joy, and Otto was centered on learning. They all worried about a loss of learning. While Nani and Joy worried about a lack of learning online, Otto was specifically worried about the loss of learning in the asynchronous environment. The participants' feelings and worry about the loss of learning was psychologically formed; they imagined a loss of learning without any real online tutoring experience.

From a different lens, some participants feared a loss of space. Alana's fear of loss focused on a loss of relationships, and, for Joy, loss was the absence of the campus space and imagined expectations that she would need to become the face of the center online, which was a big weight. Nani's loss was rooted in the loss of community. Interestingly, the participants' initial feelings of loss were largely connected to the campus environment. Specifically, the participants felt a loss of elements rooted in campus tutoring. However, a deeper interpretation of loss tied it to a loss of people. Nani and Alana discussed their value of community, and Joy's new-ness as a tutor seemed to influence her ideas that she had to be the center for students online. Ultimately, the loss of space was an imagined loss and not one rooted in experience; nonetheless, a deeper

interpretation of the participants perceived loss of space seems most closely connected to an imagined loss of people.

Psychological distress about the loss of aspects of the campus environment transcended into a loss of comfort for all the participants. Alana was most concerned about her computer-mediated self-impacting her communication. Otto and Nani were concerned about their ability to tutor successfully, but Nani focused more on specific fears about power and authority in online sessions. Parker worried about technology as a barrier, and Joy was anxious about the online environment, in general; and in particular, she feared her ability to tutor online. With vastly different worries, a critical analysis of the overriding trends reveals a deeper worry about performance. Tutors were psychologically distressed and worried about their ability to perform, to help, or to do their job in the online environment. This fear about performance seemed to make them feel a particular loss, which they attached to the online environment.

Regardless of their different perceptions on loss, the participants viewed a looming departure from campus settings as not a positive sign of growth, but more like a sacrifice of self. In this sense, the participants seemed to be superficially sacrificing their self-comfort. The participants viewed the act of growing into the online environment as a hazardous cliff, a perspective related to the Bildungsroman, that illuminated their naivety or immaturity (Standford, 2019) regarding the online environment. The grief the participants felt for the loss of the campus environments extended into psychological distress, based on their imagined loss. And yet, while psychologically distressing, their “nervousness” and “worry” marked their coming-of-age process. For some characters in the Bildungsroman, the loss of the familiar, or change away from the familiar is a critical step in navigating the transition to maturity (Standford, 2019). Although some participants might have felt an “aversion to change,”

(Standford, 2019, p. 22) this discomfort was a big part of their journey; it marked the beginning of a departure of their psychological adolescence of tutoring in multiple or online delivery formats and the beginning of their transition into becoming seasoned online tutors. Hence, with the thought of online tutoring mulling around in their minds, the participants, whether they wanted to or not, committed to starting their unknown journey into the world of online tutoring.

Episode 2. Journey Begins

The start of a journey is a significant part of the Bildungsroman. Customary to this genre is some sort of incident that forces or influences the protagonists onto their journey (Nordlen, 2009). In starting their journey, the protagonist might gain disappointment (Buckley, 1974); yet, through different experiences, the protagonist will grow through work or play, among other activities (Buckley, 1974). Ultimately, the start of the journey beckons a "school without walls" experience, where the protagonists experience real-world situations and learn and grow from them (Buckley, 1974, p. 232).

The Start of the Journey was a superordinate theme. Our participants' unique journeys start at different periods in time, but their stories parallel each other. The marked start of the participants' journey is their experiences receiving some form of online training, prior to their first online sessions. In starting their journey into the online environment, they all experienced distress and disappointment but learned through their multifaceted experiences, as they progressed through their transition. The participants' parallel journeys begin with training, accompanied by feelings of distress, and this part of their journey ends with some relief gained after their initial online tutoring sessions.

Training

Before diving head-first into the online environment, each participant participated in some form of training. Training was an important introduction and step closer to facilitating an online tutoring session. This subordinate theme was linear in every one of the participants' journeys. However, the amount of training differed for each participant. For instance, Alana sort of received training. She said the following about her training experiences:

> Um, I don't want to bring it just because we're talking about online, but in person we had set tutor trainings that we would do together in person. Um, but because we came online so quickly, our instructor, the instructors. And the, um, what are they called, our supervisors and stuff who usually do those tutor trainings, they did not have anything set up for an online environment. So all we really had were the guides that that one tutor created for us. And, we're slowly building upon it, but no one's done any formalized work for it yet. So, we haven't had any real set training on what to do online.

She could not help but compare her online training experiences with campus. Clearly, her campus training was a collaborative event facilitated by instructors or supervisors. However, with the sudden shift online, due to the pandemic, Alana did not receive what she considered formalized training. She received a guide from a peer but felt she did not really receive any “real set training” on how to tutor in online settings. The lack of formal training concerned Alana, and she felt nervous and unsure. This concern might have also been partly influenced by her expansive campus tutoring experiences.

Nevertheless, Parker’s experiences were similar to Alana, but he had an extra set of tasks. When asked about his experiences with training, Parker said,

> I was producing our first pieces of training material for online tutors. So, I was our very first batch of, um, online tutors and for that reason, I did not receive any training. My, um, kind of, my experiments were my forms of training like playing around with Zoom. That that was my training for the most part. Um, but then because I, I, became comfortable with it pretty quickly. [...] In both the fall and the spring semester, for the most part, I was creating a lot of material on, um, what it means to be an online tutor, and what type of obstacles are specific to the online space. And, you know, how you work around them and like how you try to replicate the in person, um, tutoring space.

Like Alana, Parker received no “formal” online tutor training. In fact, he did not receive any training from his supervisors, like he had in campus settings. Rather, Parker trained himself with how to use Zoom and gradually gained comfort with the tool, as it became familiar to him. Soon after, he began creating online tutor training for his peers, which was a task he did not have in campus settings. Parker’s ongoing familiarity with the synchronous tool seemed to indicate a degree of self-comfort, which enabled him to share his experiences with his peers without too much worry.

Joy experienced similar feelings of uncertainty through her “casual” and informal online tutor training. She made this comment about her training experience:

> So, it was just a very it was a very casual, um, you know, go explore the, the, online platform we're going to use and sort of learn how to how to work it and what it looks like for both the client and for the, the, administrative side. So, it was not super formal like, we did not have like a, you know, module one, module two, sort of thing, but it was I think it, it, helped because the, I mean, the platform that we use, uh, thank goodness is relatively simple. But, um, you know, on my own time, I did go under like the, the, websites, uh, like the, you know, the help tab and the frequently asked questions just to see if, you know, if problems do occur like what can happen and what I can do.

Joy’s supervisor trained her and other new tutors on how to use the synchronous platform to facilitate online tutoring sessions. She was also taught what to do to document a session and other administrative tasks required of tutors. Although, like her peers, Joy felt her training was casual, perhaps too “casual.” She spent her own time researching and self-training on how to problem solve and troubleshoot technological issues or glitches that might occur while using the synchronous tool. While Joy felt a little more “at ease with the tool” she needed to tutor online, Joy still felt very worried about tutoring online.

Like the other participants, Nani also felt her training was not formal or robust. She had completed an entire semester’s worth of training for campus tutoring, which was tough to

compare. She shared this on her experiences with online training:

> Um, [brief pause] the trainings. This is not to like fault the writing program, um, coordinator at that time. Um, but the training was not as robust as being in [campus training class]. And, of course, [my training] was an actual course. Um, we were learning about writing pedagogy over the course of five months, so it's hard for me to compare it. But, the training was like, let's, here's some guides to asynchronous tutoring and synchronous tutoring that were one-page guides. And on top of that, when it came to, of course, I had to go through a shadowing process of watching my co-workers tutor. [...]. It was not like, it was like maybe two, um, and before jumping into tutoring, um, I did not get to see or really talk to my, my, fellow tutors outside of those shadowing sessions. And, during those, um, shadowing sessions, it's not like I could ask them questions because they were working with the client, and that was the priority there.

Nani also compared her online tutoring with her campus experiences and found she received much less training for the online environment as compared to the campus environment. While several of the study's tutors had to rapidly shift online, due to the pandemic, Nani completed online tutor training years before the pandemic. She did not want to blame the program director, but she did feel the training was not as instructional as she would like and certainly "was not very robust." After reviewing two handouts on tutoring best practices for two different delivery formats, Nani then shadowed two online sessions. She did not get to engage or ask questions about why the tutors did or did not do certain things. She simply watched, then got ready to conduct her own online tutoring session. This lack of interaction and instruction made her nervous.

Otto's experiences with online tutor training were unlike his peers. Before starting online tutoring, Otto completed tutor training. He said his training helped "prepare" him for his first online tutoring session, and he felt "ready for it." He described his online tutor training experiences as blended with campus training:

> I mean, um, and then I think for the, the, video conferencing for the Zoom. Um, just practicing I know we did lots of trainings, especially towards the beginning of the semesters when I was a student tutor. [...]. So using those and going through those

trainings definitely like helped set my mind at ease.

Otto's supervisors taught tutor training and combined online and campus practices together, as he was expected to provide tutoring support in campus and online delivery formats. He received many different training segments before starting tutoring, which helped to bring him some relief and "set [his] mind at ease" prior to starting tutoring. Yet, Otto makes a comment sooner after that he "still felt nervous" about his ability to tutor online, even after gaining some relief with training.

Overall, Alana, Parker, Nani, and Joy felt their online tutor training was informal and lacked robust qualities as compared to their campus experiences. Only Otto believed his training experiences were robust and equipped him well for campus and online tutoring. One apparent difference for the participants was that, as campus tutors, they were heavily invested in with respect to training to prepare for tutoring, but the investment online seemed significantly less. Other than a start difference with their campus training, the participants seemed to be nervous and worried about their ability to tutor online, even after formal or informal training. It seems the tutors struggled with, or perhaps lacked, confidence. They lack practical experience to bolster their confidence, and in some cases, might have also lacked support.

Distress

After their training was completed, the participants waited for their first online session to be booked. Once a student scheduled a session with them online, aside from Parker, the participants experienced pre-tutoring jitters, anxiety, or stress. Here again, distress is a non-linear theme, but re-appears in a similar fashion as in Episode 1. Participants experienced differing levels of psychological distress, as they prepared to experience their first online tutoring session. Alana's "biggest feeling" prior to her first online session was "nervous anxiety." The difference

in environment influenced her nerves, even though she had been tutoring for several years prior to her re-transition online. Alana's nervousness seemed performance focused. She wanted to do well and create a good experience for her students.

Otto experienced "stress," which was similar to Alana's feelings. He made this statement about his pre-online session feelings:

> I, I, definitely think there was like a lot of stress involved. A lot of like not like bad anxiety, but just like, you know you're doing something for the first time. So, there's like butterflies in your tummy. And, you're like: oh my god, I hope this goes well.

Otto's feelings were akin to that nervous energy one might experience before a job interview. He had "butterflies in [his] tummy" before he began his fist session. His concerns also seemed connected to a fear about performance. He wanted to perform well, and he felt the nerves of the upcoming performance. Relatedly, Nani felt a mixture of "excitement but also a mix of being worried" before her first tutoring session. She reflected on her feelings and had this to say about her mixture of worry and excitement:

> Just because the training was not as robust, and I could not really rely on my fellow tutors for mentor, mentorship and support like I had done at the [campus] writing center.

Nani's worry was also connected to her ability to perform as well as a lack of "training" access to resources such as "mentors, mentorship, and support." She had previously tutored in a campus writing center that always had fellow tutors and supervisors for support and mentorship, but she felt concern about the lack of training and a type of isolation that was embedded in the nature of her center's online tutoring environment. Without her support network, Nani was worried about not being able to reach out for help, if she faced challenges or questions about her performance. In a sense, she questioned if she could perform well, without a support network and without adequate training, which influenced her concern.

Joy was nervous too. Just before her first online tutoring sessions, she experienced a

“storm of stress.” She was not only anxious about her ability to tutor, but she worried about the potential expectations she might face about providing technological support. She also had an additional layer of stress added, when she began to feel a pressure to look professional and presentable. Her concern about professionalism invaded her thoughts, and Joy focused on how to be the best representative of the writing center. She made the following statement about her feelings of distress minutes before her first session:

> I was super nervous because, um, well I guess, yeah, you did not really get to see my, my, background because we were, um, the internet was sketchy, and I also blurred it. But, my, like the room that I usually work in is really messy and that's just how it always is [laughs]. And, I was worried that, um, you know, not only would I, I, was doubting my, my, ability to just be a good efficient tutor. But also, I did not know if I would be professional or I would look professional enough because my background is absolutely wild. And, the, the, platform that we have [laughs] is not like, it's not like, it's not as, uh, how do I say this. It's, it's, not as, uh, technologically advanced as Zoom, so you can't put virtual backgrounds and blur backgrounds. So, it was just me in my room [laughs], and I actually had to, right before my first session, I was scrambling around the house because I did not want to sit in my room. And so, I ended up just sitting in the hallway and that's where I ended up doing all my sessions for the rest of the semester. So, that was not added, that was an added weight [laughs]. That I had to think about.

Joy’s worry about being a professional representative, coupled with her fear about her ability to perform and the added technological pressure and expectations created layers of stress. She was anxious about performance, like the study’s participants, but she was also worried about her ability to represent the campus writing center well, which was an additional weight she had to shoulder. The stress compounded for Joy, and it left her with an enormous amount of processing by the time her session finished.

The recurring theme of distress gripped most of the participants before their first tutoring sessions. They felt stressed out and struggled with feelings of fear, worry, and concern over their ability to perform well. Yet, the root of their distress was slightly different than in Episode 1. In the first episode, psychological distress arose out of an imagined perception of loss. In this

episode, the participants' psychological stress related to performance. In this part of their journey, they had an increased conceptual knowledge of the online environment, but they still lacked practical experience. Increased knowledge without experiential actions compounded stress and worry for the participants and became a major mental hurdle for them. In addition, an interesting point of inflection was the isolation that some of the participants experienced with their first sessions. Nani, Alana, and Joy all began tutoring by themselves without the support of their peers or the writing center space, which might have added to the stress they felt prior to their first online writing tutoring sessions.

Relief

Regardless of the worry the participants might have felt prior to their first season, they all made it through their initial online sessions without too many difficulties. In fact, after completing their first online tutoring session, a majority of the participants felt a sense of relief. The Relief theme was linear on the participants journey towards growth.

Before his first online synchronous tutoring session, Parker tried to imagine how he would structure his session. He planned on trying to structure his session similar to his campus sessions. This strategy worked. He was pleased that his first online session went similar to how he had imagined it. Not only did he feel relief after finishing his first season, but he also quickly identified a benefit with online tutoring, saying:

> One major advantage that I picked up on right away, was that I was able to send people resources immediately. Um, because and you know this, unfortunately, this isn't a feature on of course like all tutoring. Um, like digital tutoring, um, avenues but through Zoom, specifically since you have that chat function, you can just send people links immediately.

Parker’s first session was smooth and seemingly successful; it went how he imagined, and this brought him relief. He even found a benefit that could help him in future tutoring sessions, which

was a new and easy strategy for sharing online resources with his students. The chat system could not only serve as a space to talk with students in text-based sessions, but it could also be used to share resources with students, regardless of the communicative method of the session, which was a major bonus in Parker's eyes. This experience positively reinforced his online ability.

Likewise, Alana and Otto experienced almost immediate relief after their first online sessions. Alana said that once her session started, her worries started to fade away, since she was focused on what she needed to do to help her student in her online synchronous session. She added,

> So, by the time it was over, it was more relief. I was like, oh thank goodness like we were able to help the student with this or thank goodness the, the internet did not go out.

Alana also noted that she felt relief, but "it was not until a couple of sessions in where I felt like it was good." Although she still felt some challenges with her early sessions, she gained a sense of relief that continued, as she obtained more positive, reinforcing experiences tutoring online.

When Otto first jumped into his online session, he felt anxious. But, he said that his training helped him to work through the session, and that reflection as well as positive experiences brought him relief. He said,

> I think as I was doing it, um, while the training came back to me I'm like: oh, yeah, so and so taught me that I was, I was prepared for that. I know how to use all the tools on it and actually in some ways. Um, I found out that like the online tutoring like there are some things that I can do online that I can't do as easily when I'm in person with someone or on campus with someone. Like looking up resources, um, pulling up Purdue owl, pulling up some of our online resources on our website; a lot of that was very, very, seamless, um, online.

For Otto, training was key to helping him feel prepared and helped him to successfully complete his first session. Like Parker, Otto also discovered the ease of sharing resources with students during online sessions. Resource sharing online was "seamless" for him, which he valued. He

quickly identified and used the new strategy to share tutoring resources in the synchronous chat system. With a positive online tutoring experience, Otto felt relief and his confidence in his abilities seemed to increase.

Joy experienced relief at a later point than the other participants. Interestingly, Joy felt even more distress after her first session than before it. Even though she believed her student was "happy" after the session, Joy believed her session was a disaster and was not sure what to do to correct her mistakes. Joy thought she had to cover every single student error during the session and when she ran out of time and had to end the session without finishing, she panicked. However, after reaching out to her supervisor, Joy began to feel relief. She said this about the experience:

> It helped talking with my supervisor because he's a really, uh, he's a, he's a, really good, uh, not counselor [laughs]; but, you know, I'm trying to say he's very [brief pause], he gave good advice. Uh, and then after that session, I actually ended up doing a few more observation sessions where I could see what the other, more experienced consultants did, and it sort of helped to see like how they approach different, different, sorts of clients and what they decide to do. And, that helped me a lot in figuring out how I should approach my clients.

Joy needed debriefing with her "supervisor" and more peer "observation" sessions to gain a sense of relief. She had experienced a storm of stress prior to her session, which was challenging to sort through. Then, after her season, she felt she made the session a complete disaster. Her anxious feelings, coupled with a perceived negative tutoring session seemed to decrease Joy's confidence. Perhaps Joy struggled with the transition more than the other participants because this session was Joy's first experience. Unlike her peers, who had varying degrees of campus tutoring experience before transitioning online, Joy had more layers of new-ness to sort through and juggle, making this transition seemingly more challenging. Joy also seemed to take on a major responsibility, as she attempted to embody the campus center. Joy felt she did not live up

to or accurately represent the campus center during her session, which propelled her downhill spiral of distress and questioning herself and abilities to play the role she was expected to play.

Regardless of the immediacy of relief, this theme was a key part of most of the participant's journey. Arguably, without gaining some semblance of relief, the participants may or may not have remained in their roles for long. Relief seemed to also influence the participants' confidence. The participants felt more confident and comfortable with online tutoring, after working through their first sessions. Most of their sessions were viewed positively. Plus, many picked up on similarities with campus tutoring, which might have influenced their newfound confidence in their ability to perform online.

Summary of Episode 2

The start of the participant's journey online was anything but smooth, but they traversed through it. This stage in the Bildungsroman journey is quintessentially a stage that reveals the internal progression of individuals, as they navigate external conditions such as environmental, societal, and cultural milieus (Standford, 2019). The first leg of their journey in this stage was training. All the participants received training, but their training experiences differed. Otto received extensive training, while Nani, Parker, Alana, and Joy received "informal" training. In fact, Nani, Alana, and Joy were particularly critical about their informal training experiences. They suggested their training experiences lacked robustness and did not ease their feelings of distress; for Nani, lack of training increased her anxiety. In fact, feelings of unease were introspectively reflected on by each participant post-training. Almost all the participants faced fear, worry, and concern after training. Even with Otto's extensive training, he felt a similar psychological distress that boiled down to a lack of confidence in his ability to perform. Introspectively, each felt a sense of discomfort and nervous anxiety; they had all experienced

some form of knowledge development in regards to synchronous tooling and navigation, but they all seemed to lack authentic or practical learning experiences, which may have influenced their lack of confidence.

Prior to the participants first experience providing online tutoring support, they felt "nervous" or "worried." Feelings of psychological distress just prior to their sessions were likened to nervousness that one might feel just before a job interview, a useful metaphor described by Otto. The overriding concern for the participants circled back to fear about their ability to perform their job online, as they navigated a new environment, different ways of interacting, new expectations, and, for Joy, the voluntary taking on of a new responsibility to represent the campus center online. A closer reading suggests that the participants feared not being able to meet social expectations regarding performance. None of them seemed to really have a firm grasp of what online tutoring would be like, which seemed to have influenced their feelings of lack of confidence in their abilities. At the same time, the participants also worried about their center's expectations. Most of the participants seemed concerned about not being able to meet their center's expectations; they worried that they were not going to be able to do things the "right" way in their online tutoring sessions, which added to their feelings of distress.

Interestingly, the final part of this new journey offered evidence of some growth, as the participants revealed a new "developmental target" that organically demonstrated their process of formation (Golban, 2018). More specifically, the participants illustrated a marked change from inexperienced "anxiety" to gaining some feelings of "relief." The participants, aside from Joy, almost instantaneously experienced relief after they completed their first online tutoring session. While Joy's relief came several days later, the participants' feelings of "relief" was a milestone. This was the first time the participants felt some form of relief in their online tutoring

journey. Relatedly, this marked change suggested that the tutors were able to overcome at least some feelings of a lack of confidence with their new environment and new social expectations, and gain greater degree of "self-comfort" (Sandford, 2019), as they transitioned further down their journey. Overall, Episode 2 suggests that the participants introduction to online tutoring meant gaining some tool knowledge without authentic tutoring experience, causing stress and worry. However, relief was gained after positive, authentic experiences. With the first online tutoring session behind them, the participants began to trek deeper into the world of online tutoring. However, this world was not always pleasant. In fact, the more the participants tutored online, the more they encountered new conflicts and challenges not previously considered or imagined.

Episode 3. Conflict

The concept of the traditional Bildungsroman stresses a development process where the protagonist must pass through a series of conflicts (Golban, 2018). This phase of the journey is where the "real education" is worked though (Buckley, 1974, p. 22). The protagonist experiences challenging opportunities for development, based on a diversity of experiences and people (Buckley, 1974). With the saturation into a new environment, challenges arise that may contrast the provincial setting where the protagonist originated (Buckley, 1974). While conflicts can range from spiritual, psychological, physical, and social elements in the Bildungsroman genre (Golban, 2018), the core facet is that conflicts arise and must be faced.

Conflict was a superordinate theme. The concept of conflict was deeply rooted throughout the participants' experiences during this part of their journey. Each participant discussed challenges that, while unique to their individual setting and context, were similarly experienced by other participants. The more the participants dove into online tutoring, the more

they discovered difficulty and challenges that had to be overcome. For the participants, distress, communicative challenges, role clarity, and access were all consistent challenges faced.

Distress

Feelings of relief that arose after the participants initial online tutoring sessions did not last long. With an increase in sessions, the participants soon encountered a transition in their psychological state, as they gained feelings of distress. With an increase in sessions, they discovered new challenges embedded in the online environment. These challenges soon led to psychological distress, which is a consistent, non-linear recurring theme. When participants described their distress, it was almost always connected to a concern about performance and their ability to help students online. However, in some instances, the participants worried about student behavior. The participants worried, to different degrees, about whether or not students were getting something out of their sessions, based on certain behavior.

The more Alana tutored online, the more she began to question whether or not she was keeping her student's attention. She feared that her students were not fully paying attention to her; rather, she perceived her students were likely focusing more on their paper and perhaps absently listening while she spoke during her synchronous online sessions. Alana felt this was problematic. She commented:

> They're just kind of hearing the voice, um, because I can't guarantee that they're even looking at me; they're probably looking at their paper, so they're just listening to what I'm saying.

Alana valued nonverbal expression and focused attention on herself when communicating. She talked in detail about her use of "gestures to communicate" with students, and she felt the online environment radically reduced her ability to use nonverbal communication. Alana worried students were missing out and was concerned about her ability to communicate effectively.

Alana later commented that she was a “lip reader” and relied on watching others' mouths while they talked to best understand others. Perhaps Alana needed gestures more than her students, and she felt that if her students were not looking at her, they might miss things. Regardless, her students' behavior worried her. She also added, “I feel like something about technology, I think is a little more frustrating if you do not know how to use it.” Technology was a source of frustration for Alana; she viewed technological literacy as important to the work of an online tutor and felt with low technological literacy, online tutoring was frustrating, as she learned how to navigate and use the technology. Overall, uncertainty about her ability to perform seemed to yet again fuel Alana’s psychological distress, as it did in Episode 1. However, this time, her distress was less rooted in her perceptions of an imagined reality. Rather, it was embedded in a worry based on an assumption of a lack of focused presence via her observations of student behavior. Alana valued focused presence as the pathway for relationship building and connecting, and she felt her initial worries were taking root.

Although less worried about his own technological literacy, Otto was also worried about his students' ability to learn effectively. He questioned if students understood what he was saying:

> Like I can kind of see that, like, they sounded like they got it, but like: did they, are they gonna remember it? Did they write it down?

Otto worried about whether or not his students were gaining anything valuable or not from his sessions. His note on remembering was interesting. It seemed to indicate that he expected students to write down information to remember elements covered during his session. Like Alana, while it is unclear whether note taking was a personal strategy of Otto, he viewed it as an important part in the memory process. His distress was less about what he was doing or not doing, but more on what his students were doing or not doing. Otto perceived that note-taking

was important to memorization and without it, his students might not gain valuable information. In this light, his psychological distress was rooted based on an assumption of lack of learning via his observations of student behavior during his online tutoring.

Like Otto, Parker also felt concerned about whether or not his students were getting everything they needed from his sessions. He stated:

> But, I was showing them how to use that and all I could think was like: this isn't really complex, but I am going kind of fast. And, all of the icons are kind of small. And I just, all my thoughts are just like: what if they can't see the screen really well? Or, what if my audio is clipping in and out? And, I just worry maybe they're not getting everything.

Parker worried he was moving too quickly through material and that small screen-size and glitchy audio were impacting his ability to tutor, even with basic content. He questioned whether or not his students were getting everything that he shared. These thoughts mirrored Otto's fear about his students not being able to remember everything covered by the end of their session. But, Parker's worry focused more on his own behavior, rather than his students. Parker was concerned more about his own actions and whether or not they were conducive to a positive and productive online learning experiences.

For Alana, Otto, and Parker, their worry related directly to the experiences of their students and whether or not their student's behavior or their own behavior benefitted the session. Although, Nani and Joy's distress differed. Nani felt distressed over an absence of the physical campus writing center. She said,

> A lot of [campus] writing centers are, are, built on this idea of being not, decidedly non-academic - meaning they're supposed to resemble a home and not a classroom in appearance. So, there's sofas, there's coffee, there's open spaces with lots of chairs. So, I was missing that homey comfy aspect.

For Nani, the online environment was a "stark white space" with "just a white board, just with a chat box." She missed the campus center. Her campus experiences were described as "alive" and

“colorful.” campus, for Nani, was a thriving environment rich in resources, whereas the online environment was sterile, lacking personal connections and resources; the two milieus were decidedly opposite. In considering the motif of the “home,” Nani’s experiences offer an insight into the ways she felt about her campus center. Home was a safe space that was comfortable and provided all the resources Nani needed to thrive. The idea of “lots of chairs” seems to also indicate a large number of people. Leaving this home meant leaving behind physical resources, people resources, and more. A deeper interpretation of Nani’s experiences reveals a sense of isolation and loneliness that she felt in her work online.

Joy’s distress centered on her worry about representativeness and performance. She felt pressure from students to perform a certain way, but experienced pressure from her center to perform a different way. This is what she said about her juxtaposed position:

> I, get a lot of, uh, clients who come in, and they just want like, they just want their grammar checked. So, I feel like it's harder to be, it's harder to be, you know, that, that, peer that our institution wants because like because the client clearly just wants me to check their grammar. It's not like they want like a, like a super working discussion about things if that, if that makes sense.

She struggled to differentiate between expectations and needs. On one hand, she felt an expectation to avoid grammar editing and teaching, but when asked by students to assist with their grammar, Joy felt pressured to adopt a certain role. Joy faced friction trying to live up to her center’s expectations but also give students what they wanted. She talked about it being “hard” to do two things at once: be a helpful tutor and be a tutor her center wanted. Specifically, Joy’s center wanted her to talk with students about their work and facilitate a rich conversation, but Joy assumed her students did not want a rich conversation about grammar. This assumption led to psychological distress that was a bit paradoxical. In Episode 1, Joy worried about being a perfect representation of the center. However, with experience, Joy worried less about her center

and more about her students' expectations. She wanted to please both groups, but Joy eventually realized that she could not, and so Joy decided to adapt to fit her students' expectations, rather than her center's recommendations. Even though Joy felt her center might not be aligned with the role she chose to embody, she ultimately opted to go against the grain and be the tutor she felt her students wanted her to be. Regardless, a deeper reading of her experiences revealed her focus on performance and pleasing her students over her center. Joy felt uncomfortable with breaking the rules, but she chose to do so for the sake of her students and the immediate social expectations she faced.

Distress in this episode was different for the participants, as compared to the previous episode. Psychological distress varied from fears based on assumptions of observed behavior or reflections on personal behavior as well as feelings of isolation and concern about going against the rules. While feelings of worry, fear, and concern were evident in this phase, the root cause of these issues were, in some instances, confirmed. For example, Alana's worry about the inability to build rich relationships online was being fulfilled, while Nani's fear about the lack of staff support and mentorship were actualized. Yet, for others, their perceived distress and experiential distress differed from the previous episode. For instance, Parker was less worried about his students' ability to navigate the online environment and more worried about his own ability to explain content. In this way, the participants' psychological distress was carried or different, as they moved forward in their online transition journey.

Communicative Challenges

Another challenge the participants came across, as they continued to tutor, was communicative challenges. In fact, each participant recounted tremendous difficulties communicating with students during this part of their transition into the online environment. This

subordinate theme was non-linear, but it was heavily ingrained in this part of their journey. The most disruptive communicative challenge was nonverbal communication. All the participants, except Nani, either worried about their ability to communicate without nonverbal communication, or they worried about their ability to “read” students without the ability to adequately see their students’ nonverbal expressions. The challenges faced by most of the participants, in terms of communication, were uniquely tied to their practices in campus-based environments. There was friction between what they did in campus-based settings and what they were attempting to do in online settings.

Technology was an overriding constraint related to communication. For example, Alana, Parker, and Joy felt their computer-mediated version of themselves impacted their ability to communicate. Alana said,

> And I feel like it [voice] sounds a little more harsh and I feel like they're not getting, um, the full facial expression that comes with face to face. [...]. In person I can kind of have a I have a pretty good sense of like when the student is ready, when they're having an issue. But online, it's hard.

Alana felt her voice sounded “harsher” online. While she did not elaborate on why she did not like the way she sounds. Perhaps this concern about technology not presenting herself well comes down to a worry about performance or approachability. Regardless, it was a pain point. Alana also felt her students were unable to see her nonverbal facial expressions, which worried her. At the same time, she struggled with limitations in “reading” her students nonverbal expressions. The ability to observe students was important to Alana, and she relied on this strategy in her campus-based settings. In fact, Alana primarily relied on visual cues and her ability to assess student’s behavior or expressions to help her determine next steps or to adjust to support her students. The ability to adequately observe students online was hard for her, and it indicated that not all campus strategies could be successfully deployed the same way online.

Joy felt similar. She also used the word “harsh” to describe her voice online. When discussing how she felt about communicating online, she said:

> I don't have like one of those super pleasant like secretary voices, so I always felt that it's a little awkward. Uh, because especially since the mic is so close to my, my, face if I, if I sounded like overly harsh on, on, sessions because that, and I don't really come out nice [laughs] on camera. So, I always feel like I have more of an advantage if I’m there in person, uh, but, you know, everyone, you know, how they say like the camera makes you gain like 10 pounds.

Joy felt self-conscious of her voice and appearance; she did not feel her voice sounded pleasant. Like Alana, Joy felt her appearance and ability to communicate fared better in campus settings, rather than online ones. Although Joy did not talk about her challenges observing students, rather her comment about not having a “secretary” voice revealed a different concern. Joy seemed more worried about her ability to be a positive visual representation of her center. She worried about professionalism and appearance, as a form of pleasant, customer-service type communication. Clearly, Joy was concerned about how others perceived her, and she worried her authentic self was not a fair representation of herself and perhaps was not something that she believed her students expected or desired.

Parker shared a different concern about his computer-mediated self and communication. He said,

> And, I did sometimes have some students that were like, you know. I definitely like, [pauses], I don't think, I don't, I don't, remember anyone phrasing it like I was less friendly. But, I do remember some people just being like: it's harder to read you like when you're on Zoom. And, you know, especially if I can't see you, um, directly because I’m trying to focus on the paper that's on my screen and you're just this little window, it, it's not like I never had any instances myself where it felt weird.

Parker struggled to articulate his experiences at first but talked about a situation where one of his regular students felt he was “harder to read” online. This struck Parker. He offered an introspective justification, arguing that perhaps he spent too much time looking at a paper,

especially because a little window in Zoom can be difficult to focus on during a tutoring session, and not enough time building relationships with his student. Interestingly, Parker's experiences are almost opposite of Alana's experiences. While Alana was worried about her ability to observe her students, it was Parker's students, rather than himself, who were worried about their ability to observe him as the tutor. Observation, in this light, was important for interaction online, for some tutors and some students. Observation for Alana was important for her to read to her students, but technology made it difficult for her to observe. Observation for Parker was less important for him, but more important for his students to be able to observe their tutor, but technology made his students' ability to observe him difficult. In this way, technology was viewed as a barrier to communication.

That said, when considering the inability to "read" others nonverbal expressions, Parker also discussed not just being able to "read" his students through observations, but also the reduction in rapport and small talk he experienced online. He shared,

> There were a few times I think where conversations were a little more stilted or there was definitely like a little less like, like, small talk. And, you know, those, those, are such little things that I think I, I, personally really took for granted. [...]. Um, to be, honest in person too, that I then was slowly missing out on a little bit in the in the online environment. And, not to the extent that it like made my job unpleasant. It was just something I definitely did notice though. Just like, yeah, sometimes it's harder for me to read students and know exactly where they're at. And sometimes I think that the same was definitely true for them, um, both in terms of like tone and body language.

After reflecting, Parker acknowledged that casual, talk story communication was more challenging in the online environment. He noticed his casual conversation was stifled, but he could not quite figure out why. In campus-based settings, Parker used a type of small talk as a connection point between himself and his students. And, he did not realize it was something he had missed until one of his students pointed out that he did less small talk in his online sessions. Parker became more focused on getting through papers than connecting with his students. His

online sessions became less of a hang-out space and more of a work space. Relationship building online was lacking, and Parker realized it late. Perhaps this lack of relationship building was fractured, in part, by the lack of visual cues online. From a deeper view, there's something about the online environment, at least for Parker, that seemed to influence his normal campus communicative strategies. He often discussed technology constraints taking up time, and perhaps he tutored with a perceptive of getting down to business before a technology barrier occurred, rather than a relaxed environment with space and time to catch up with his students before diving into work.

Otto also faced challenges with limitations in nonverbal communication during his synchronous and asynchronous online sessions. He said,

> I, I, try to be very reactive, um, and sometimes like [brief pause] online, um, through like things, like this, um, through Zoom or video conferencing you can't see like people's hands fidgeting. Or like, like, sometimes people like tap their feet or like you can see like nervous things that you can't see or in person that you can't see online.

The difficulties reading nonverbal expressions both synchronously and asynchronously was a challenge that bothered Otto. He relied on being "reactive," based on what he saw of his students. Otto, like many of the participants, used observation to look for nonverbal cues that he used to build assumptions of students. Otto used his assumptions to guide his future steps. He valued nonverbal communication. However, Otto found the loss of nonverbal communication difficult to adjust to online. He discovered that observation is not an easy campus strategy to convert online.

While Nani did not share as many challenges with communication as her peers. She did share how tough writing is in general. Nani said, "Writing as a form of communication is hard." She felt the work of writing was not easy, and she framed her comment on writing around text-based tutoring. She discussed the challenges with text-based tutoring and said it can hinder her

ability to “gauge” her students and determine “what sticks.” Nani went on to say,

> Sometimes when you're using chat that only the chat function on in an online space, you have a hard time seeing what sticks in the when the person talks about something or their face lights up. um, you sometimes can't necessarily see that in the chat function, but with audio and videos a little it was easier to see and understand.

Nani saw communication as enhanced with audio and video technology. Without any video or audio, she found it more challenging to “read” her students in text-only sessions. From this perspective, audio and video synchronous tools were much easier to communicate with students, as compared to text-based tutoring because she could see what “stuck,” based on facial expressions. Like the other participants, Nani relied on observation to assess her students’ nonverbal expressions and formulate assumptions to help her determine what she should do next to facilitate her online tutoring session. Nani seemed most comfortable with observing students in online synchronous sessions compared to the remainder of participants. Perhaps this comfort stemmed from her longtime online tutoring experiences.

Joy also commented on the challenges with text-based online communication. She stated,

> Chat, chat, freaks me out [laughs] because, um, not only do you have to make sure that you type in grammatically and like you know all your things, all your words are spelled correctly, because that would be sort of ironic for a writing tutor to have bad grammar and spelling.

Joy talked about the “irony” of being a writing tutor but having errors in her work to her students. That irony “freaked” her out, and she worried about the fall-out that might arise with her errors. A deeper reading of her statements suggest that Joy felt uncomfortable with the potential for having others think badly of her, and she tried to avoid this at all costs. She feared her performance and ability to be a “good” representation of a writing tutor online, and for Joy, that meant added stress to be perfect, or at least appear so.

Like Joy, Otto was also concerned with his ability to provide text-based tutoring. He

spoke specifically about his experiences with asynchronous tutoring, stating:

> And then when we provide feedback via like our email tutoring, um, like the, um, students submit their papers online and then we email them feedback. Um, there's no, no, like back and forth between the student.

Otto also shared his challenges with text-based synchronous tutoring. He recounted an experience when a student requested to chat over Zoom. He noted,

> One time I had a student that was unwilling to use the voice chat or the video chat; they wanted to use like the text only. And, I'm like: this is [brief pause] very challenging. [...]. I still like hope and I wonder how much they actually got out of it. Um so there are situations like that as well. [...]. It was very, very, peculiar.

Asynchronous tutoring, like synchronous tutoring posed challenges to Otto. Perhaps this is an ironic point, to borrow Joy's language. While Otto worked as a writing tutor, he felt a tremendous lack of confidence providing tutoring support in text-based form. This might reveal his own insecurities about his ability to write, or might further highlight his worry about performance and continuing to manifest an "expert" perception online. His comment about his student's "unwillingness" to use audio or video elements suggested his frustration about being forced to provide text-based furling. Regardless, it is important to note that writing is challenging, as Nani stated. And, perhaps text-based tutoring was simply more challenging to communicate with students than audio and video tutoring sessions.

In summary, communicative challenges encompassed a lack of observation for students and tutors, due to technological constraints, and inherent difficulties with text-based communication, regardless of delivery format. For some, a layer of concern over self-esteem and external perceptions influenced difficulties with communication. For others, the inability to observe non-verbal expressions, a popular and common campus-based strategy, made communication online challenging. Lastly, text-based communication, whether synchronous or asynchronous, tied back to a worry about external perceptions of performance. Overall, the

participants seemed to be uncomfortable with communication between them being different online as compared to campus-based environments. This difference was not always easy to overcome, and it required time and effort to work through.

Role Clarity

Another conflict faced by the participants along their journey to growth was role clarity. This subordinate theme was linear in the participant's journey and began to occur after the participant's initial communicative challenges. In some instances, role clarity was a result of communicative challenges. When considering roles, all the participants initially viewed roles in light of their campus training experiences or tutor training rooted in campus pedagogy. In particular, the participants viewed their roles as needing to be peer-like or some type of mentor, both akin to the campus environment. However, as the participants began to tutor more online, they soon faced situations that contradicted their training.

Alana discussed how much she enjoyed being a "mentor" in her campus-based tutoring sessions, but she felt her role was different online. She said,

> I feel like now online I've kind of reverted back to the peer tutor. And I don't know if it's because online is so convenient, and it's so quick that I can't really stay [brief pause] with the student that long. Or because in person you know you have the set time like maybe 30 minutes to an hour, and I think because the students physically go there, they feel obligated that they have to stay the 30 minutes to an hour. So you're more likely to get to know them a little better and help them a little more with the skill side; whereas now with online stuff , I think they know that they can just leave whenever they're finished. So they'll come in and once they have their questions answered or once they think their paper is done, they kind of just bail. They're like okay I'm good like thank you so much I'm gonna leave. So, I definitely feel more like a peer tutor now, instead of a helpful mentor I guess.

Reflecting on her experiences in the online environment, Alana feels she's more of a peer tutor and less of a mentor, like she was in campus settings. She acknowledged that her mentor role might have emerged out of student's feeling "obligated" to stay and chat, even if their session

finished early. Perhaps more interesting though was Alana's comment about "reverting back to the peer tutor." She indicated that the role of a "peer" was not as desirable as the role of a "mentor." A peer tutor, for Alana, was more or less an answer giver or provider. Yet, the concept of a peer as an answer giver seems oxymoronic, as a peer, in this light, seems elevated to a teacher or expert with answers. In her role as a mentor, Alana viewed herself as helpful, but in her role as a peer, she felt she was less helpful with holistic student development and mostly offered answers to questions about writing. Nonetheless, this offers greater insight into Alana's perceptions of what a "peer" meant to her and her work as a tutor.

More specifically, there is an interesting power dynamic that Alana hints to in her comment. On one hand she is a peer, but on the other hand, she is an answer-giver. In this way, as an online tutor, Alana seems to embody a more authoritative figure that serves as a writing subject matter expert to students. This suggests that there is a power imbalance that is more magnified than nullified for Alana online.

Opposingly, the role of a mentor was more helpful to Alana, and she valued not only building relationships with her students but also building their skills, as opposed to simply sharing knowledge. From an interpretative perspective, Alana viewed herself as a seasoned tutor in campus settings, but felt less experienced online. Perhaps her feelings about roles present a greater underlying difference between the two environments. She may be or feel less experienced online, due to her lower level of technological literacy. In fact, from a closer view, Alana does almost everything opposite in the online environment compared to the campus environment. She builds less relationships, uses different roles, sounds different, and feels different. Online, Alana is quite a different tutor. In fact, it seemed that Alana's radical role changes seemed to expand towards broader aspects of identity.

Otto and Parker both felt that their roles were “fuzzier” online. Seeing a need to support students with technological issues or needing a review of how to use various technologies, the participants felt they shifted between teacher and peer. Otto said this about his experiences:

> I believe in practice that there might feel like there's a little bit more hierarchy. Um in that like, the tutor also knows how the platform works that the student is working on. So, a lot of times, um, it will be me explaining to the student: oh, this is how you do this on Zoom, this is how you do that on Zoom. And, in that way, I'm sort of teaching the student how to use Zoom, how to use the, the, online platform, how do you work with their technology. So, it sort of feels like I have more answers, um, in some ways than I, that I feel like I do. I'm like: know about Zoom, and I can teach you about Zoom, what I know in Zoom. Um, but [brief pause] as far as like your paper goes, as far as your writing goes, um, this is a journey and experience that we're both on together.

Otto faced a conflict between being a technology expert and teacher. He experienced a “hierarchy” of power and authority when he provided technology support. He felt when he acted like a technology expert, this authority subconsciously shifted to his tutoring. The transition from expert to peer was “difficult,” if not impossible and caused varying degrees of challenges, as he tried to navigate how to try to shift away from being viewed as an expert when trying to help tutor students with writing. Otto likened writing tutoring as a journey. While technology support is a period of instruction, writing tutoring should be a journey of learning. However, while this is the ideal state, Otto’s earlier comment seems to suggest this ideal state is difficult to reach.

In this way, Otto reveals a power-dynamic that emerges from the online environment. He juggles between being a subject matter expert in technology and peer writing tutor. The differences in his roles transcends are difficult to manage. When he performs as a technology expert, but pivots to writing tutoring, a sense of expertise remains, and his students seem to view him as more of an expert than peer. In other words, Otto’s comments indicate that he believes that when his students perceive him as a technology subject matter expertise, they automatically believe that he is also a writing expert. Even though Otto does not view himself as a writing

expert, he struggles to navigate how to help his students recognize and accept that he might be an expert with technology but not writing. This reality reveals that in online settings, power-imbalances may be enhanced between students and Otto.

Parker also felt a challenge with power differentials online. He said,

> Um, I always, okay, like kind of considering my role, um, as a campus-based tutor, um, and I, I, felt this way as an online tutor as well; but, it was something that I think I was especially clear about while I was like in person. Um, was that I was not, I was not a teacher. That was always something that I wanted to be able to distinguish for my students because I think that sometimes, especially for people who don't have a lot of like they're, they're, not, they haven't been in the role of a tutee very frequently. Um, something that they're not entirely certain about. The line there is kind of fuzzy, of like: I don't know how much you have the material, and you have the knowledge? And so, I would just kind of reinforce for them like: you know, not only am I a student myself, but I am also just a tutor. Even if I was not, was not, in the like a student, even if I was someone who had already graduated, and I was a graduate tutor, I, I, wouldn't be your teacher because of course I'm not teaching the class. [...]. But, the feeling that at at particular points in time, especially when there are technological issues or particularly Internet issues from the tutees and, the tutor, has to kind of step into position of being like a little more direct than is often ideal for tutoring session.
>
> Sometimes you are teaching. And that is, that is, the only kind of difficult thing. Is just, like you're, even, even, in the online space, you know, you're never put in the position of being the actual like, like, professor; you're not teaching the class but sometimes you do kind of enter the role of like a, um, tech expert. That you're not actually, or at least that I was not actually. And, um, that can be a little awkward particularly when you're hoping for them to be. Like, like, for instance, you know, I'm trying to show them how to use the library, the local libraries database. Well, if they're having tech issues, or they're really just genuinely uncertain of how to access the database, how to put in their, their, student, um, you know like username and password, I'll take over.

In campus settings, Parker notes that his role was "clear." He was empowered to act as peer tutor. But, with his transition online, Parker viewed his roles as less clear. While he did not feel empowered to teach online by his center, he felt a social expectation to teach his students how to navigate and use technology online. In fact, when considering tutoring delivery formats, Parker's roles online were opposite to his campus-based experiences, just like Otto. Parker was both a "teacher" and a "peer," and he struggled with these conflicting roles online. He struggled with

who he was and what he was supposed to do online. Parker did not seem to feel empowered to do certain things online, but, like Otto, when faced with technological constraints and lack of student technology literacy, Parker felt a need to shift roles. He felt he had to be more direct to help students online, "than [he] would in person." Parker did not particularly like being more direct, but he also viewed himself as not being able to help his role adoption. For Parker, "taking over" and becoming a teacher was essential to the success of his sessions.

Parker's entrance into a technological role though, seemed partly out of necessity and partly out of either a lack of patience or feeling pressured to help. His example detailing how he "takes over," indicated that he must take control to help because the student could not figure out how to use a technological tool. Parker seems to hold the stance that it is better to be a technological expert and mitigate technology problems, so he can focus more on writing tutoring as opposed to technology tutoring. This lack of clarity on what he should and should not do online indicates the need to continue to learn what it means to be a tutor "online."

Likewise, Parker's comments illustrate his unique experiences with power dynamics that are unique to the online environment. Like Otto, performing as a technological expert made Parker feel like he was in a position of power and authority, and his elevated position online was unlike his campus experiences. While students may experience uneven power-dynamics from students in campus-based settings, based on perceptions of content expertise, in online settings, Parker experienced an imbalance of power-dynamics that were influenced by his expert performance using technology. In this way, power-imbalance was different online than on campus for Parker. In campus-based settings, Parker seemed to more frequently manage power-imbalance through students' perceptions of Parker as a writing expert. Online though, he faced a new power-imbalance where he had to manage students' perceptions of Parker as a technology

expert. Regardless of the root-cause of the power-imbalance, Parker had to manage different types of power-imbalances whether online or on campus. For Parker, power-imbalance was not necessarily greater online than on campus, it was simply different.

Nani's perspectives mirrored Parker's discomfort about directive tutoring. She said,

> The face-to-face setting, we were encouraged to be very non-directive with students. But, in online tutoring, because of, you have to take more time to type, there's more time constraints, there's more communication, just, constraints, there's experience constraints with clients and tutors needing to model how to interact on an online space. With all those constraints together, you have to be more directive.

She felt a need to acquire more of a directive tutoring role online compared to campus settings, due to online "constraints" not necessarily present in campus settings. Nani seemed to feel the need to fill in or supplement the online environments constraints to provide writing tutoring. In this way, she was more authoritative and direct, at first, which caused discomfort. Online, at least at first, Nani seemed to hold more power than her campus-based tutoring sessions. This power imbalance is tied to her expertise and knowledge of the online environment but may also connect with her subject-matter expertise in writing. Overcoming constraints, for Nani, meant being more directive and doing more modeling for the student with technology, as opposed to technology tutoring. For Nani, like Otto and Parker, the need to change roles and use ones not normally needed in the campus environment suggested a noticeable growth. They all took on aspects of power and authority and had to navigate power-imbalances that were constraints seemingly unique to online settings. In other words, technology was a core factor that seemed to influence Nani's use of power online. In this way, power-imbalance, for Nani, seemed magnified online as compared to her on campus experiences.

Joy had an altogether different experience with role clarity. Not having campus tutoring experience, Joy struggled to determine her role in the online environment. When she first started

tutoring, Joy thought she had to be an expert. She stated,

> But, at first, I thought I would have to be like, you know, the all-knowing, the all-knowing tutor. Uh, and, and, be like: oh yes, like, I know exactly what you have to do and, and, then I'll help you do it. But, I, I, realized that the, you know, the realization that I don't, that I can only guide them. [...]. And, so I, you know, I, we try not [laughs] to be editors, but and I always try to teach them, you know, the grammar rules, so that they can improve themselves as a writer, but, um, because lots of my sessions end up being so grammatically focused, I always feel like my role is, uh, you know, is always sort of attuned to that.

Joy's perception on having to be an "all-knowing" tutor illuminated her thought process. She felt she needed to be perfect. While Joy gained a realization that she did not need to be an expert, she indicated role conflict about not being an editor but a teacher. The concept of teaching grammar is unlike the peer tutoring role, but it is a role Joy felt she needed to adopt. This is similar to Alana; both participants viewed their roles online as being answer providers, at least to an extent. This perception transcended into reality. During their diary reflections of recent tutoring sessions, Alana and Joy discussed providing short, direct answers or editing students' work. They both experience a social pressure or assumed social pressure to perform as answer providers as compared to conversation facilitators. In this way, both Joy and Alana have allowed their students to dictate their boundaries rather than themselves. This willingness to bend their roles may be in response to the freedom they experience or a deeper desire to please their students.

Roles changed as a result of the transition online for the participants. The participants' roles changed drastically, from teachers to editors to answer givers. While some of the participants tried to embrace peer roles online, they faced conflict and challenges with social expectations, when trying to shift from the role of a technological teacher or expert to peer writing tutor. For others, the shift moved from engaging and enriching conversations and facilitated discussions to answering questions. While roles were different, the participants

demonstrated a change in their behavior, based on their situational experiences, which suggested development and growth.

The participants' attempt at meaning-making revealed a deeper challenge for tutors around roles and what they should or should not be doing in their role as a tutor online. Each of the participants indicated a sense of questioning about what their role was supposed to look like within the online space; and, aside from Joy, the participants did not seem to have received much, if any, guidance on role performance or expectations in the online environment. With a lack of role clarity coupled with new tasks and different constraints online, the participants struggled determining what they should and should not be doing online. Role performance online was certainly different than campus-based settings. They faced power dynamics that were, in some instances, unlike their campus-based experiences, adding further difficulty. An overall challenge with what the participants were empowered to do in campus-based settings seems to have influenced the participants to question not just their role, but perhaps their identity. Unspoken questions like: Who am I? Am I a tutor or a teacher? Can I be both? Should I be both? were left to most of the participants to sort through themselves.

Access

The final subordinate theme in this stage of the participant’s journey was Access. This theme was non-linear, as participants commented about access at different points throughout their journey, but it appeared most frequently during this period of time. After tutoring experience was gained and the participants reflected on communicative challenges and role clarity, they considered the unique challenge of access. Like the other subordinate themes, access brought several challenges for the participants. However, it was not all bad. The participants also discussed the benefits of online tutoring as offering more access. In this way, access was a

double-edged sword. It offered benefits and disadvantages.

Access was an important topic for Alana. She referred to it several times in her journey. Alana's perceptions on access were two-stranded. On one hand, she viewed access in light of physical access. She stated, "I would definitely say that online tutoring opens more doors to making it more convenient for students to get the help they need." While metaphorical, she viewed online tutoring as offering more "doors" or outlets for students to meet with tutors. Although, perhaps ironic, she also experienced "less students," with her transition online. Even though the online center was easier to access, Alana suggested that the online environment required a certain level of technological literacy. She said,

> I feel like online tutoring requires a bit more background knowledge than before. Mostly because you know you; I don't want to say you can't tutor online if you don't know how to use a computer, but it definitely makes it way harder. [..]. Um, so I feel like there are certain things that you need to know more about online just about the technology.

Alana referenced technological literacy in light of tutors and their need to have a certain degree of technological know-how. Although, the same might be argued for students. As Alana noted, she sees less students online, which may suggest a barrier to technology, proficiency with technology, or a mixture of the two. Regardless of the reasons, technology was viewed as a barriered access-point for Alana.

Otto made a similar comment about the online environment and technological requirements vis-a-vis access. He noted,

> Um, at first for students, it was super daunting that like online like through video chat, that was very intimidating for a lot of students. And, some students that worked with us like weekly by or like twice a week. Um, one student was coming in like four or five times every week for a different for a variety of classes but coming in super frequently. Um, and then as soon as we started doing online, um, or virtual video conferencing chat only. Um, they completely stopped having sessions; it was too challenging for them to work online with the tutor and trying to get all of what they were getting out of the sessions. I, um, and it happened with a bunch of students. I think we had like three, four, even five students that were coming in frequently like that, um, that we that we were not

> able to work with.
>
> But, on the other hand, I've definitely met more students from Maui, Big Island. Um, what's the really small, Lanai. Um, we have like two people logging in from Lanai, and, like um, we never would have like worked with those students or those students never would have reached out to us, if they were not, if everybody did not move online.

The online environment was problematic for some of Otto's students. Unfortunately, they viewed it as "too challenging," and Otto no longer provided them tutoring support, when the center shifted online. This issue did not happen for one student, it happened for "a bunch of students." The move online impacted the ability to access tutors for several students, and Otto lost relationships he had gained from his campus work. However, for other students, the shift online increased access. More specifically, while access might have been impacted for students on one island, access was increased for students on other islands. Otto reflected on getting to work with students from several islands, including Lanai, which housed students that Otto had never supported before. Like Alana, access online was not entirely straightforward and had its positives and negatives.

Parker had similar concerns with the shift to online tutoring. He stated,

> Um, the one problem of course that I anticipated and that I did run into frequently especially because, you know, we have so many rural places out here is that there were individuals with kind of bad internet access. And, then frankly, I myself, I'm out in the [location]. I have bad internet access too sometimes, especially when it's windy. So [brief pause], that, that was a barricade every now and then. But, not to the extent that it, we, could not work around it. [...]. Just concerns about the tech problems, and not only internet access, but also what if I have a student; you know, a whole new problem is, what if I have a student now that isn't really tech capable?

Parker worried about access on two fronts. He was worried about internet access for himself and his students as well as students' technological literacy skills. He saw both technology constraints and literacy levels as potential barriers to tutoring sessions. Parker's worry about students' technological literacy caused a higher degree of concern over technological problems. He felt technology problems could be overcome, but he worried about students who had no or low

technological literacy; Parker questioned if he could help this group of students. The issue of technological literacy was not a major problem at the center, but online, Parker viewed it as critical. From this lens, Parker was anxious and questioned how much he could really do for a non-technology literate student. This paints a difficult picture and frames Parker's view of the online environment as a barriered access point, like the other participants.

Nani and Joy also discussed access. For Nani, online tutoring was an "educational resource access" point for students around the island chain. Although, Nani found that when she initially began supporting students "on the outer islands" they sometimes "had very, um, sketchy internet connection, those synchronous sessions were not working." The issue of "sketchy internet" was a problem. Technology here again, while bountiful in potential, had access disrupted due to internet connectivity challenges. Interestingly, Nani used asynchronous tutoring to mitigate issues with access that sometimes plagued the synchronous tutoring environment. She called asynchronous tutoring a "plan B" for when "synchronous tutoring wouldn't work." From this viewpoint, Nani seemed to prefer the synchronous online tutoring environment, but valued asynchronous tutoring as a work around to still provide support and be a "helpful tutor," as Joy put it. Regardless, like the other participants, Nani referenced online tutoring as a helpful access point for students rather than herself.

Speaking of Joy, she felt that online tutoring was "a lot more convenient." She liked the ease it afforded her as a student. Joy said that she would "pop back" into an online session at any time. In the middle of breaks or down time, Joy would jump offline and work on her "homework while I waited for my next session." Joy especially liked this flexibility because she said she felt it would look "unprofessional if I was doing work at the center." Here again, Joy worried about her appearance of professionalism. That said, Joy worried about her own technological literacy,

as well as her students. She commented saying,

> I can barely, like, use this platform. But, I, I, don't know what will happen and luckily for me, um, you know, during this past semester, I did not have any glitches; it all sort of went to my co-workers. So, maybe I was just, I had good luck this semester. But, but, there would be like, um, I, I, heard stories where, you know, the, like the, the, platform would just shut down and then they'd have to switch to chat. Or, there'd be clients who wouldn't be able to log in and so they'd have to switch to, to, a different method like Zoom or something. And, I don't know if I would be able to, if that happened to me, I don't know if I would be able to confidently and efficiently, uh, maneuver around those, those, problems.
>
> And so, you know, and if something goes wrong, all I can do really is freak out. But, I'll try not to, maybe restart the computer because that's all I know how to do. But, but, I think, yeah, I think I would really appreciate, you know, if there was a workshop or something that the, the, school could do to help with this. But, yeah, if we're going to be online, we need to build more of a techie knowledge there.

While online tutoring has its benefits, like easily joining tutoring sessions from anywhere around the island, one fear for Joy was what to do when she faced a technological problem. She worried about her ability to access information or expertise to solve technological problems. Parker's fear was how to help a student with low technological literacy, while Joy's worry was the need to help anyone. Her comments resonate with Alana's points that online tutors need a degree of technological skills, perhaps not to tutor but to gain confidence working online and knowing basic troubleshooting to recommend to students. Joy used the term "freak out" again to describe her thoughts and feelings about the potential expectation to offer technology support. She was uncomfortable, startled, and unsure of herself, causing hesitant anxiety, which she defined as culminating into feelings of freaking out. While on the outside, Joy remained calm and collected, internally she was worried. Clearly, she felt underprepared and not comfortable with the idea of having to help students. However, as her training suggested, she might be asked or expected to support students with technological support and be a "helpful person." Interpreting Joy's feelings about providing technological support, it seems in this area she cannot hide her ability to be

perfect or to professionally represent the center. She did not feel she could perform to the expectations her students and center might have placed on her, and this made her feel immense discomfort.

Overall, access is a unique concept that has two very different sides. On one hand, the participants unanimously viewed online tutoring as a portal or hub that offered students anywhere the chance to work with a writing center. Although, on the other hand, only privileged students who have a certain degree of technological literacy or feel comfortable attempting to receive help online in addition to students with the technological tools and resources could enter an online session. While access may be increased in some ways, in other areas, it decreased.

Summary of Episode 3

Conflict is another critical yet unique stage in the participants journey. This is a pivotal in-between stage that is nestled between two vastly different periods - the participant's start of their journey and growth. Like many transitional Bildungsroman, the coming-of-age growth process is filled with conflict (Standford, 2019). The Conflict stage can be described as a period of transition that is ambiguous and filled with personal uncertainty (Standford, 2019), as the protagonist journeys through self-education (Buckley, 1974). The relief gained in the previous stage was short-lived, as the participants soon began to face conflict.

After tutoring for a time, Alana, Otto, and Parker began to worry and question whether or not their students were "getting anything out" of their online sessions. Joy was also concerned with her ability to help. She struggled with the pressure to adopt roles "expected" by her center, but she felt roles, such as peer tutor, were unlike the roles her students wanted her to play. A close review of the participants' challenges reveals a conflict with performance. The participants felt psychological discomfort and personal uncertainty, as they struggled to vocalize the

ambiguity they face in the online environment.

A closely related conflict was communication. All the tutors faced communicative difficulty online. Alana and Joy felt their computer-mediated versions of self ultimately did not transcend well and hindered their communication with students, while Parker's reference to "small screens" and Otto and Joy's not about "chest up views," detailed the limited visual cues that tutors used to have access to in the campus environment. Each participant discussed the inability to observe the students and "read " their students' nonverbal expressions. The lack of visual elements in synchronous and asynchronous or text-based tutoring was a genuine cause for concern among the participants. Through a deep review of the participants' cumulative challenges and conflicts, performance seems to arise again. The participants felt distressed about their ability to tutor and communicate. Both these elements are wrapped up in performance. It seems that the change to the online environment, in part, required the participants' ability to "bear it" and accept their discomfort around performance abilities or evolve and begin the maturation process (Stanford, 2019).

The challenges and conflict around role clarity offer a sharp contrast to the difficulties with psychological distress and communicative challenges. Specifically, the participants, aside from Joy, highlighted their tutoring role as a fixed, mostly peer-like, in campus-based settings. Although, with the transition online, their roles become flexible, and sometimes the opposite of a peer tutor. In many instances, the participants recounted their need to be "directive" and "teacher-like," as they taught students how to use technology, then sometimes shifted back into the role of peer, but not always. Across the participants, the perception on roles as fixed changed, and they adopted roles not common, or perhaps not even "allowed" in campus settings. This change was not without conflict though. Parker, Otto, and Alana faced friction around their

directive roles; they felt uncomfortable being directive tutors. Interestingly, Alana felt like more of a peer, but described her idea of a peer as more of an “answer-giver,” which was oxymoronic, given the role of “peer.” There was friction in Alana’s response, as she felt more peer-like, but seemed to act more as a teacher than peer. Parker talked about roles online as being “fuzzy,” which made him feel “uncomfortable." Otto made a similar comment, suggesting the challenge of trying to re-establish expectations, after adopting a tech expert role, then attempting to shift into a peer role. Analyzing the participants' challenges, a unique result arises. Participants did not question their ability to perform an expert or teacher role, they questioned whether or not they were allowed to adopt these roles. The concern shifted from performance ability to performance acceptance. Going against their training and the ethos of peer tutoring, several of the participants faced uncertainty between real student needs compared to the canonical and philosophical campus dimensions and what it meant to do their job online. They questioned what was allowed and what was not.

The theme of access offered a unique juxtaposition for the participants. From one perspective, all the participants viewed online tutoring as a positive access point that offered more students the ability to “access” and receive support from a writing tutor. Although, the online environment had an Achilles heel, technology. Each participant stated that technology offered an access point for some, but several participants also acknowledged that it became “a barrier” for others. Otto and Alana experienced a drop off in some of their regular campus students, while Parker and Otto worried about students' technological literacy levels. Access to technology was also a concern for Otto, Parker, and Nani. Viewing access from an entirely different lens, Alana and Joy talked about the added skills the online environment requires for tutors. They both discussed the need for tutors to have a degree of technological knowledge and

know-how to be able to navigate and feel comfortable during their online tutoring sessions. In this light, online tutoring was a barriered access-point. Some students were able to overcome the barrier to access the virtual space, but others were not.

After facing tremendous conflict and obstacles, the participants all encountered wall-less or decentralized learning experiences. Their decentralized learning experiences grew with the conflict they faced along their journey. Through these challenges, the participants shifted from "bearing it" to embracing the evolution required in the maturation process (Standford, 2019). These growing moments brought the participants closer to the final stage in their transition journey, psychological maturation.

Episode 4. Growth

The participants journeyed through metaphorical mountaintops and valleys on their journey from naïve to mature online tutors. Each stage brought different formative challenges and offered space for reflection, growth, and evolution. The Bildungsroman typically describes a journey through a formative period in a person's life, where they undergo development that leads them into maturity (Standford, 2019). One scholar asserted that education, in light of the Bildungsroman, propels protagonists to grow up through gradual self-discovery via their cumulative "school-without-walls" experiences (Buckey, 1974, 22). The journey implies a gradual progression of growth that is gained through a variety of learning opportunities, leading to self-discovery (Standford, 2019). In some instances, the journey to maturation is triggered by social expectations and determinism that leads a person to receive an identity akin to adulthood or maturity (Golban, 2018). A key part of the maturation process focuses on "discovering talent and figuring out how to use it" (Galens, 2002, 70). In other words, the protagonist learns from their relationships with other people and the complexities of the world, which influences the

protagonist to learn more about themselves as well as others, eventually gaining mature self-awareness (Galens, 2002).

Learning about the complexities of the online environment as well as expectations of students led the participants to the final superordinate theme in the Bildungsroman journey, Growth. The participants experienced a decentralized learning process, wherein they faced conflicts and overcame them to move forward in their online tutoring journey. The participants experienced self-discovery in unique ways that propelled them to accept the online tutoring environment. Interestingly, each participant embraced an identity and potential future identities that seemed influenced by social expectations and personal discovery. Their experiences encompassed their perceptions of online tutoring as positive, they grew to accept nuanced roles, created new versions of self, and introspectively recognized that, in reality, their transition process was still ongoing and that they had not fully transitioned online. Each of these subordinate themes illustrated important elements of self-discovery and maturation in the online tutoring world.

Nuanced Roles

With a number of experiences providing online tutoring, the participants could not help but face role conflicts head on and determine how to overcome role clarity differences. Each participant navigated role clarity in their unique way, yet the consensus among the participants, regarding their roles online, was that the online environment called for nuanced roles. The subordinate theme of nuanced roles was insightful and offered a unique lens into the participants' growth with the online environment. Role clarity was one of the first big changes that was brought on by the online environment. All the participants discussed arriving at a place of accepting nuanced roles online. In particular, they mostly viewed campus roles as fixed, but they

came to view their roles online as requiring constant shifting, based on the needs of their students. The ability to shift between roles and be flexible, based on the needs of students was an overriding agreement among the participants. When discussing her current practices and views on roles, Alana noted:

> You like sometimes you're a more teaching role, sometimes you're just like a peer, sometimes you're just straight tutor but sometimes you're like more of a classmate kind of a role so kind of just like switching how you interact with students.

Alana viewed her roles as dependent on the needs of her students. In campus settings, she discussed being a mentor, but online, she viewed her role as in a constant state of flux. This role difference grew from her initial perspective of being a mentor campus and peer online. She changed her perspective to include roles as teacher, peer, tutor, and classmate. Alana felt these roles switched often and were based on how she "interacted" with students. For Alana, roles were less task-based and more centered on interaction-based. A closer reading suggests that Alana's roles may be less influenced by power, as she stated she did not see any "differences in power" between her campus and online sessions. Rather, these differences in roles might be defined as either more directive or non-directive when communicating with students. For Alana, each student and situation called for a specific role.

When discussing his thoughts about roles online, Otto talked about flexibility just like Alana. He said,

> I think there's always like an ideal that we strive for. Um, but I think that each situation in each student sort of requires, um, different tools, different skills. [...]. Um, I think, I assess it in every session that I do. Um, in terms of, uh, well: oh, my goodness, that, that, session like I was totally like off base. Like, I the, the, student like my reactions to what the students was saying. Um, I feel like I should have approached it differently. Or, one thing that I always try to do is, I'm definitely a talker, and I try to minimize some of the talking that I do, so I can hear and learn more from the student and work more with the student. Um, but sometimes I'm just like rambling, and, um, I definitely think that I could do better and other times I'm like: wow, I hit that out of the park, um, I wish someone was watching me. Or, like, I wish like I got that on camera. Or, something, um, you know

things like that.

Otto made several points about his thoughts on roles. First, he felt that he tried to strive for an "ideal" role, but the ideal may be different for each student. He also attempted to "assess" each student to help him select a role, but he acknowledged that he did not always accurately assess students and ended up "off base." Other times, Otto felt he successfully matched his role selection to his student and "hit it out of the park." This introspection is an example of his growth in roles within the online space. Interestingly, he noted that he sometimes wished he would have gotten some of his sessions on camera because he felt that he did a great job. From an interpretative point of view, Otto valued his performance. The desire to capture his excellence in performance alludes back to his earlier comment about students having better perceptions of him in online settings. Perhaps his comment on filming his great sessions arises from a place of want to show his greatness or increase his sense of self-worth that he truly is an expert online. Regardless, Otto came to value flexible and adaptable roles when tutoring students in the online world. In particular, with flexibility, Otto has the opportunity to attempt to adopt a role, based on his perceptions of what he assumes his students might want or need. When Otto reviewed positive feedback from his student, also viewed as a role partner, he viewed his tutoring performance as successful. However, when Otto did not receive positive feedback from his student, he viewed his tutoring performance as unsuccessful. In this way, Otto's sessions rely heavily on his ability to interact with his students, perceive needs, and acquire a role-type that he feels is best suited. He resides in a delicate balance between accurately reading reactions and adjusting behaviors to compliment his students' reactions. Otto's struggle with reduced non-verbal expression, highlighted in Episode 3, is more deeply understood through his efforts to

constantly identify students' reactions and make changes, so he gains a sense of role comfort and confidence vis-a-vis positive student interactions.

Parker echoed the sentiments shared by the other participants. He discussed the "slight" differences that he experienced in roles with the online environment. He commented that:

> I think the slight difference there is sometimes, um, you do need to be a little more direct, especially when the student is having technological issues, you know. If you, um, are needing to use the computer from your end, and you're showing them your screen, um, you're streaming it, then sometimes you're a little more hands-on, than maybe you'd like to be or then you would anticipate yourself to be. And, and, that's just something that you have to kind of like bite at the end of the day because if you still want to have a successful tutoring session, especially if the student is having internet issues or their audio is clipping in and out.

Parker felt like his roles online differed to his campus experiences and suggested technology was mostly to blame. Being more "directive" and "hands-on" were behaviors Parker felt compelled to adopt, since he felt it was his job to mitigate technology challenges. Even though Parker did not like having to be more hands-on or directive, he noted that he had to learn to "bite it at the end of the day" because he wanted his tutoring session to be successful. In this light, Parker arrived at a state of acceptance. While he did not like being a directive tutor, he chose to act directive, as he wanted to please his students and make them feel they obtain some value out of his session. For Parker, his goal was to tutor writing and not technology. From that philosophy, he did whatever he needed to do, so he could minimize technological interference and get down to tutor writing. This meant Parker chose to be more directive, in order to achieve successful tutoring performance, rather than be less directive, and not be able to tutor his students' writing. His arrival of acceptance is a marked sign of growth and maturity.

Nani and Joy were less worried about directive and non-directive tutoring strategies. In fact, Nani talked about power not bothering her as much online as it used to. Nani said this about her experiences:

> I've, I've, become less rigid about non-directive and directive tutoring fitting in the box. When I went back as an administrator for the center, I found myself being a lot more directive with face-to-face sessions because of, um, my experiences [online]. And, I was less hard on myself when I found myself being directive because I knew that the session called for it. And, in a way, I became a more flexible tutor.

Nani used to segregate non-directive tutoring as unique to the campus environment, and viewed directive tutoring roles as unique to the online environment. She used to view non-directive roles as the crème de la crème of tutoring roles. However, with her expansive experiences online, her mindset has changed. She has come to view directive and non-directive roles as not delivery format dependent, but rather student dependent. Because of this shift in perspective, Nani believes she has become a "more flexible tutor." Her introspectiveness about flexibility is insightful. Her comment suggests that previously, Nani was not a flexible tutor. She was static, tied down to a space or place and mindset that took years of experience to undo. Nani talked often about her campus tutoring experiences, and a deeper reading of her comment suggests that her past experiences and tutor training dogma might have influenced her views of the online environment as well as cut-and-dry views on roles. Only after time and experience, did Nani grow out of her "provincial" (Standford, 2019) mindset and demonstrate a complex and authentic psychological maturity.

Joy felt it was important to be attuned to her students' needs. For Joy, roles were nuanced in the sense that she chose to base her roles on her students' needs during the session, rather than static roles that might be expected from her writing center. She said,

> It depends on what, what the client wants. And, and, two what, uh, what kind of work or like maybe what stage of their, at their work is at. [...]. And, so I, you know, I, we try not [laughs] to be editors, but and I always try to teach them, you know, the grammar rules, so that they can improve themselves as a writer.

She cared more about working "together to improve the product," with students rather than embodying a specific role. Unlike North's (1984) to produce better writers, not writing, Joy's

experiences allude to a mixture of both improving writing development skills as well as writing. On one hand, Joy feels that teaching her students is important, as the act of teaching and showing students how to do things can help improve their writing skills. On the other hand, Joy cares about ensuring her students leave her sessions with a better piece of writing in hand. This dual role focus seems dictated by several factors including Joy's perceptions of what her students' want and where they are in their "stage" or writing process.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing comments was her note that she "always [tries] to teach." For Joy, teaching grammar rules would help students to "improve themselves as writers." Joy's focus on teaching is not on technology but writing. Unlike Otto and Parker, she becomes an answer-giver rather than a peer. This idea of an answer-giver tutor alludes to Alana's perspective of being a tutor who gives answers. Both seem to offer expert writing support, as opposed to expert technology support to help their students. However, Joy took this concept a step further, as Alana did not outright say she taught students, but Joy did. Perhaps due to her heavy investment in grammar, Joy feels it is important to teach students grammar rules, which will help her students. She did note that she tried to avoid editing students' work for them, but found a workaround by teaching or modeling grammar rules. A deeper interpretation of Joy's experience indicates that successful role performance is intricately tied to building her students' knowledge of writing while also helping to make their writing better. This alludes to an earlier comment Joy made about doing what she feels her "students want" and sometimes that means avoiding "long conversations" about their writing process.

In addition to their current roles, each of the participants were posed with a unique question on how they viewed or imagined future tutor roles. A cross-case comparison participants unanimously agreed that the future of online tutoring roles was embedded in

delivery formats. When discussing their views on tutor roles, all the participants discussed tutoring environments. In particular, the participants talked about their expectation that tutors would have “hybrid” roles. They each defined hybrid tutoring as tutors providing support in campus and online environments in the future. This perspective seems well aligned with the participants' perspectives on nuanced roles. The type of role and role tasks did not matter as much for the participants, as they felt roles should be selected, based on student needs. In this light, delivery formats and students' needs mattered more to the participants than roles. Since roles were constantly shifting online, the worry about roles was less around directive or non-directive, at this stage in their journey, and more focused on which type of role elements the participants should adopt to elicit affirmation from students, as positive student interaction was indicative of successful role performance.

New Self

With a flurry of challenges, the participants learned to overcome them in unique ways. From new strategies, different ways of talking, and even changes in personality, each participant created a new type of self to function in the online environment. Alana’s new self-focused new strategies to mentally prepare for her work. She mentioned the following:

> I think for me personally, it's like the, the readiness that comes with it because I think when I had to get out and do things, you know you have to get dressed and drive there. I feel like that whole process used to psych me out and put me in the correct mindset right away. But now that I literally roll out of bed and into my desk area, I feel like there's less time for me to get myself psyched up and put myself in the right mindset to do certain things online. Like it takes more mental prep because I’m not leaving my space [laughs].

Alana has found that she needs more time to mentally prepare for her online self, than her campus center self. While she feels like she’s doing similar tasks in the online space, mentally she’s needed to build in more structure to get herself “psyched up” and psychologically present and ready to tutor online. This new self has been both a product of the pandemic but also a

complete shift online. Alana's comment about "literally roll[ing] out of bed" offered insight into her behaviors and mindset. The idea of rolling out of bed beckons a sense of lackadaisicalness, yet it also suggests isolation. Alana thrived with her routine and ability to leave her space. However, with the pandemic influencing campus closures, her freedom to leave her personal space was barred. Alana, like many others during the pandemic, shifted her work and routine into her home, causing a disruption in routine and impacting her mentality. Although, Alana demonstrated her grit by persevering through the tough new difficulties brought on by the pandemic and saturation in the online environment. She discovered new things about herself, such as the need to carve in mental preparation time at home before she begins tutoring. This was a tremendous change in Alana's work routine, but it also represents an example of growth for Alana by creating space to build the "right mindset to do certain things online" and accept that she was not able to leave her personal space, but rather repurpose it.

Parker's new self-centered on the changes in tasks he adopted over time, as he shifted online. He talked specifically about what he did when working with students for the first time online. His new tasks were specific to the online environment and were in response to the technology requirements of his online synchronous tutoring sessions. He noted,

> For individuals where it's like: I'm not entirely sure what your Zoom literacy is, so to speak. Um, I, I, beginning a session it, I would pretty immediately ask them like: okay, you know, um, let's start screen sharing your assignment. If you can as well as the rubric. Are you, do you know how to do that? And then you know, I would be able to run them through real quick, if they were not sure how, and if they did know how, then we just start right away.
>
> Um, but, I did not, I did not like open with questions. Like, um, you know are you comfortable using Zoom or do you know how to use the chat function? I would typically ask questions as like, um, the need arose. So, if, if, I was like: okay, now I need to send you this link because I want to show you this website or I want to go over the article that you're using with you. Um, I would ask them: are you familiar with the chat function on Zoom? Do you think you can open it up for me? Uh, could you send me the article? Or, can I send you this, let's review it together.

> Um, especially if students were having problems with like a chat function, or they were having problems opening things on their end, I would sort of just screen share from my end, which that was, that was a really convenient, um uh, part of Zoom. And it's something that like you could not really do before. Because of course if a student is on the computer, you can't use their computer.

Parker's new tasks included assessing whether or not his students knew how to use Zoom and to what extent they had technological literacy. If he found a student struggling with using Zoom, then he would guide them through a tutorial. Although, he did not spend much time, stating that he would conduct a "quick" run through of the tool. Like his previous foci, Parker felt it was more important for him to tutor writing and less important to take extended time to ensure his students became well-versed in using Zoom. That said, Parker would not assume his students had low levels of technological literacy if they could not use Zoom. Rather, he asked them to perform a task having to do with the internet. If he found his students also could not figure out how to navigate the screen, then he would take over and do the screensharing himself, which he noted was a valuable and "really convenient" feature unique to the online environment. Interestingly, Parker discussed being a non-directive tutor in his campus sessions. He would not touch or write on a student's paper when tutoring in campus environments, but his approach changed with his shift online. Not only did he touch students' works with his cursor, but he took over their screen or screen-shares himself. In this way, Parker took charge of some of his students' work. Ironically, his virtual fingerprints, while almost invisible, are viewed or observed by the student throughout his session. A clear change took place when compared to his campus sessions. He went against the standards of his center, which focused on not touching a student's work, to virtually touch and control what part of the paper was reviewed and worked through. This adjustment in self-strategy was yet another indication of going against standards to do what Parker thought was best for his students.

Otto's new self-focused on his self-perception. He felt his ability to navigate and teach

his students online changed others perceptions of himself in the online environment. He made the following statement about his experiences with online tutoring:

> I definitely feel like there's, I suppose higher expectations of me. Um, and I know that like students, once you like show them something, especially with like the tech, and they're like: oh my god, that was so easy, and you explained it so like quickly and like concisely. They're already like all on board with like this dude's awesome or this person's awesome [laughs]. Um and my perception or their perception of me is completely different than if I was on campus. And, we pulled up their thing, and we just started like going in, and I was asking them questions. Um, they don't have that like: oh my god, he's awesome, he knows everything like sort of mindset in person.

Otto believed students had “higher expectations” of him, which he felt led them to also have better perceptions of him in the online environment. These social expectations, for Otto, made him feel like he had to perform well online to meet students’ expectations. He believed students view him as being “awesome” online, but he felt different in campus sessions. In fact, he felt when tutoring in campus settings, students had a lower opinion of him. Otto seemed to allude to his high technological literacy as influencing his status online. He felt students viewed him as more than a peer tutor, as he helped students navigate tools, troubleshooting technology, and introduce new online resources, among other actions. With all his added tasks around technology in the online environment, Otto felt that his students perceived himself as an all-knowing expert online who could “concisely” help sort out students' tech issues. Otto’s focus on his status online might serve as an ego-booster, raising his self-esteem or self-worth. In this light, it is easy to see how Otto viewed the online environment as “more positive,” after his transition. Perhaps Otto felt more respected in this space, and he may be treated more like a professional than peer, which better aligned with his position change, as he started a new role as a professional consultant and staff member, rather than a student tutor. Nonetheless, the online environment for Otto clearly became less “daunting” and more validating.

Nani’s new self was her ability to collaboratively make her online tutoring sessions alive.

She viewed the online environment as “cold, stark white space,” and she missed the comfy, homey warmth of her campus center. But, Nani discovered that she could convert the cold, sterile online environment to be a thriving, warm, and colorful space, similar to her campus experiences. She said,

> I have learned that there is warmth in online writing center tutoring and that really comes from the interaction between tutor and client. And, seeing the whiteboard just filled with text and seeing it filled with color, because on, with [online tool], whenever you edit a piece of text, it highlights it in a color that is assigned to you. Um, so I've learned that online, the online space even though, at times, it can be isolating. There is more, there is still warmth; it is not the comfy home, it's not the comfy physical home that I am used to with face-to-face tutoring. But, with my clients, we can make it very colorful; we can make it very alive. We can still have the same productive warm discussions that we would have at a face-to-face center.

Nani’s ability to collaborate with a student and leverage online tools and resources allowed her to transition the cold, white space to a colorful room that is vibrant and alive. Alluding to her initial fears about a loss of community online and facing the reality of “isolation,” Nani discovered that purposeful interaction with students can build a sense of community and relationships that were initially stifled with her transition online. To do so, Nani collaboratively facilitated online tools that build a thriving space online. A deeper interpretation of Nani’s experiences reveals her new aim. She tried to embody the campus center; she became the center for her students. Even though she could not replicate the campus center in terms of a “comfy physical home,” she created a new virtual synchronous virtual home. Using color and tracking the flow of her interactions with students, Nani brings warmth and comfort to her new virtual home, inviting warmth and convert and bringing a once stark space alive.

On one hand, Nani’s new self is that she becomes the campus center online for her students. Although this is unique to her online synchronous audio-only or audio and video sessions. She also created a new self in asynchronous or text-based sessions. Nani discussed the

need to create an online persona in text-based settings to invoke warmth and embody the campus center through writing. She said, “tutors have to work hard in developing an online persona, if they are not using audio and video features.” When discussing her text-based online tutoring persona, Nani said she created a persona that was somewhat unlike her personality. She purposely tried to change herself to appear like she was “smiling” through her text messaging and worked on being very “positive,” and also commented about being more “encouraging” or up-beat in order to build rapport with her students. For Nani, using a positive and smiley persona helped to encourage her students and “calm them down after a bad grade or comment from a teacher.” Although her authentic self was more low-key and relaxed, she worked hard to appear almost overly positive and extroverted, infusing lots of “encouragement” where appropriate. This is an interesting revelation, as becoming more aware of one’s authentic self is important to self-discovery.

While Nani noted she changed her authentic self, she also recognized who her authentic self was. Nani confidently created a new self that was more positive, encouraging, and upbeat to engage her students. Communicative strategies were major changes. In particular, she leveraged certain aspects of her online persona when working with students via specific writing genres. For example, Nani said that she offers “extra encouragement” to students writing application letters, as she viewed that writing as challenging and felt it required her to be more of a “cheerleader” or “hype-man” for her students. Perhaps this positivity and extroverted-ness was more appealing to students, or it might have been easier to take a leading, directive role. Nonetheless, her actions were purposeful - she wanted to not only nurture her students emotionally but infuse a type of warmth and comfort that had been embedded in the campus center. Like the other participants, Nani’s behaviors and introspection reveal how much she’s learned, as she transitioned into the

online world and demonstrates her maturity as an online tutor.

Joy's perceptions of new self-focused on physically changing the way she communicated. She wanted to represent the center and herself well and felt she needed to change her voice. Joy made the following statement:

> If you haven't noticed already, my voice is not the most melodic. And so, you know, when I talk, when I talk, to people in person or you know or even on video, I use a lot of facial expressions, and I use a lot of hand gestures usually to help get my point across 'cause my voice is not the most dynamic. And you know, placid sounding. And. So when it was mic only or audio only, I felt like I had some, it was more of a challenge for me to get my words across. And I tried, so I tried to make my voice higher like this to see if it would sound more helpful and maybe more communicative, but I don't know if that actually worked.

She focused on changing the way her voice sounded in an attempt to enhance interaction and communication between herself and her students. Although, Joy questioned whether or not it helped. She relied heavily on her "gestures" to help her communication be "dynamic." But, with the loss of major reduction to nonverbal expressions, she sought to change her computer-mediate self and create a new voice. In this light, Joy's fear of performance seemed to influence her actions to try to appear more "helpful and maybe more communicative." Her hesitation and questioning of herself about whether or not her change in voice helped was insightful. A deeper interpretation indicates that Joy's change in her authentic self was perhaps a mixture of uncertainty with a deeper root cause of lack of confidence. She tried to help engage her students more, but she did not know if changes in her voice actually helped or not. While Joy's behaviors might indicate a person still working through their maturation as a tutor, it might also be read in light of her truthfulness. Joy was honest in her communicative strategies in the online synchronous environment, and she was also transparent in commenting that she did not know if changing her voice worked or not. This introspection is a marked sign of growing maturity for Joy.

Like Nani, Joy also worked on creating a text-based persona that was different from her synchronous online self. In text-based sessions, Joy frequently used “smiley faces, or, you know, exclamations points” when she communicated with students. She also provided feedback in a “roundabout” way and was less direct “just because, like, you don’t want to hurt their feelings, you know.” Joy changed her tutoring style and self to be more positive and bring students more comfort, like Nani. For Joy, text-based tutoring required a different type of emotional intelligence, such as more caution around word use and feedback to ensure her students' emotional needs were considered. These new behaviors illustrated increased maturity, as Joy became acutely aware and sensitive to online delivery strategies and made purposeful adjustments in an attempt to best support her students.

The journey and outcome to gaining a new self online was different for each participant: Nani’s new self meant a new mental preparation process; Parker’s new self meant new strategies to mitigate challenges, which sometimes proved counter to campus policies; Otto’s new self was a perception of greater worth with providing expert technological support; Nani’s new self was her embodiment of the campus center and unique conversion of campus elements to make her online sessions come to life as well as the creation of a new text-based online persona; Joy’s new self was a physical change in voice and new online persona. Clearly, while the creation of a new self, meaning a new task or process or behavior, was observed throughout all the participants. The outcome of the participants’ new selves ranged from psychological to physical behavior changes.

Positivity

Through the participants' change and growth process, their overall perceptions of the online environment began to change. Specifically, there was a marked psychological

transformation in the participants, as their perceptions about the value of online tutoring shifted. Initially, the participants worried about the online environment; their concern mostly focused on a loss of learning, relationships, and general comfort. The participants all worried about the online environment before they began their journey into the online tutoring world. However, after tutoring online and working through a series of conflicts and trials, each participant came to view online tutoring positively, which suggests the mere experience of online tutoring can be transformational in a positive way and individuals can gain comfort. Although, the degree of positivity differed for each participant.

Alana and Joy's perspective seemed to be most identical in their acceptance of the online environment. They both saw online tutoring as a good thing, but they still held a preference for campus environments. Alana described her thoughts this way:

> Like I'm always gonna like, um, campus-based tutoring in-person tutoring more. And, I think it's just because what I; it's what I'm used to the most. That's what I've trained for. Um, the online is still fun and interesting, but it's definitely out of my comfort zone. And, I feel like I tutor more effectively [laughs] when I'm comfortable.

While Alana seemed to have come to terms with the online environment noting that it was "fun and interesting," she still preferred the campus environment. She offered two points of reflection to justify her feelings. First, Alana noted that she was "trained" for the campus environment. Second, she felt the campus environment was her "comfort zone," and she was most "effective when [she's] most comfortable." Training and comfort were critical factors for Alana, and they might be related. Alana discussed participating in many different types of training for the campus environment, which seemed to influence her comfort and confidence levels. However, she did not feel her training was very robust or formal when she re-transitioned online. Without training, Alana was left to figure out what to do online by herself, with some support for her "other tutors." Alana seemed to second guess what she did online and this may be due to a lack of

formalized online tutor training. Although, it is important to note that Alana also did not feel comfortable online because of her self-described low technological literacy. This suggests that Alana feels ill equipped to support her students with technological challenges that inevitably occur in online environments.

Joy expressed a similar feeling of positivity but coupled it with an acknowledgment that there continue to be challenges online. She noted,

> And, uh, when I, once I got the hang of online tutoring, I realized that despite there being setbacks, socially, because we all know that online communication can be a little awkward [laughs], um, you know, if you if you take that in stride, then there's a lot of things that can be helpful and that can only apply to online sessions.

Joy still struggled with the “socially” awkward “online communication.” Communication was a persistent struggle for Joy in her transition journey. Joy struggled to be the type of tutor that held lengthy “discussions,” a characteristic her center expected, when supporting students seeking grammar help. She also struggled to overcome her self-critical perceptions of her computer-mediated self. Joy felt her visual and auditory online self was problematic and did not adequately reflect her authentic self. Hence, Joy spent an added effort trying to replace her “harsh” sounding voice with an unnaturally higher tone to make herself sound more pleasant in an effort to enhance her synchronous online communication with her students. Additionally, Joy created a new online persona in her text-based tutoring to curtail “hurting [her] clients feelings.” Although, Joy’s comment here suggests an even greater awkwardness. She seemed to feel that social interactions with her students were awkward l, and perhaps these feelings were influenced by her attempts to make her online interactions less awkward. Regardless. Joy’s points suggest an overcoming point. She alludes to the requirement of taking the awareness “in stride.” Through this comment, it is clear that Joy has come to accept the awkwardness she feels with online interaction and pushed past it. Once she did, Joy recounted that the online environment truly did

offer a number of “helpful” benefits. She finds that although challenging, the online environment can be positive. This mindset is almost opposite to her initial thoughts. From questioning why she was forced to tutor online to viewing online as having valuable benefits, Joy’s mindset illuminates her growth as an online tutor.

Otto also viewed the online environment as “more positive” based on the cumulation of his experiences. He made the following comment:

> I think [online is] more positive. I think, um, there was a lot that we learned. There's a lot of things, the ways that our services have grown. We're definitely able to reach more students and as we transition back more in person, I definitely think that online tutoring is going to be a huge part of our services; way more than it was before. And, I can't imagine, um, in the future, um, not providing online services or a decline in the amount of online services we provide.

His comment reflects a depth of introspection about his journey into the online environment. Otto discussed the amount of lessons learned and growth in services as important markers and suggested that his center would continue to offer online tutoring in the future. Otto’s use of “we” reflects his connection to his center, and it might reveal his role as a tutoring leader. The use of “we” suggests not only Otto’s center, in general, but, specifically, it might also reflect himself and his leadership team. Otto’s focus on self-worth and perceptions were highlighted again in this comment. It evoked a sense of leadership, direction, and power, all the things that Otto had been learning to morph into with his personal transition from peer to professional tutor. From this lens, Otto’s views of the online environment might also be viewed in light of his positionality as a leader and staff member within his center.

Interestingly, Parker and Nani had related perspectives on the positives of the online tutoring environment. They both saw the online environment as offering almost an identical type of service as campus centers. Parker stated,

> And, and, particularly when they're not having technological issues, definitely the, the, slight gap between the in-person tutor and the online tutor pretty much disappears, you

> know. If, if, they're, if everything's good on their end, and they're also like tech literate, at least to the same extent you are, then you're probably not going to run into any like any obstacles that would be unique to the online space. [...]. You, you, can't perfectly recreate the online or, I'm, the in-person environment in the online environment, but what you can do is kind of work around it, you know.

While Parker suggested that "technological issues" were the major distinguishers that differentiated an online session from a campus session. However, if a student was "tech literate," then Parker viewed the potential for an online session to closely parallel a campus session. That said, Parker offered a firm resolution that one "can't perfectly replicate" a campus session online. While the online environment offered unique benefits and the opportunity to "work around" challenges or leverage benefits like easy resource sharing, it can't do everything that one might on a campus session. Perhaps this comment gains context in relation to Nani's earlier statement about the online environment's inability to cater to students' "physical" needs. That said, this comment might be in light of Parker's earlier comments about the lack of observation opportunities to "read" his students behaviors and, vice-versa, for his students to read his own behaviors. One might also recall Parker's comment on "stifled small talk," and the challenges he faced trying to form relationships with students like he did in the campus environment. Regardless, Parker's discovery that one cannot "perfectly recreate" the campus environment illuminated his complex thinking and experiences towards the online world. While he saw benefits online, he also recognized that online tutoring was simply different from the campus environment, and that perceived reality was okay for Parker.

Nani's feelings resembled Parker's, but she took her arguments a step further. Nani made the following statement:

> As a [graduate] student, as a tutor who has been tutoring for eight years, and as an administrator, I would, I would be hesitant to say there is a difference [between campus and online tutoring]. I would just be, I would just be like [laughs], it depends on the session, it depends on the client, it changes with every session. Um, I wouldn't say there's

> no difference, but, in my mind, my mindset has shifted to be like: yeah, it's just writing, it's just writing center tutoring, yeah.

Nani recounted her expansive jobs and experiences to make a declarative statement that online and campus tutoring sessions are not all that different. She did not think "there is a difference," at least not from a scale of significance. Even though there might be some embedded differences between delivery formats, those differences did not matter as much to Nani anymore. Rather, she believed that the true difference of a session was based on the student and their unique needs and characteristics, rather than the delivery format. To Nani, online and campus tutoring are "just writing center tutoring" in different delivery formats. They are one in the same. This viewpoint is a tremendous change from her earlier thoughts. Nani used to believe online tutoring and campus tutoring were "decidedly different." In fact, at one point, Nani questioned the "feasibility" of online tutoring and was very concerned about why asynchronous tutoring was "still around." Yet, her journey into the online world has changed her, and her experiences have altogether altered her perception to view online tutoring through, arguably, the most radical lens of all the participants. According to Nani, online and campus tutoring was just tutoring. This marked growth reveals a deep maturation in Nani's journey online.

Each participant viewed the online environment through different lenses of positivity. In fact, there was a noticeable scale of differences in perspectives with Alana's view of the online environment being perhaps most conservative, followed by Joy and Otto, and then Parker. Arguably, Nani's perspective was the most liberal. For example, Alana's perception was that the online environment was fun and interesting, but still lesser-than the campus space; Joy felt communication was awakened online, but the virtual space had its benefits; Otto viewed the online environment as good, and this perspective seemed to be fueled from a place of elevated status. Whereas, Parker saw the online environment as good and very closely, but not entirely

replicative of the campus environment. On the other hand, Nani viewed online and campus tutoring sessions as one in the same; they were both simply writing tutoring. In sum, the participants' mindsets changed radically, as they journeyed through the online tutoring world. While perceptions on the degree of positivity for the online environment different, each participant held radically different views compared to their first few steps in the online world.

A deeper interpretation of positivity suggests that comfort is closely intertwined with positivity. The Bildungsroman posits that a key to transformational change is a realization of the function of milieu. That is, the participants discovered that their roles, strategies, and overall function were dependent on their environments. Clearly, social settings were influenced as a result of physical changes from working in campus-based settings to online ones from each of the participants. For example, each participant reinvents themselves, in part, after questioning their interactions, as revealed in the New Self theme. The act of making changes to one's self suggests that the participants have not only challenged their assumptions, but transformed their mindset to view the online environment as positive, especially when, prior to their online transition, the participants mostly viewed the online environment in a negative or reserved way. This suggests that the mere experience of the online milieu was transformational, in a positive way, for the participants.

Not Fully Transitioned

The cumulative moment of introspection and final marking of the participants arrival at a place of maturity in the online environment was their self-identified position in the transition journey. This final theme was linear and offers a richer perspective into the participants' self-discovery. Interestingly, all the participants, except for Parker, identified their tutoring journey

transitioning into the online environment as being far from over. Alana, Nani, Otto, and Joy all believed they were in a continual process of transition.

When Alana was asked if she had fully transitioned, she offered a quick and immediate response. Alana stated, “Definitely continuing to transition [smiles], and I want to say that it will take several years for me to be, used to it [laughs].” Alana felt her transition would “take several years.” When prompted at why she felt her transition would take several years, as opposed to months, she referenced her challenge with technology. Alana viewed her self-described limited knowledge of technological literacy as influencing her transition. Recalling her prior comments, Alana was most concerned about loss of relationships, lack of training, and reduced feelings of comfort and confidence compared to the campus environment. While Alana might be physically transitioned, in the sense that she’s been tutoring online for a long period of time, psychologically, she felt it would take her years to transition and reach the level of comfort she experienced in campus settings. In all, Alana’s transition was incomplete. However, her extensive experiences infer a tutor who has grown immensely as a result of overcoming tremendous challenges faced online.

Otto felt he had not fully transitioned online because he “was learning every day.” In reflecting on his transition process, Otto said,

> I don't necessarily know if transitioned is the word I would, transitioning or transition is the words I would use. Um, but I think I’m always learning when I’m online. I could say maybe like I’m used to being online. Maybe I’ve transitioned online, but I’m still learning when I’m online. It's not like I feel like I’ve solved everything, like online is a solved, sort of thing. I feel comfortable online. I feel we're comfortable working with students online, but I still think there's more things that I can learn.

He reflected on the word “transition” and did not feel it entirely reflected his perceptions. Otto justified his perspective in relation to comfort. On one hand, he felt he had transitioned online to the extent that he felt “comfortable online.” Although, he hesitated when reflecting on what he

did not know. Specifically, Otto's comment that he still thought "there's more things that [he] can learn," illuminated his uneasiness about whether he had truly transitioned or not. Even though Otto struggled to articulate if he had truly transitioned online, his authenticity, truthfulness, and earnest resolution that he had not "solved" everything online signified the continuation of his transitional journey.

Nani's experiences with transition were similar to Otto's, but she also viewed her transition from the perspective of her numerous role changes. Nani stated,

> Uh, I am [laughs] always in the, um, I guess my position is, I am always transitioning online. And, even with face-to-face, I am still transitioning to face-to-face too. Um, I always like to think that I'm learning from my clients, I'm learning from my fellow tutors. There is always something new to be learned with any sort of writing center space, any sort of pedagogy. So, I always like to think that I am in a state of transitioning. Um, and just, just, personally with my experiences in writing centers, I'm always in and out of programs. Um, so I was, I've always been in a state of transition; it was, it's only been recently, this, this past year where I've really stayed put with one program. Um, but yeah, it's, it's, a weird feeling, but it's also a good feeling because you don't feel like you know everything even with x number of years in the field. We're, we're, fortunate as writing center practitioners, um, that the field is still continuing to grow. We're still revising our pedagogy where, you know, there's, there are so many calls for research. The writing center field is also known to be very slow in adapting things because we've taken things from the composition field, and I think we've learned that some of those lessons don't really fit us. So, in the past two decades, we're really trying to see what works for us, with, especially, with, um, research. Um, yeah, so always in the state of transition, but it's not a bad thing.

Nani offered a holistic view of her transition process. Her perspective on being in a "state of transitioning" was evident in her perspective of "always learning" from her students and fellow tutors. Additionally, Nani felt she was constantly shifting in both environments, online and campus, due to her flexing job positions. Being "in and out of programs," made Nani feel that she was in a constant state of learning, like her tutoring sessions. What's even more insightful was Nani's commentary on the larger field of wring center pedagogy. With the radical shift online, caused by the pandemic, Nani saw a tremendous season of growth and learning for

tutoring pedagogy in general. In particular, her comment about the tutoring field attempting to grow out or away from the composition field offered a unique view in the world of online tutoring, from a broader perspective. Nani's experiences offer a parallel view of what transition means for her, that learning was needed and continues to be gained from tutoring, roles, or the larger field. In this view, transition, for Nani, means that she is in a constant state of learning.

Joy viewed her transition in light of her experiences with technology. For Joy, technology was one of the biggest barriers in her transition process. That said, she also worried about larger ramifications of representation. Joy said,

> I'm still learning about how to use my computer; it's going to be a lifelong transition online [laughs]. So, what I'm worried about is that, um, I'll get to this, like, weird, uh, point where this weird limbo point where I won't be; I'm still not completely comfortable online, and I don't think I ever will be.

Like most of the study's participants, Joy felt like she was continuing to actively transition and felt like her transition process would be "life-long." Her note that she was "still learning how to use [her] computer was compelling. Joy insinuated that she felt not knowing how to proficiently use technology was a major factor that prolonged her transition. She then referenced a "weird limbo point" before stating that she did not "think [she'll] ever" be comfortable online. Her comments seemed disjointed, as she attempted to reflect on her experiences. The seemingly coded comments reveal a deeper uncertainty in Joy's transition process. On one hand, Joy alludes to the possibility of being comfortable online with her "limbo" comment. However, she decided to immediately squash any potential that she may eventually become comfortable online. This behavior might indicate a number of interpretations. However, from a close reading of Joy's experiences, she continuously questioned herself and her abilities with technology. Although, when required to perform, she was able to overcome everything she faced in her online sessions. Joy does not give herself enough credit. Perhaps she convinced herself that she was not a

technology knowledge holder and therefore could not see that she knew more than she did. What Joy does not recognize is that she was a problem solver and regardless of the issue, she would likely be able to figure out what to do. Maybe the larger problem for Joy isn't technological literacy as much as she might fear making a mistake, which was evident in her first tutoring session. She was gutted, imagining that she had cost her student a "good grade." In this light, Joy's concern about technology, and her state of constant transition, might be due to a larger fear of mistakes and not being perfect. Joy recognized she did not have all the answers with technology, especially as it "constantly changes," as she noted. Technology is unlike grammar rules, which she is highly proficient in. In this way, Joy might always be transitioning unless she accepts that it is okay to not know all the time. In this way, Joy's transition process is a continuous, life-long journey.

Interestingly, Parker saw himself as fully transitioned online. He said this about his completed transition:

> I was fully transitioned to online tutoring by October 2020. Throughout September, I had actually been moving in between the campus center and my house for work. I offered in-person and online tutoring sessions while at the physical center, and then would offer solely online tutoring services on days where I worked from home. Then my in-person hours turned into from-home shifts, and I only supplied digital tutoring.

A close reading of Parker's comment suggests that he perceived his transition to the online space as a physical transition. In particular, this comment "then my in-person hours turned into from-home shifts, and I only supplied digital tutoring," insinuates that once he stopped tutoring in campus sessions, Parker believed he fully transitioned online. This view on transition was unique, especially when compared with the study's other participants. Fully transition, for Parker in this sense, was a physical transition that transcended into a psychological one. Although Parker was unable to articulate his transition mark from a psychological sense, marking the date

of his transition, October 2020, suggests a degree of commitment. Parker could pin-point the date he shifted to online offering tutoring sessions online, and he did not seem to have looked back. The physical movement and effort to “move” his center to an online space suggests a successful and complete transition in Parker’s worldview. Parker’s physical shift seemed to provide a degree of comfort that represents a form of success. His experiences suggest the importance of engaging in a form of online experience, prior to taking part in online tutoring. Parker spent tremendous amounts of time exploring and experimenting with systems, and his extensive amount of practice and experience with the online environment and tools helped him to feel comfortable. This feeling of triumph was a major step in his transition journey and step towards success. While Parker may likely experience further self-evaluation regarding his performance, he might not be ready to pivot towards reflection and evaluation of other elements in his transition journey, such as online pedagogical practices, relationships, etc.

In all, the journey into the online environment has not ended for any of the study’s participants. Their transition journey into the online world remained ongoing. Although the participants might be in different places of their transition journey, they each revealed differing views on why they were still in a state of transition. That said, the most common phases of transition were cited by participants as needing to build technological literacy and know-how and continuously learning from their students.

Summary of Episode 4

The resolution of the traditional Bildungsroman illuminates the protagonist experiences a series of developmental phases that help to bridge the gap between youth and maturity (Standford, 2019). Along their journey, the protagonist overcomes a variety of experiences and tensions that form a barrier to their peace of mind, and through this “growing up” process, they

gain increased clarity of mind to mature. Each of the participants experienced a number of experiences that challenged their comfort, self-perceptions, confidence in abilities, and more. Particularly, the lack of psychological comfort and confidence, coupled with communicative and technological constraints presented themselves as major challenges that the participants had to overcome to mature. Overall, the participants' actions and their emotional state illustrate how far they have come in their coming-of-age journey.

The realization and acceptance of nuanced roles was a marked difference to the participants' previous perceptions of roles vis-à-vis campus environments. Each participant, aside from Joy, viewed their roles in campus environments as fixed – they were expected to be peer-like. After transitioning online, the participants experienced conflicts in social situations that challenged the one-role campus tutoring model. After facing challenges with roles, such as adopting directive and teacher-like roles, each of the participants came to accept the need for "flexible" roles to meet the needs of their students. The participants also unanimously agreed that role-flexibility was both task-based and delivery-based. All the participants viewed the potential need for tutors to provide flexible hybrid tutoring, meaning tutors would likely provide online and campus tutoring support in the future. The change in mindset from tutoring roles as fixed to flexible. This marked psychological change demonstrates the participants maturity. Seeing the need to change their roles, and adopt ones not traditionally used or accepted, goes against the grain of their center's research and practices, but the tutors demonstrated a sense of judgment and insight, based on contextually-sensitive situations that allows them to "authentically approach" (Standford, 2019) each online tutoring session and adjust to meet their students' needs.

Switching from an assertive view of tutoring roles, as structured and rigid, to a more flexible view of tutoring roles, the transformative mindset shifts also impacted and influenced the creation of a new self. New self for Nani meant a change in mental preparation, while new self for Parker focused on new ways of assessing his students and new tasks. New self for Otto meant greater feelings of self-worth and ability, and, for Nani, it meant embodying the center online and bringing online to life. On the other hand, a new self for Joy meant changing her physical characteristics to enhance perceptions of self and communication. Clearly, the perceptions of new self were different and wide-ranging for each participant. Context is an important element in the coming-of-age trajectory (Standford, 2019), and on closer analysis of the participants, their new self was influenced by the need to adjust. Each participant made critical changes to themselves, based on a series of complex moments of adaptation (Standford, 2019). Some scholars argue that, in the Bildungsroman, the real sign of maturity is a movement towards authenticity. With the creation of new selves, have the participants moved closer or farther away to authenticity. Nani's introspection on the need to mentally change her approach, seemed to be embedded in a quality of "truthfulness" (Standford, 2019). The same argument might be made for Parker, Otto, and Nani. However, Joy's case is unique. Her attempt to change her "natural sounding" voice to a higher tone seems to suggest a move away from her authentic self. In some ways, Joy might not have quite experienced the just "bear it" point, where she accepts her authentic self. Yet, studies on the sense of self and teaching indicate that integrating one's authentic self into their teaching using various strategies of discovery and disclosure can enhance student engagement and empowerment (Powell, Cantrell & Adams, 2001; Cranton, 2001). However, integrating one's authentic self is not easy and requires a number of aspects including

negotiation (Donovan, 2009) as well as comfort and confidence, as indicated by the study's participants.

Regardless, one of the major themes addressed by Joy in her journey focused on comfort. Achieving a sense of comfort was important to Joy, and her reality focused on the multifaceted elements of comfort. Aside from comfort with space and experience, Joy struggled with the comfort of oneself. Even though Joy feels uncomfortable with her computer-mediated self and her abilities, she still participates in the act of tutoring. Joy's reality may be likened to an actor or presenter who is afraid of public speaking, but faces her challenges. While Joy may feel or appear lacking in some fashion related to visual or auditory communication experience and expertise, she continues to attempt to tutor.

Perhaps, in some ways, Joy is continuing to work through her journey. While she may attempt to position herself as having matured through the increase in tutoring sessions, her actions and decisions might reveal a psychologically younger mindset that is continuing to work through ways to overcome a perception of an "acceptable persona" (Standford, 2019) and increase her ability to talk and communicate as her authentic self. In other words, Joy lacks self-confidence. This lack of confidence seems to be related to fears of performance failure and an absence of comfort. This point again circles back to the need for one to be comfortable with their authentic self to be an empowering educator (Cranton, 2001). Joy's experiences suggest that she is still working through her transition process as a new educator and also an individual new to the online environment. While triggers that influence her to deviate from her authentic self might not be able to be removed, perhaps there is an opportunity for Joy to better recognize and understand her triggers. Overall, still views the online environment as a mysterious place, and this perception influences her lack of confidence. In this light, Joy might need more maturing

within the online environment, as compared to the other participants. She may need more structured experiences to build self-confidence and comfort, so she can be empowered to be her own authentic self online.

Reaching acceptance and gaining comfort to be their authentic selves was a major part of the participants journey. Another unique transformational mindset change was the participants' perception of the online environment from problematic to positive. Each participant changed their initial perceptions on the online environment as not good, to a space that was positive. Alana saw the online environment as “fun;” Joy, Otto, and Parker saw online as having many “benefits,” and both Nani and Parker also felt that online tutoring was more similar than different to campus tutoring. The increase in environmental comfort is significant. Leaving their original environment of comfort and journeying into the unknown online world was mystifying at first. However, the participants experienced a challenge to their prior working environment that led to the formation of an internal perspective of their new online working environment as holding genuine value. Although, for some participants, like Joy and Alana, while the online environment is positive, they would still like to return to their “provisional” home, which is not unlike protagonists in the Bildungsroman. While they physically want to change, psychologically though, they cannot return to the same state they were in prior to their transition because they cannot erase their online experiences. While the Nani and Joy can psychologically bury their experiences, neither of them seemed inclined to do so. Hence, the tensioned transition between what was to what could be was a “formulated authentic approach to adulthood,” (Standford, 2019) and reveals an increase in self-comfort and confidence that projects the participants towards a place of maturity.

In defining maturity, with respect to this study, a dualism arises in the final subordinate theme in this chapter. On one hand, the participants demonstrated a sense of “developed” maturity, which is defined as a demonstrated growth in self-comfort and confidence through their reflective meaning-making. Each of the participants demonstrated this type of developed maturity by attempting to be their authentic self in online tutoring settings. However, the participants also illustrated an “underdeveloped” maturity within the online environment and tutoring, in general, which is not atypical of Bildungsroman narratives (Boes, 2006). When asked if they felt fully transitioned online, only Parker stated that he felt fully transitioned, but that his views on transition were singular and perhaps he was not quite ready to consider other aspects connected to the transition process. That said, the remainder of participants did not feel fully transitioned and cited the need to continue to “learn from their students" and/or “learn more about online.” Although the Bildungsroman offers a systematic development journey filled with interrelated stages of conflict and growth, it does not always need to end in happiness or success (Swales, 2015). The overriding importance of a Bildungsroman novel is to showcase an individual’s progression through development targets, that organically reveals a deeper and richer complexity of each person (Swales, 2015). Viewed in this light, the introspective nature of the participants' responses, alludes to a “high degree of truthfulness and authenticity “that are important for maturity (Standford, 2015). In this way, the participants development of maturity is signaled by their recognition and acceptance of continuing to reside in a state of transition; additionally, their self-comfort and confidence suggests that the participants have embarked into a psychological adulthood that is laced in sincerity, truthfulness, and genuine acceptance for their work online.

Overall, after recognizing the differences in online milieu, the participants adjusted their actions including roles and behaviors, to make the online environment work for them and their students. This does not mean they became all-knowing experts who fully transitioned online, rather it meant that they accepted the online environment, grew in comfort, and eventually their mere experience, gained a transformational mindset that viewed the online environment positively.

Summary of Findings

This section contains details on the inter-coder results for the study's data analysis. It also provides a high-level and concise summary of the study's findings in light of the research questions. Lastly, this section offers a simplified review of the superordinate and subordinate themes that emerged from the data analysis.

Inter-Coder Results

It is important to note that while the description of the study's findings is formatted through a narrative structure, the study's codes were compared with an independent inter-coder (O'Conner, 2020). The study identified four superordinate themes (loss, journey, conflict, and growth) with thirteen subordinate themes (loss of learning, loss of space, loss of comfort, training, relief, distress, role clarity, access, communicative challenges, positivity, nuanced roles, new self, and not fully transitioned). These codes were analyzed using Cohen's kappa to assess the alignment of each coder. Several low codes were identified in the first analysis. The researcher discussed the initial codes with the inter-coder, then re-coded the data. The re-coded data results are as follows: 9 (69%) codes had almost perfect agreement with a score of 0.81 to 1.00 and 4 (31%) codes had substantial agreement with a score of 0.61 to 0.80. Since this study

was not medically-based, and the 4 codes were contextually-based in all participant cases, the researcher opted to move forward with the codes for the data analysis.

Relationship to Research Questions

Choosing to build out a sequential narrative, rather than a review of each of the research questions, this section provides a concise review of the relationship between the research questions and the participants' data (see Table 11).

Table 11. Research Questions and Participants Data

Research Questions	Superordinate Themes
RQ1: Make sense of transitioning process	Transition process as a complex, continuous journey
RQ2: Make sense of past, current, and/or future roles as tutors while tutoring in various modalities	Past roles as fixed, current roles as fluid, future roles as fluid and hybrid
RQ3: Make sense of online environment vis-a-vis transitions and roles	Online environment as initially difficult and problematic, requiring nuanced roles and new self to gain comfort, confidence and positivity

Chapter Summary

Five participants across learning or writing centers across the university-system were interviewed for this interpretative phenomenological study. Verbatim transcripts provided the raw data for analysis. After a thorough analysis, the findings in this chapter were organized into four primary superordinate themes. Based on the most prevalent and relevant themes, the researcher identified thirteen subordinate themes, the four superordinate themes emerged. In this chapter, whenever a participants' comment was relevant to multiple themes, the researcher opted to place the comment into the theme that the researcher deemed was the closest fit.

The first superordinate theme was Loss. This was a critical part of the participants' journey into the online world of tutoring. In this stage, the participants were introduced to the expectation that they would tutor online, and it focused on tethering out their feelings about how they imagined the online environment. Within this superordinate theme, the subordinate themes of loss of learning, campus space, and comfort were explored. The participants illustrated their ultimate worry about the absences of familiar campus elements and their ability to successfully perform the role of a tutor online.

The second superordinate theme was The Journey Starts. This was another important sequential part of the participants' experiences, as they battled feelings of discomfort and a potential need to take on the responsibility of embodying the campus center online. Although, after completing their first online session, the participants experienced a sense of relief, which indicated a developmental marker in their process of formation. The participants partly overcame their feelings of concern and gained a semblance of self-comfort, as they transitioned further in their journey.

The third superordinate theme was Conflict. This theme was nestled in between a stage of adolescence and growth. Arguably, the participants grew the most in this stage of their journey. The participants faced tremendous conflict and tension between their roles, communicative challenges, access, and psychological distress. A synthesis of their experiences identified three core areas: lack of comfort, worry about performance, and perception of barriers to access. The meaning-making the participants gained from their experiences through this tumultuous and highly ambiguous period allowed them to truly take part in a wall-less learning experience. With continued challenges, the participants learned to manage difficulties, prompting further

introspection about their work and changes they had to make in their strategies, roles, or communication, which marked another major change in their growth process.

The fourth superordinate theme was Growth. This theme embodied a cumulative journey of growth and illustrated the participants psychological state as an overall outcome of their journey in transitioning online. For one, most of the participants grew to be their authentic self in the online space. They began to enact actions and behaviors that they thought were right, based on their experiences, to support students. Secondly, the participants gained an increase in self-comfort and confidence, which was a major milestone compared to their initial psychological states. This change indicated an authentic growth in approaching psychological maturity. Lastly, the participants' ability to recognize the complexities of their situation and accept that they still needed to learn and grow offered a unique sincerity and acceptance to their work online.

The participants' experiences, challenges, and obstacles that needed overcoming were unique to their individual experiences. However, it may be that some aspects of their journeys are endemic in tutors' experiences across higher education institutions. Feelings of discomfort, worrying about performance, and barriered access are problematic, but might be mitigated or reduced to assist in their journey online. In Chapter 5, a connection will be drawn between the research data and literature to offer a conclusion about tutor’s experiences providing online writing tutoring.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research study was conducted to understand writing tutors' experiences. The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of writing tutors engaging in online tutoring. Additionally, the researcher sought to discover whether or not writing tutors' lived experiences might fit within the framework of Role Acquisition and Multimodal CMC theory.

Listening to the stories and experiences of the study's participants was insightful and particularly valuable for me in the role as a researcher. During the interviews, the participants were engaged and eager to share their experiences with me. They made comments such as, "I'm glad you asked that question," or "Here's an example." One participant also noted that the questions "really made me think about my experiences," which I felt suggested a rich sense of reflection and meaning-making. During my interviews, I was able to use my video to visually observe the participants, which revealed thoughtful nonverbal expression. For example, one participant used hand-gestures throughout our entire conversation, but when asked a potentially more difficult question, she put her hands down, raised her head and looked up to her ceiling, pausing while she pondered the question before answering. Another participant smiled when she was unsure how to answer a question at first. Her smile was warm, and she sat with her eyes shifted to the side while she considered how to respond to my question. During the audio reflection entries, each participant read the question prompts out-loud one at a time, which was particularly thoughtful and helped me to keep track of each question they answered.

This study also required tremendous reflection and rigor. It was valuable to leverage member checking to verify the accuracy of data and talk with the study's participants to gain further clarity on their experiences. I also engaged in peer checking and inter-coder reliability activities that not only challenged my viewpoint and interpretations but also encouraged further

reflection about my actions and my analysis of the participants' experiences. Keeping an audit trail and noting my reflections was also valuable to recall the thoughts, feelings, and ideas I had as a researcher while conducting this study. An additional form of analysis and reflection was re-reading my writing and building on my writing process. I continuously wrote, read, and then re-wrote or revised aspects of my entire dissertation. This continuous writing process served as a critical reflection strategy and further assisted by thought-process, analysis, and overall dissertation development. Along with my rereading and rewriting process, discussing, brainstorming, and receiving feedback from my chair was invaluable. My chair challenged me to think beyond the obvious, reflect on ways to express my ideas, and dive deeper into philosophical perspectives. Overall, this iterative process served as a valuable tool in reflexivity and assisted in my overall writing process, reflection, and dissertation creation.

The following chapter offers a discussion of my study's findings vis-a-vis the study's research questions, existing literature, and theoretical framework. The chapter concludes with implications for theory, practice, UPA perspectives, further research, and the overall study conclusion.

Research Questions: Discussion of Findings

The study's primary research question was what are the past and present lived experiences of tutors transitioning to online environments? To aid the researcher in answering that question, three sub-questions were created. This section addresses the findings of each of the sub-questions that form the overall results of the study's primary question.

Research Sub-Question 1

The first sub-question was: how do tutors make sense of their transitioning process? The participants' transition process was likened to a journey that was complex and continuous. The

journey covered four superordinate themes: Loss, The Journey Begins, Conflict, and Growth. Chapter 4 detailed the participants' journey from initial introduction to the idea of online tutoring to the transformational mind shift they each experienced, as a result of their unique journeys into the online environment.

Specifically, the study's findings illustrated a varying degree of psychological distress, particularly around performance and challenges with roles and communication as well as growth in relation to their introspection and demonstrated development of strategies and approaches when working with students online. When the participants first started their journey, they felt nervous about the online environment. After starting tutoring online though, the participants gained some relief but quickly faced new challenges and tensions not previously imagined such as conflicts with their roles and difficulties attempting to use some campus-based strategies online. The number of challenges faced by the participants influenced their psychological distress around performance. However, they each overcame the challenges they faced, in similar ways, and grew to gain acceptance and deep insight into what it meant to work as an online tutor.

Most of the participants shared that their transition process into the online environment was ongoing. Some participants felt their transition process would take several years to complete, while others argued that their transition journey was lifelong. The participants unanimously agreed that the reasons for their prolonged transition were based on their experiences of always needing to learn new things from the students they interacted with as well as their desire to learn about new changes in technology and online tools. While the participants believed that they were in a constant state of transition, they did not necessarily view this particular 'state of being' as a bad thing. Rather, the study's participants mostly viewed their

transformational process positively and perceived this ‘state of being,’ as a continual learning journey, which was a path they all believed was good and acceptable to continue on.

Research Sub-Question 2

The second research sub-question addressed the past, current, and future roles that tutors experienced and might experience within various delivery formats. In particular, past roles were viewed as fixed while present and future roles were seen as flexible. In the past, the participants believed that delivery formats required specific tutoring roles. Outlined in the previous research question, the participants shared specific experiences that were embedded in two superordinate themes: Conflict and Growth and embedded into two subordinate themes: Role Clarity and Nuanced Roles. For example, almost all the participants viewed their past roles as embedded in the campus-based environment. Their past roles were non-directive and peer-like or mentor-like. The participants felt their roles were fixed and ingrained in a particular environment, based on their perceptions and experiences of what it meant to tutor as campus-based tutors. However, with the transition online, the participants experienced challenges with their non-directive and peer tutor roles. Technology, communication, and computer-knowledge constraints, among perceived student expectations, influenced the participants to acquire new roles, not previously used or in some cases allowed in campus-based settings. More specifically, several of the participants described being “technology experts” and “teachers” when managing technological problems or working with students who had low technological literacy knowledge and skills. This change in roles was unexpected, and it challenged the participants perceptions of what it meant to be an online tutor. With more experience, the participants began to change their views of roles. They eventually viewed roles as less fixed and as more flexible online. Each participant believed that online roles were nuanced and required flexibility and changes, depending on each

students' needs, after they began tutoring for a time online. The participants also unanimously agreed that in the future, tutor roles would likely be flexible, meaning that tutors could opt to play a variety of roles, depending on the needs of their students. They also believed that tutoring roles would be hybrid - they saw 'hybridity' as meaning that tutors would likely be expected to provide writing tutoring support in online and campus-based delivery formats.

Research Sub-Question 3

The third sub-question looked at the online environment and the ways the participants viewed the online environment with respect to their transition process and roles. Each superordinate theme: Loss, The Journey Begins, Conflict, and Growth highlighted data to address this question. The participants' perspectives of the online environment changed significantly. At first, each of the participants viewed the online environment as problematic. They saw it as either not feasible for learning or isolating with an absence of people and resources. Above all, the participants felt a loss of comfort with their looming transition online. After completing their first online tutoring sessions though, each of the participants gained relief. They began to perceive the online environment as not all bad, or less problematic than they had initially imagined. Although, their relief did not last long.

The more the participants tutored, the more they encountered difficulties. One of the first major challenges faced was situations where they felt compelled to adopt teacher or expert roles to support students' with using or navigating technology. In other instances, the participants felt that they overall were more directive than non-directive in their online sessions, which caused further hesitation and uneasiness. Communicative challenges were another cause of anxiety. From a lack or limited ability to observe or read students to stress providing text-online support,

the participants initially struggled with negotiation on how to communicate with their students in online writing tutoring sessions.

Their issues with roles, communication, and access influenced a psychological distress around performance. The participants questioned whether or not they were doing things well and whether or not students were getting any value from their online sessions, due to role and communication challenges and changes. Yet another difficulty was friction around access. On one hand, the participants felt online tutoring was more accessible, and yet they saw technology as a major barrier point for students with low-technological literacy and students without access to adequate technological resources, causing several participants to lose students they had worked with in campus-based sessions. However, some of the participants gained new students from different parts of their island or outer islands, due to new access in online tutoring. Overall, the online environment was viewed as complex and challenging during this part of the participants’ journey.

Experiencing more tutoring sessions, the participants' mindset gradually began to shift. They overcame their role conflicts through acceptance that they needed to adopt different roles, based on their students' unique needs. They struggled but accepted that they could not do all the same things in campus-based environments and had to create new strategies and a new tutoring self to communicate in different ways online. These changes influenced the participants' view of the online environment. Each participant began to view the online environment with varying degrees of positivity. Some participants liked the online environment and felt it was fun but still preferred the campus-based environment. Others liked the online environment and felt while it could not replicate campus-based settings, it was valuable in its own way for tutoring. Yet, a few participants felt that there were insignificant differences between the online and campus-based

environments and viewed the two delivery formats as mostly one in the same. The participants' shift in perspectives of the online environment reveal a fundamental change in thoughts, feelings, and perceptions about the value and use of the online world for learning and tutoring students.

Literature: Discussion of Findings

The genesis of online writing tutoring began during the 1990s (Arzt, Barnett, & Scoppetta, 2009), but the global COVID-19 pandemic marked a radical shift for higher education by forcing almost all educational programs, including writing and learning centers, at least temporarily, online (Bashir et al., 2021). Half of the study's participants were forced to transition online, as a result of their campus-based center closing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, for some of the study's participants, the movement online was based on a willingness to volunteer or an expectation as a part of working for a particular center, and their transition from campus-based settings to online tutoring took place before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Role Clarity

The concept of role clarity is essential for tutoring (Buck, 2018) because without role clarity, tutors can face anxiety with their expectations (Abbot et al., 2018). However, writing center studies on tutor roles have mostly focused on campus-based writing tutors (Fuches et al., 1997; Roscoe & Chi, 2004; Duran & Monereo, 2005; McDonald, 1994; Topping et al., 2003; Brown et al., 2014) and less is known about the roles of online tutors (Baumann et al., 2008). While online writing tutoring has increased in popularity (Thiel, 2010; Smith, 2018), little is known about peer tutors' experiences (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018) or roles (Baumann et al., 2008) in the online environments.

Nuanced roles

This study revealed that tutoring role approaches in the online environment were different from campus-based roles. In particular, it found that there were some differences in tutoring roles, such as directive or non-directive strategies, between campus-based and online settings. These differences between campus and online sessions initially influenced role-clarity challenges. This study confirmed the importance of role clarity and tutor expectations, and it also highlighted the ways lack of clarity around role and expectations can incite anxiety and stress. For example, with the shift online, the study found that more nuanced situations can arise that require tutors to be more directive than non-directive or embrace a mixture of directive and non-directive strategies in a single online tutoring session. The realization that sometimes directive roles were warranted in online sessions caused friction, confusion, and distress for the participants, as they negotiated what role type was acceptable and what they should or should not be doing in their tutoring role online. In addition, the participants' use of role flexibility in online environments confirmed an earlier study on instructors' fluid role adoption online (Gonzales, 2009). Interestingly, the study's participants, overall viewed their roles as less contingent on delivery format, and more dependent on the unique needs of their students within online sessions, which caused them to pivot often between directive and non-directive strategies.

Expert technological support role

This research study confirmed previous findings regarding tutors needing to take on more of a technologist role or be able to provide some sort of technical support for students (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018), as suggested in studies on subject or professional tutors in online settings. It also revealed that peer tutors may take on more

teacher-like roles when supporting students with technology, which is a role type not commonly used or recommended by writing center scholarship in campus-based settings.

Role Types and Behaviors

Research indicates that there are several types of tutors and characteristics including peer tutors, graduate tutors, teaching assistants, and professional writing tutors. Typically, peer tutors are viewed as non-authoritative and focus on providing comfortable collaboration that help students gain confidence in their writing process (Mick, 1999; Howard, 2001). However, some studies suggest that peer writing tutors do have power and authority, and they have the responsibility to wield their power appropriately by avoiding being teachers (Carino, 2003). These studies focused on campus-based peer writing tutoring, but an online-focused study suggested that campus-based tutors can tend to be more hierarchical in campus-based sessions as opposed to asynchronous sessions (Jones et al., 2006). In terms of graduate tutors and teaching assistants, individuals in these roles may attempt to adopt a peer role, but their seasoned experiences often influence a power imbalance and makes them a type of hybrid helper who is not quite a peer but not quite an instructor either; neither expert or non-expert (Harris, 1992; Snively, 2008). However, this hybridity offers graduate tutors more flexibility in their role choice, as they often become negotiators between a students' writing and an instructor's feedback (Bell, 2018; Baker et al., 2010; Devet, 2014). Regardless, this group of tutors should have a set of principles to guide them in selecting tutoring strategies (Medvecky, 2019). Lastly, professional tutors generally have the widest power gap (Mick, 1999). These types of tutors avoid being peer-like and often support thesis or dissertation development (McMurray, 2020). They might also act as center coordinators, trainers, or some type of leadership role in the writing center (Mick, 1999; Nordstrom et al., 2019). Three of the study's participants self-identified as

peer tutors, one participant self-identified as a graduate tutor who also held a leadership position in the center, and one participant self-identified as a professional tutor and staff member.

Chapter 4 revealed that even with different types of roles, in online settings, the types of behaviors demonstrated by the study's participants were relatively the same. This finding indicates a major deviance from campus-based scholarship on tutoring role types. The study indicated that the participants all engaged in nondirective and directive roles strategies. They also shifted between peers and experts or teachers, depending on the needs of their students. Flexibility regarding role choice and use was valued by the participants. It is important to note that this type of role flexibility was used and valued by the study's participants in synchronous but not asynchronous settings, which disconfirmed a subject-based tutoring study that found tutors were more flexible in asynchronous settings (Ghadirian & Ayub, 2017). Nevertheless, the ability to change up the type of role needed by all the participants suggests that, even while the participants held different role types, in online settings, the participants behaviors most closely aligned with that of a graduate tutor. Often graduate tutors use a range of roles and strategies, and this type of behavior was consistent with the study's participants when they engaged in the online tutoring sessions (Bell, 2018; Baker et al., 2010; Devet, 2014). Yet, the participants' flexibility with strategies seemed less focused on the participants' knowledge of composition and rhetoric or content area writing strategies and more focused on their knowledge of technological literacy. The participants enraged in role flexibility largely based on their students' degrees of technological literacy and comfort with navigating the online environment. In this way, the study disconfirmed campus-based studies indicating different types of behaviors, based on tutor types. Instead, it found that regardless of tutoring type, tutors acquired similar roles, strategies, and behaviors when tutoring in online settings, and this was due to their student's degree of

technological literacy. Overall, student technological literacy seems to be a major factor that influences tutors to adopt flexibility when working in online environments.

Role Function

Role function was another concept highlighted in Chapter 4. This study viewed role function as the types of tasks and uses that research highlighted. Most scholars agree that campus-based roles should either be fixed or reciprocal. Fixed roles, in campus-based settings, are defined as skilled peers who offer explanations (Fuchs et al., 1997; Roscoe & Chi, 2004; McDonald, 1994), ask questions (Duran & Monereo, 2005; Graesser & Pearson, 1994), offer feedback (Bentz & Fuchs, 1996; Chi et al. 2001; Duran & Monereo, 2005), and conduct demonstrations (Fuchs et al., 1997; McDonald, 1994; Topping et al., 2003) during tutoring sessions. Whereas, with reciprocal roles, peer tutors often act as facilitators who ask questions (Leung, 2015; Roscoe & Chi, 2008; De Backer, Van Keer & Valcke, 2015), promote knowledge construction (Pea, 2004; De Backer, Van Keer & Valcke, 2015), and role-play with students (Colvin & Ashman, 2010; Ginsburg-Block & Fantuzzo, 1997; Ismail & Alexander, 2005; Brown et al., 2014; Abbot et al., 2018). Additionally, one study found that reciprocal tutoring roles can invite the exchange of dialogue between tutors and students and produce an openness not as easily fostered in fixed-role peer tutoring (Brown et al., 2014).

Scholar finds that online role function is not as clear or straightforward, especially with asynchronous tutoring. One study found that asynchronous tutors are perceived as coaches who are “error-noticing helpers” (Severino & Prim, 2016, p. 167). A different study found that reciprocal roles in asynchronous peer tutoring were important, as they promoted role flexibility (Ghadirian & Ayub, 2017). On the other hand, research on online synchronous tutoring suggests that tutors might need to take on the role of the technologist and provide technology support

(Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Another study found that in online synchronous sessions, the tutor felt a greater weight and responsibility to create a welcoming and collaborative environment (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017). Socialization in online synchronous sessions can also be influential and more socialization can lead to students feeling safe and comfortable (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017; de Jong et al., 2018). However, a study discovered that online synchronous tutors were less concerned about socializing and more concerned with guiding students through the online learning environment (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Adopting roles as socializers and collaborators are consistent with writing center scholarship in campus-based sessions (Bruffee, 1984; Harris, 1995; Grimm, 2001; Brown, 2015).

Roles dependent on students and not delivery format

This study's findings discovered the viewpoint that role use or function in the campus-based environments was more reciprocal. Although the participants initially viewed their roles in campus-based settings as reciprocal, they still saw themselves as peer tutors. This meant that they could only be reciprocal to the extent that they were still able to continue being a peer. Later in their online transition journey, several of the participants changed their perspective on roles, and came to view tutoring roles as fixed, reciprocal, and flexible in online synchronous environments. This meant in synchronous online sessions, the participants felt that their role use was sometimes more fixed, and they asked questions, directed conversations, and offered guidance and advice. In other instances, their role use was more reciprocal, and they did more brainstorming and had more open conversations with students. Lastly, sometimes the participants used flexible roles, shifting between peer and expert or teacher, depending on the needs of their students.

Interestingly, the participants viewed asynchronous tutoring roles as fixed. Asynchronously, the study found that the participants largely viewed asynchronous roles as letter-writers or feedback providers and less as “error-noticing helpers” (Severino & Prim, 2016, p. 167) and more letter-writers. This role as a letter-writer did not change, regardless of the student, in asynchronous settings.

While the study disconfirmed fixed role perspectives, from a tutors’ perspective, it did confirm that offering feedback, asking questions, and promoting knowledge creation were important elements embedded in online synchronous sessions, but that guidance and pivoting between peer and teacher were also equally important to the perceived success of online writing tutoring. Overall, the study added to research by highlighting other role functions, not typically used in campus-based settings such as teaching, training, technology troubleshooting and support in synchronous online sessions. However, it is important to add that while the participants indicated clear differences between their campus roles and online roles and perceived their roles as being more dependent on their students than delivery format, communicative modes can influence role adoption. A descriptive analysis of computer-mediated modes indicates that tutors may tend to play specific roles more frequently in specific modes when tutoring in different online delivery formats such as text-based chatting or audio or video conversing.

Additional online tutor role responsibilities

The study also found that participants experienced a greater perceived weight of responsibility to create a welcoming online environment. This finding confirmed literature suggesting online tutors have more responsibility creating a welcoming environment (Rennar-Potacco, Orellana, & Salazar, 2017). Relatedly, the study results also suggested that while most of the participants were more focused on writing tutoring, rather than relationship building in

online synchronous settings, they recognized that they did spend less time interacting and casually talking with students, which they also believed was problematic. These findings are consistent with an earlier study on subject-based tutors that found online synchronous tutors may spend less time socializing with students (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018).

Role power dynamics

Closely connected to role function and performance is the concept of power dynamics. Campus-based studies found that tutors can face power-struggles in campus-based environments with their roles (Colvin, 2007; Palmeri, 2000; Carino, 2003), but not all scholars believed that power dynamics was problematic. In fact, a theoretical article suggested that there are benefits to tutors using their authority to guide and direct a tutoring session (Palmeri, 2000). On the other hand, other scholars argue that tutors should avoid teaching writing or presenting themselves as an expert of writing (Carino, 2003). Clearly, there are mixed perceptions on whether or not tutors should use their power and authority, but what is clear is that tutors' roles seem characteristically laced with an elevated position of authority in campus-based sessions. Alternatively, a different studied reinforced campus-based power-dynamics but suggested that in online asynchronous online tutoring sessions, tutors were less hierarchical and power was more nullified (Jones et al., 2006).

This study found that the online environment promoted tutor power dynamics, and it added an additional layer of power that is unique to the online environment. For example, the study confirmed that like in campus-based settings, during online synchronous sessions, students may view tutors as writing authorities. Additionally, the study found that tutors may also view tutors as writing experts, due to tutors' technological literacy. For instance, when tutors provided technological support and troubleshooting to students, particularly students who had lower

degrees of technological literacy, this promoted a power imbalance between tutors and their students. When students viewed tutors as technological experts, these perceptions seemed to also carry over to writing. The participants perceived their tutors viewing them as all-knowing experts, which made it difficult for some of the study's participants to manage sorting out how to perform a technological expert role, with elevated power, then attempt to shift to a peer-like position and try to nullify power differentials; it was hard, if not impossible to make the shift.

Concerns over power and authority were a major concern for the participants in online synchronous tutoring sessions. The participants attempted to mitigate perceptions of expertise among their students by communicating with their students in less-direct ways when interacting using synchronous text-based communication. However, the study found that tutors tended to communicate more directly in synchronous video or audio sessions because the tutors felt they could rely on their tone and/or nonverbal expressions to mitigate students feeling intimidated or avoid hurt feelings.

That said, concept of power-imbalance in asynchronous sessions was not as clear-cut as Jones et al.'s (2006) findings. In fact, this study found that tutors may communicate more professionally in asynchronous tutoring sessions. This purposeful professionalism in asynchronous tutoring sessions indicated that a power-imbalance was magnified, rather than nullified. These findings suggest that, overall, power dynamics might be magnified online due to technology literacy. In this way, tutors might not only need to negotiate their power and authority related to writing literacy but also technology literacy.

Transition and Transformation

Engagement with transition is a required process for educators when they move from campus-based to online environments (Shakeeb, 2020; Thanaraj, 2016; Cochran & Benuto,

2016). Several studies have highlighted college instructors' challenges with transitioning to online environments including changes in instructional strategies, engagement, roles, and identity (Thanaraj, 2016). Recent reports also suggested that instructors need training and support, as they learn to adopt new technologies for the online space (Educause, 2021). Related to the transition process is the degree in which instructors may change, as a result of their shift online (Thanaraj, 2016; Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Serdyukov, 2015; Shakeeb, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). More specifically, some instructors who transition into the online environment experience a transformation in their teaching assumptions, beliefs, practices, roles, and identities (Thanaraj, 2016), while another study found some instructors were on a fluid continuum, believing that they were always in a state of transition (Cochran & Benuto, 2016).

Research on instructors transitioning from campus-based to online environments identified unique challenges that required instructors to change their practices. For instructors transitioning from campus-based to asynchronous settings, studies found that the asynchronous environment significantly affected the way instructors interacted and taught (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). Specifically, instructors faced situations, where they felt they had to change their tasks, responsibilities, and roles when working with students asynchronous (Jonker, März, & Voogt, 2018). In a different study related to asynchronous roles, online instructors adopted fluid role changes and shifted their roles constantly while supporting, communicating, and attempting to facilitate asynchronous instruction (Gonzalez, 2009). Overall, asynchronous focused studies suggest the need for flexibility in roles and strategies to succeed online. Whereas, instructors transitioning from campus-based to online synchronous environments faced different challenges including the need to adopt a new role as a technologist to support various technological related challenges that students faced (Martin & Parker, 2014). Synchronous online instructors also

changed their approach to be more flexible and found that their relationships with students changed, becoming in some cases, less hierarchical. Nonetheless, facets like teaching experience and technological literacy were not mentioned in studies of synchronous online instructors, and it is unclear whether or not those variables may have contributed to feelings of increased comfort or not for instructors teaching online.

Benefit of tutoring experience and technological literacy

Tutoring experience and degree of technological literacy may have aided some of the participants in obtaining increased feelings of comfort tutoring online. The study found that the participants with higher degrees of technological literacy seemed more comfortable and confident with certain aspects of their online tutoring role, as compared to other participants. It also found that the individuals who had more tutoring experience, prior to their transition online, faced challenges and distress but seemed to overcome challenges and distress and gain relief and comfort faster compared to the participants who had no or little prior tutoring experience. These findings add to research related to tutoring and suggest that prior campus-based tutoring experiences and degree of technological literacy may help tutors when transitioning their work online.

Transition process is complex

This study also confirmed research on instructors' transition process into the online environment. Specifically, it revealed that peer tutors’ transition into the online environment was complex, like it was for instructors. The participants were faced with numerous challenges to their tutoring strategies, communication, and roles. These difficulties required adaptation to overcome or mitigate (Thanaraj, 2016; Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Serdyukov, 2015; Shakeeb, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Overall, flexibility was a critical element in overcoming

challenges and adjusting to make the online environment work for tutors to support their students.

Environment influences roles and responsibilities

The study also confirmed changes in tasks, responsibilities, and roles in asynchronous and synchronous environments. The study found that the online environment influenced changes in roles, tasks, and responsibilities, as the participants shifted their work online. For example, the study participants adopted a variety of roles, some that they did not use in campus-based settings. They also took on new tasks such as navigating websites or taking over students' screens or screen-sharing student's work. The study's participants also took on new responsibilities as technological support experts or teachers; this new responsibility was an especially critical new task in many online synchronous sessions with students who had low technological literacy skills and knowledge. The degree of a student's technological literacy was a critical factor supporting ease of transition online for several participants, as suggested by research on instructors transitioning into teaching synchronously online (Martin & Parker, 2014).

The study also confirmed research on instructors transitions online and the ways the online environment becomes a contested space for instruction (Comas-Quinn, de los Archos, & Mardomingo, 2012). In particular, the online environment influenced a type of flux-state, where new hierarchies and relationships were constantly being forged and changed on a student-by-student basis for the study's participants.

Transformation and constant state of transition

Lastly, the study confirmed the concept that when tutors, like instructors, transition online, they experience a transformation in their practices, roles, and more (Thanaraj, 2016); but, at the same time, it also confirmed earlier research that, like instructors, tutors reside in a

constant state of transition (Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Through the participants' journey, they experienced ongoing changes that led to a transformation in the perceptions, practices, roles, and more, as highlighted earlier in this chapter. This suggests that, for tutors, the mere experience of online tutoring not only transforms but might also be a process that either takes longer than anticipated or never really ends. Additionally, the study's findings suggest that while some tutors may feel they have transitioned and transformed their tutoring strategies and practices, it does not necessarily mean that they have transitioned or transformed in all areas.

Comfort, Confidence, and Community

Writing center research highlights the value of comfort in writing tutoring. Chapter 2 highlighted the value of comfort, confidence, and community within writing centers. When students and tutors are comfortable, a connection between the two groups can develop (Salem, 216; Pfrenger, Blasiman, & Winter, 2017). One study argued that student and tutor comfort and confidence can be built through community (Nicholas & Williams, 2019). If students and tutors feel comfortable and confident, then the writing center can be a harmonious place to not only work but also visit (Cooper, 2018). To aid in feelings of comfort, several studies described writing centers focus on placed-based elements like coffee, plants, couches, and toys to help increase comfortability (Nordstrom et al., 2019; Brugman, 2019). Evidently, comfort, confidence, and community are important elements to foster for campus-based writing centers, as they can benefit tutors and students working together.

This study highlighted and confirmed tutoring research on comfort, confidence, and community. Comfort was defined, in the context of this study, as a psychological state of ease and relief. It is an absence of anxiety and stress. Whereas, confidence was defined, in the context of this study as, self-assurance in one's knowledge, ability, and/or skills. The concept of comfort

was a central theme that influenced confidence. When shifting into a new, unknown environment or situation, people may experience fear, concern, and anxiety. A lack of comfort can influence reduced feelings of self-confidence. What is interesting is that for tutors who lack confidence in technological literacy or self-esteem, comfort may be more challenging to develop in online settings, as the participants made it clear that technological knowledge is essential to the work of an online tutor, and without it, the work of an online tutor can be more challenging. Along similar lines, having access to a community can help build comfort and confidence for some individuals. In all, this study reinforced the importance and interrelatedness of comfort, confidence, and community. Research related to these themes and their importance in campus-based tutoring seems to be confirmed in online settings too. Overall, these comfort, confidence, and community are just as important for campus-based tutors, as they are for online tutors.

Tutor Training

Typically, writing center tutors participate in training prior to starting their campus-based sessions. Campus-based tutor training often includes specific pedagogy such as role-clarity (Chou & Chan, 2016; Clarence, 2016; Metcalf, 1997; Dinitz & Harrington, 2013), how to support international students (Metcalf, 1997), and assist students with learning disabilities (Corbett, 2015). Tutor training is important and not only offers tutors with professional development but also helps them to identify their roles and boundaries with students (McFarlane, 2016). When considering the online environment, scholars suggest that online can be “cold” (Harris, 2008) and lack nonverbal expressions (Rafoth, 2009), but it can also provide support for non-traditional students (Hewett, 2015). Because of the differences, tutor training is important to support tutors’ online preparedness (Gallager & Maxfield, 2019). Other research has recommended that online tutor training include training on how to use technology and the

nuanced communication elements in online tutoring sessions (Johns & Mills, 2020; Yeh & Lai, 2019).

Chapter 2 highlighted the value of campus-based tutor training to teach peer tutors about specific writing center pedagogy like role-clarity, supporting a variety of students, and learning how to establish boundaries with students around roles and expectations. Research suggests that training can benefit peer writing tutors in campus-based settings (Chou & Chan, 2016) and can benefit new tutors to the online environment with online preparedness (Gallager & Maxfield, 2019).

Authentic learning experiences

This study's findings, particularly in The Journey Begins superordinate theme indicated that while tutor training for online tutors can be valuable, a lack of authentic experiences can lead to increased feelings of psychological distress. It also found that while extensive time and resources have been built around and committed to campus-based tutoring programs, online equivalents may not receive the same amount of attention. Even though the pandemic caused a radical and rapid shift online for half the study's participants, most of the participants did not receive formal training after their transition online. The limited training received by most of the study's participants focused on theoretical knowledge or tool knowledge and lacked practical or authentic experiences. The study's findings indicate that tutors can adapt to the online environment with little to no training. However, the challenges that ruptured in the online environment for the study's participants included role negotiation, communication challenges, difficulties transferring some campus-based strategies, and challenges with low technological-literacy and troubleshooting. These topics might be valuable to integrate and build into online tutor training to support online preparedness, as suggested by Gallager and Mafield (2009),

though with a specific focus on authentic learning experiences such as role plays, AI simulators, or other activities that integrate experiential learning.

Conceptual Framework: Discussion of Findings

The study's conceptual framework merged Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory and Herring's (2019) Multimodal CMC theory. Weaving these theories together suggests that individuals can acquire roles through one or all five communicative modes. Per the study's interpretive nature, the conceptual framework was used to analyze the participants' unique stories after the initial analysis, and not before it; this was done purposefully, as an IPA study is less worried about confirming or rejecting a conceptual framework and more interested in the participants' meaning-making process in relation to their lived experiences. The following section details Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory in light of the study's findings.

Role Acquisition

Yellin (2019) argued that a role is composed of a series of expectations, based on different behaviors, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and potential role acquirers are influenced by social expectations to adopt certain roles through modification and negotiation. Individuals may enact quick changes in behaviors, when they adopt new roles, especially when they assume a new role for the first time (Yellin, 1999). There are four stages in the role acquisition process: ambulance, absorption, commitment, and confidence; each of these affective orientation elements are essential to complete until role confidence is achieved. While progressing through each stage, Yellin (1999) argued that some type of marker, occasion, or event must be experienced with some type of achievement in order to progress to the next stage. If a marker, occasion, or even does not end in an achievement, then the role is likely to be exited (Yellin, 1999). The further an individual progress in their role acquisition, the more likely they are to

develop feelings of identification, confidence, and self-worth with their new role (Yellin, 1999). Yellin's (1999) theory is akin to the participants' journey into the online tutoring environment. While each of their stories are unique, the participants' experiences followed a sequential model that mostly mirrors the role acquisition process.

Ambivalence

The first affective orientation in the role acquisition process is ambivalence. During this stage, individuals first experience their new roles. It is common for individuals in this stage to feel contemplative or even depressed (Yellin, 1999). Individuals often experience a loss of orientation and regret (Yellin, 1999). If individuals in the ambivalence stage receive negative responses from role partners, it can impact their motivation, and the individual may decide to quit the role entirely (Yellin, 1999).

The participants' experiences seemed to mimic Yellin's first affective orientation. For example, with the participants' initial introduction to the idea that they would become online tutors, they experienced feelings of loss and concern, as highlighted in Chapter 4's superordinate theme Loss. Interestingly, the participants who seemed to feel the most regret, Alana, Parker, and Joy were also those who were forced to tutor online, as a result of the pandemic. Even though four of the study's five participants had previous tutoring experience before transitioning their work online, the reactions of the participants suggest that the role of an online tutor was different than the role of a campus-based tutor. Each of the participants were seemingly "role novices" (Yellin, 1999) in light of their new role as online tutors. In this way, the participants did not just transition their work as a tutor online, they had to acquire a new role, not previously adopted in campus-based writing tutoring settings. Overall, in light of this study, the study's participants began the ambivalence phase when they agreed to work as online tutors.

Marker, occasion, or event

Before moving to the next phase in Yellin's Role Acquisition process, individuals must give way to some form of engagement with their new role and role relationships. This engagement is defined by Yellin as either a marker, occasion, or event. The sequential experience signifies some sort of change in oneself with respect to a new role. With each marker, occasion, or event, role novices view their role as different and assess their ability at negotiating how their role expectations changed (Yellin, 1999). With more experience in the role, individuals attach new meanings to their role, and its relationship within a social context (Yellin, 1999).

For each of the study's participants, their first online tutoring session was a marked event that gave way for engagement with their new role and role relationships, as highlighted in Chapter 4's superordinate theme, The Journey Begins. Their first online tutoring session was the pivot from never having tutored online to actually working as an online tutor. After the participant's first tutoring experience, they seemed to each transition from an affective orientation of ambivalence to absorption. In particular, the study's participants all felt loss prior to their first online tutoring session. However, after completing the session, the participants expressed a noticeable change. Feelings of relief began to replace feelings of loss. The participants were able to negotiate their role with their students, also considered role partners. What's more, arguably, it was the positive responses and interactions that the participants experienced during their first online tutoring session that, as Yellin (1999) suggests, influenced their motivation to move forward in the role acquisition process.

Although, one participant's experience diverged slightly from the study's other participants in relation to the marker, occasion, and event process. This divergence suggests that individuals may require different types of markers, occasions, and events than others to shift

through the next role acquisition phase, which Yellin (1999) confirms. Unlike the other participants, Joy had a delayed transition from one affective orientation to the other. After Joy received positive messaging from her student, after her first online tutoring session, she still struggled with loss and regret, suggesting she had not shifted from ambivalence to absorption. Unlike the other participants, Joy had to receive positive responses from not just her student but also her supervisor to gain the motivation she needed to move to the next affective orientation.

Joy's experiences highlighted two areas. Firstly, since Joy's first online tutoring was also her first tutoring experience, perhaps role acquisition was more challenging for her compared to the other participants who had completed several tutoring sessions in different settings. Perhaps Joy was truly more of a "role novice," as compared to individuals who had experience tutoring in different delivery formats. Secondly, it suggests that one positive experience from a role partner might not be enough to obtain motivation for all role players. Joy felt like a complete failure after her first tutoring session, and it took positive feedback from her supervisor to convince her that she was performing well. From this perspective, it might not be as simple as positive interaction or responses from role partners that assist individuals to shift from one affective orientation to the next. Rather, it might be that specific role partners are more likely to influence individuals' motivation to pivot from one orientation to the next, at least from the results of this study.

Absorption

In the absorption phase, individuals engage in repetition and begin to devise, negotiate, and perform their role. During this affective orientation, individuals may feel overwhelmed by the quantity and complexity of their expectations; yet, at the same time, they may experience pleasure with their growing experience and mastery (Yellin, 1999). Individuals are absorbed in

learning the range of expectations and experientially testing the limits of acceptable performance during absorption (Yellin, 1999).

The more the study's participants tutored online, the more they grew in self-awareness of their environment, role partners, and acceptable performance, as suggested in Chapter 4's superordinate theme, Conflict. The study's participants described their feelings of psychological distress and worry, as they faced constant friction between what they had been trained to do and their experiences in campus-based settings compared to the expectations they had to negotiate within their online tutoring sessions with students. Each participant highlighted concern after concern; whether it was tutoring strategies, communication strategies, or overall technological constraints, the online environment was complex, and the participants' role transition was equally complex. Whenever they faced challenges, the participants had to work out their roles and align functions and expectations to their role partners.

Even with seemingly endless challenges, each of the participants chose to stay in their roles. Arguably, it was the participants' ability to successfully negotiate their online tutoring roles that resulted in continuous positive interactions with students. These positive interactions, according to Yellin, assisted in influencing role players motivation to stay in their role. Interestingly, the more the participants tutored online, the more they learned what their online role tutoring expectations were, and the more they figured out what it meant to be an online tutor. The participants discovered new requirements, such as becoming a technological troubleshooter and technology teacher and expert. The study's participants also began to understand what acceptable performance meant for themselves and their students. For example, Parker noted that if a student could not successfully navigate a web-browser or their screen, then he would "take-over" their screen and navigate for them. This concept of "taking-over" is

antithetical in campus-based environments and literature on non-directive tutoring, but Parker argued that it would be “quite frankly absurd” to not help his student. In this way, he decided to take over his student’s screen for the first time and received positive feedback from his role partner, which helped him to identity what acceptable performance might mean in online settings and how performance looked different online compared to campus-based settings.

Even though the participants worked through the absorption phase, it did not come without its challenges. While working through expectations in the online environment, some of the study’s participants felt discomfort in not being able to use previous campus-based role strategies. This challenge, among constraints with communication and technological literacy, influenced the participants’ perceptions of their performance. More specifically, each of the participants were self-critical about their performance online. Even with positive affirmation, the participants worried about their ability to successfully perform and questioned whether or not their adoption of new role strategies was acceptable by their center, which was a major influential role partner. In this way, the participants experienced role conflict, which is also a concept confirmed by Yellin. The study’s participants did not just feel overwhelmed though, as Yellin suggests they might. They felt anxious and stressed, but the participants did not suggest that they were overwhelmed during this stage in their transition. They did note that it took a number of online tutoring sessions before the participants were ready to pivot to the next phase. This finding indicates that, like the previous phase, some role partners may be more influential than others. It also suggests that anxiety, stress, or worry may be embedded feelings within this affective orientation.

Marker, occasion, or event

To make the transition from the absorption phase to the commitment phase, individuals

must obtain reasonable experience, so they can negotiate their role performance and expectations (Yellin, 1999). If sufficient expertise in role performance and expectations are achieved, then relationships with role partners change, allowing individuals to make the transition to the next stage (Yellin, 1999). If individuals receive overly critical or unsupportive interactions with role partners, or if they feel devalued, then they will exit the role (Yellin, 1999).

What is perhaps most interesting about the participants' experiences in-between the absorption and commitment phases is that it was a marker, rather than specific occasion or event, that indicated the pivot from one affective orientation to the next. The participants recalled continuing to grow and experience different tutoring sessions online and learning from their students.

The more the participants seemed to gain experience, the more they grew in comfort negotiating their role performance and expectations. For example, Alana discussed how she began to adjust the way she tutored, based on the needs of her students. In campus-based settings, Alana spent time focusing on the holistic student. She tried to mentor each of her students by not only providing writing tutoring but diving deeper into their experiences with classes, questions about careers, and socioemotional support. However, the more Alana tutored online, the more she discovered that in online settings, her students did not want mentorship, they wanted answers. Alana stopped focusing on the holistic student and instead focused on how to best provide support to students who wanted answers to specific questions in her online sessions. Once Alana provided answers, her students left, and she moved on to the next online session. While tutoring online, she stopped diving deeper and providing the same type of support compared to campus-based settings. Alana clearly negotiated her online tutoring role and changed her performance to align with expectations from her role partners. In this way, her

relationships with role partners changed, and she was ready to make the transition to the next phase.

Alana's story is just one example of how the participants transitioned from the absorption phase to the commitment phase. While her story is unique, it offers a running parallel to the outcome of the other participants. Each of the study's participants indicated their ability to negotiate their online tutoring role, and they all adjusted their performance in some way to manage and align with online students' expectations. In this way, each of the participants' relationships with role partners changed. After reaching a point where they were each able to negotiate their online role, the study's participants achieved the marker that allowed them to eventually transition to the commitment phase in Yellin's role acquisition process.

Commitment

Within the commitment phase, individuals receive positive approval from others and themselves (Yellin, 1999). Through affirmation, individuals increase their extensiveness and intensiveness of role relationships, and they repeatedly label themselves with their new role (Yellin, 1999). According to Yellin, this affective orientation influences self-worth among the individuals acquiring the role. In this way, individuals commit to and identify with their role, as the role feels routine and comfortable (Yellin, 1999).

The study's participants focused a great deal of time and attention discussing role performance with me. The concept of role performance was extremely important for each of the participants, and they highlighted the value in receiving positive approval from their students, who were their role partners, as a measure of how successful they felt about their performance online. The more the participants continued to tutor, the more they seemed to gain increased positive approval from others, which influenced their own self-worth and comfort in their

behaviors as online tutors. Slowly, the participants' perspectives on tutoring in online environments changed from something that was negative to something that was positive. Each participant discussed their eventual acceptance of role performance and expectations in the online environment, which indicated their achieved intensiveness with their role relationship. They began to internalize being an online tutor and commit to it.

One example of this commitment was highlighted in Otto's experience. The more Otto began to tutor online, he grew in comfort and self-worth. Otto discussed the ways he adjusted his performance to meet the needs of his students by becoming a technological expert for them and assisting his students to navigate through the online environment. He supported his students with synchronous tool navigation, resources and webpage identification, and more. This change in role performance in the online environment allowed Otto to gain positive approval from his students, which in turn led to his own increased positive approval in self and self-worth. While I talked with Otto, he focused on describing how he felt that his students had "higher expectations" of himself compared to his campus-based students. He also said that he felt that his online students had better perceptions of who he was as a tutor in online environments. Otto's students viewed him as being "awesome" online, which he said was almost opposite to his campus-based experiences. Otto felt his students viewed him as an all-knowing technology expert online, and his perceived elevated status seemed to serve as an ego-booster. Positive affirmation from his students raised Otto's self-worth. He also noted that his views about online tutoring changed from being daunting to validating, suggesting that not only had Otto's self-worth been enhanced, but he also felt comfortable in his role. At this point in his journey, online tutoring, for Otto, became routine, and he was committed to his role as an online tutor.

Although the commitment phase contains less role conflict, it is not absent of role conflict, according to Yellin. Inadequate role performance or negative approval from self or others can still rupture in this phase and influence role exit. Each of the study's participants discussed worry and anxiety around inadequate role performance, even after months or years of online tutoring. What is most interesting about this phenomenon is that while the participants did not highlight any negative interactions or disapproval from students, they almost all struggled with negative approval from self. Aside from Nani, each of the participants highlighted areas of self-criticism. They either worried about whether or not their students were getting anything out of their sessions or whether or not they were doing the right things in their online roles. While their negative self-approval was clear, it was not enough to influence a role exit. In other words, the participants gained enough self-worth through their experiences, that even though they questioned their performance sometimes during this stage in their process, it was not enough to de-motivate themselves and leave their online tutoring roles, which aligns with Yellin's (1999) theory that unless continual role dissatisfaction arises, individuals will likely remain in their newly acquired roles.

Marker, occasion, or event

The final marker, occasion, or event is between the commitment and confidence phases. If an individual identifies with a new role, then their affective orientation towards the role and role relationships changes further, causing them to transition to the final phase in the role acquisition process (Yellin, 1999).

Affective orientation is critical in the transitioning between role phases, and the study's participants suggested further changes in their affective orientation. With increased time in their online tutoring roles, the participants adopted a sense of confidence. For example, Nani

highlighted how her initial concerns with the online environment were that it was not the most ideal learning setting. Over time, her views changed. Nani later perceived the online environment as feasible, but she still viewed online tutoring as being more directive and campus-based tutoring as being non-directive. In recent years, Nani has come to view online tutoring and campus-based tutoring as one-in-the-same. For Nani, online and campus-based tutoring was simply tutoring. While she acknowledged the environments were different and could not be fully "replicated," she felt confident in both roles and saw campus-based and online tutoring as more alike than different. Nani's story is special to her individual experience, but it illustrates a type of marked change in her affective orientation. This change in orientation was consistent with Otto, Parker, and Alana.

Arguably though, Joy had not achieved a change in affective orientation towards her online role after the commitment phase. Joy perceived an increase in self-worth, but she had yet fully committed to and identified in her role as an online tutor. Joy's comments about desiring to go back to campus-based environments and work as a tutor in campus-based settings suggest that she had not entirely completed her transition within the commitment phase. Joy also highlighted more role conflict that persisted throughout her experiences. While she reached a degree of comfort helping students online, she still faced challenges and anxiety with the potential need to provide technological support. Whereas, over time, the other participants began to feel more confident in their online role and experienced reduced role conflict, than they previously experienced. They felt more comfortable providing both online writing tutoring and at least some technological troubleshooting support, which was a marker of transition from the commitment phase to the confidence phase.

Confidence

Confidence is the final phase in the role acquisition process. In this phase, individuals feel confident in their role and have reduced or no role conflict (Yellin, 1999). Role performance is routine and predictable. However, constant repetition and performance duration, such as years performing role, can impact affective orientation leading to demotivation and boredom (Yellin, 1999). To maintain an individual's interest in the role, they might need role alteration or added tasks to gain self-renewal (Yellin, 1999).

The participant's stories revealed that they still faced some role conflict, but role conflict was significantly reduced compared to the earlier phases in the role acquisition process. The participants also indicated that their role performance was relatively routine and predictable. Otto noted that he felt comfortable and knew what to expect when tutoring online compared to when he first started. Alana stated that she achieved a place where she found online tutoring worked for her; although she acknowledged the role of an online tutor was not her favorite role, Alana knew how to perform in the role and viewed her role with predictability. Parker and Nani also suggested that they felt comfortable and confident in their role as an online tutor, but Parker continued to experience some role conflict. Alternatively, Nani did not indicate any role conflict. She seemed to have achieved the most confidence in her role. This may be due to her long tenure in the role of an online tutor, as compared to the other participants in this study. It is also important to highlight that, as noted in the previous section, I do not believe Joy had successfully made the transition from the commitment phase to the confidence phase, when the study's data was collected. Hence, when this section refers to "the participants," it excludes Joy.

That said, Nani's story provides a valuable example of what it means to embody the confidence phase in the role acquisition process. While talking with Nani, she shared an example

where she received a negative response from a student. Nani had set a time-boundary and was reinforcing the time-boundary when her student responded to Nani in frustration. Nani listened to the student's concerns, affirmed her student's frustration but continued to hold to the time-boundaries that Nani had established at the beginning of the tutoring session. After describing the event to me, Nani referenced her years of experience stating situations like the one she shared did not happen frequently, but sometimes students get upset and express feelings of frustration or anger. Through the years, Nani learned how to manage student behaviors and worked to develop a solution that maintained Nani's time-boundaries but offered another option for her student to receive help by a different writing center. Nani suggested that her behaviors and reactions to the student were built in through years of experience and were, in essence, routine. While she felt sorry for the student, she maintained her boundaries, even if it meant the student left her session feeling upset. However, Nani was adamant that she offered an alternative solution to the student, even if the student was not entirely satisfied with the alternative. Nani's actions indicate that she reached a level of confidence where she was okay with not appeasing her student's every whim and could hold to important boundaries in her work as a tutor.

While Nani's example illustrated a degree of confidence and routine actions through her behaviors, Otto also shared a useful situation where he and his center's leadership tried to experiment with asynchronous tutoring. Otto recalled trying to experiment with the way he offered asynchronous writing tutoring support by trying to change the way he and his center provided feedback in an attempt to build more collaborative back and forth letter-writing. While the initiative was not successful, it indicated a desire to try to experiment with different tasks and asynchronous role alternation.

Nani and Otto's experiences were just two examples of the concept of being in a "state of transition," discovered in Chapter 4. Their experiences, alongside other unique lived experiences shared by the study's participants compliments Yellin's (1999) argument that individuals residing in a role must have some sort of role alteration or added work to gain self-review. In particular, being in a constant state of transition alludes to the reality that the participants are always learning, always growing, and always experiencing alteration or added work. Perhaps being in a state of transition is an essential characteristic a part of the online tutoring role and requirement to remain in the role.

Overview of Role Acquisition results

Overall, while some participants experienced confidence with certain aspects of their role performance, not all the participants experienced confidence in all of their role expectations. This study focused on role perceptions, which is the way individuals view how to behave in specific situations (Goodman et al., 1987). However, in analyzing Yellin's theory in light of the participants experiences, other aspects of roles naturally emerge with role expectations and role conflict being a major focus for the participants. For example, the participants talked in length about their role expectations and how they perceived themselves, as they conducted their work online. The participants perceived their own behavior as related to that of a brainstormer, listener, teacher, coach, editor, etc.

The study's findings indicated that a common and expected role behavior perceived of the participants was to provide technological support. Connecting this concept of technological support to role acquisition theory produces an interesting conundrum of sorts. For instance, Joy felt comfortable engaging in tasks as an editor, but she did not feel comfortable providing technological support. This was a problem perceived by Joy but also related to role conflict. On

one hand, this participant seemed to exhibit confidence as an editor but almost no confidence as a technological supporter. There was a clear range in affective orientation in relation to two of Joy's role expectations, which caused friction for her online. Joy's varying levels of confidence suggests that perhaps roles are more multidimensional than Yellin's (1999) initial theory described. In other words, the study found that individuals may experience different affective domains, based on the variances in their role identity, perceptions, expectations, and conflict, which are core elements related to Goodman et al.'s (1987) findings on roles.

Although Yellin includes role conflict into her theory, she did not illustrate the nuanced and multifaceted nature that roles may exhibit and manifold, especially in relation to the four aspects of roles, as outline by Goodman et al. (1987) and the ways these elements may influence the role acquisition process. In light of Yellin's theory, a tutor may feel comfortable when it comes to brainstorming, which brings them confidence, but, at the same time, they may feel they are unskilled at technological troubleshooting, making them feel at a loss, until that aspect of the role can be developed. This begs the question - when does one truly pivot from one affective orientation to the other? Perhaps, through this lens, Yellin's role acquisition process offers broad-sweeping generalizations about role acquisition, but it does not dive deep enough into the varied aspects of affective orientation in relation to specific intricacies of roles.

The study's participants suggested that while aspects of their role were routine, it did not entirely mean they were confident or comfortable with all role tasks or expectations. This interpretation reveals richer intricacies with roles that question whether or not an individual can reside in different role acquisition phases, based on the variety of expertise or confidence with their role tasks. Put simply, if an individual felt at a loss in one aspect of their role but also felt confident in a different aspect of their role, where should they be placed within the role

acquisition process? This is not entirely clear in Yellin's framework, as her theory did not highlight variances in role aspects.

What's more, the study also found that role progression may be more iterative than Yellin's (1999) initial framework suggests. When the study's participants completed their first tutoring session, their affective orientation clearly changed, indicating a movement towards the next affective orientation. However, the more the participants engaged in their roles online, the more they seemed to experience a change in their affective orientation. The participants seemed to gain more anxiety and stress, rather than relief. This finding seems counterintuitive to Yellin's theory, as it indicates the further a person progresses in their role acquisition process, the more they should experience feelings of relief and confidence. However, the study's participants seemed to move forward then backwards in their affective orientation experiences. This suggests deeper nuances between the role acquisition phases and less linear movements between affective orientations that require further inquiry than the scope of this study. Overall, Yellin's theory may be underdeveloped and lack integrated details that bridge a richer perspective on the intricacies and multifaceted aspects of roles.

Multimodal CMC Theory

Herring's (2019) CMC Multimodal theory suggested that communication transmission can happen through a number of modes including audio, video, graphics, text, and robotics. Interactive multimodal platforms (IMPs) are systems that allow two or more semiotic modes, such as text, audio, video, and graphics (Herring, 2015). The study's participants all used an IMP in the form of a video conferencing system that supported video, audio, graphics, and text-based communication as well as a collaborative whiteboard (Herring, 2019). Herring's theory (2019)

argued that IMPs support a convergence of media CMC and require theories and analysis to better understand the interplay between text, audio, video, and graphic mediated communication.

Herring's (2019) Multimodal Communication theory posits that each mediated mode - text, audio, video, robot, and graphic - should be analyzed based on structure, meaning, interaction management, and social phenomena (Herring, 2019). It also suggests that, due to social distance, people can present themselves in select ways compared to face-to-face communication (Herring, 2019).

This study confirmed Herring's (2015) research that IMPs include four modes of communication: text, audio, video, and graphics. These four modes were discussed by the study's participants during their online synchronous writing tutoring sessions. The study's participants only used text and graphics during asynchronous tutoring sessions.

That said, the study also found that Role Acquisition theory was related to Multimodal CMC theory. For the purposes of this study, a surface review of preliminary findings related to Multimodal CMC theory and Role Acquisition theory were discussed. The four modes analyzed in this study were: text, audio, video, and graphics. It is important to note that the study did not provide insight into the robot mode, as this mode was not used by the study's participants. Nonetheless, the four IMP modes highlighted by Herring were also found to be connected to specific role tasks and expectations. The study used Herring's CMC toolkit (2014) to form the structure of analysis. The four modes were reviewed based on the ways structure, meaning, interaction, and behavior were used within each unique context (Herring, 2004). Structure described utterances focused on messages, exchanges, and conversations; meaning illustrated what was intended to be communicated and what was accomplished; interaction management highlighted how turn-taking took place; social phenomena revealed the social dynamics

mediated online practices (Herring, 2004). Using Herring's CMC toolkit, I looked at the participants' experiences from micro to macro perspectives.

The following sections detail the modes and relevant roles associated with the different CMC modes embedded in IMPs along with a critical analysis of the types of roles adopted by the study's participants vis-a-vis each mode. It is important to note that none of the communicative modes were observed during this study. For instance, I did not collect data on chat transcripts or live or recorded audio or video online tutoring sessions. Rather, I collected data on the participants reflections of the types of modes they engage with and the ways they engage in those modes. In this way, I offer a broad review of the ways the participants engaged in different modes during their online sessions. Hence, the following section highlights a description of the participants reflections on the four multimodal CMC modes they used during online tutoring sessions:

Text Mode

Text-based communication has been historically used in writing center practices since the late 1990s (Harris, 1998), and it continues to be a popular mode of communication between students and tutors in asynchronous and synchronous online settings, as indicated by this study. I found that tutors communicated with students using text-based synchronous chatting and asynchronous document commenting. The following sections highlight the structure, meaning, interaction management, social phenomena, and relationship to the participants' online tutoring role.

Structure

The study's participants discussed two types of genres of writing in online tutoring sessions: synchronous chatting and asynchronous document commenting. The two genres

contained different characteristics. Synchronous text-based chatting was viewed differently by participants. For instance, Nani viewed synchronous chatting as an opportunity to interact with students in a casual way that contained mistakes, whereas other participants, like Joy, viewed synchronous chatting as important in their ability to represent the writing center, which meant they felt compelled to write perfectly without any spelling or grammatical errors.

Regardless of perspective of discourse conventions, synchronous text-based chatting was viewed as a way to communicate with students and answer questions, brainstorm, and help provide text-based writing support. Overall, it was perceived as a more casual form of text-based communication by the participants, compared to other written conventions such as emailing. During synchronous text-based tutoring, tutors would write text into a chat box and wait for a response from a student using a synchronous video-conferencing tool. The written messages were less structured and organically moved with the pace and needs of the student. The synchronous mode was also defined by its immediacy of interaction. The study's participants valued synchronous chatting for its relative ease and immediacy of communicating with students, even though they noted that it often took longer to communicate than other mediated modes.

Alternatively, the two participants in the study who engaged in asynchronous, Otto and Nani, discussed this type of mode as document commenting. Both of the participants viewed this type of writing as more formal letter-writing. They saw their text-based writing as structured and more formal than their synchronous text-based chatting. During asynchronous commenting, the participants build an introduction, body, and conclusion, similar to an email or letter. The participants also purposefully embedded questions into their asynchronous text-based correspondence with students, as a way to attempt to get their students to think about their own

writing process and possibly send another draft to be reviewed asynchronously by the participants.

Meaning

Interestingly, the two text-based genres experienced by the participants seemed to have different meanings. In synchronous text-chatting, the participants focused their discourse on message exchanging with students. The participants wanted to communicate in a way that viewed themselves as positive and encouraging. This meant using grammatical punctuation like exclamation marks to indicate enthusiasm to students. The participants also discussed making encouraging statements and acting more non-directive or suggestive through their writing as compared to audio or video modes.

On the other hand, in asynchronous document commenting, the participants did not always believe their students would write back to them, so their messaging was focused on trying to get students to think about their writing. Comments were embedded in word processing documents and included introductory comments, content-focused comments, and closing comments to frame the overall writing and highlight areas for further development. The participants tried to ask questions that would encourage students to reflect on their own writing process. In summary, synchronous chatting focused on attempting to chat with students, while asynchronous commenting focused on trying to comment on students' work.

One aspect of text-based communication with the same meaning was emoticons. The participants discussed the importance of “being smiley,” encouraging, or positive, and they viewed the use of emoticons as a method to communicate positivity and express casualness in writing, whether synchronous or asynchronous. A smile-type emoticon was the most popular emoticon used by the participants, as they found that type of emoticon communicated

friendliness and perhaps even helped to mitigate tone in both synchronous and asynchronous text-based communication. Almost all the participants preferred emoticons compared to emojis for one of two reasons: ease of use and professionalism.

Interaction management

A noticeable difference in interaction between synchronous chatting and asynchronous commenting was immediacy and type of interaction. Synchronous chatting happened simultaneously with two individuals communicating with each other during the same period in time using an online synchronous chat-based tool. Another important aspect of interaction was turn-taking exchanges that required two-way communication between a tutor and student. In asynchronous commenting, communication was delayed and the student and tutor were never interacting at the same time together. Text-based asynchronous commenting also indicated that communication was more one-way, with a tutor doing most of the interaction and a student receiving the interaction but almost never communicating back to the tutor. This one-way communication channel was an observation described by both Otto and Nani during my discussions with them about their asynchronous tutoring experiences.

Otto and Nani also discussed the length of time it took to communicate in asynchronous sessions because they spent a longer time reflecting on their writing and considering whether or not their messaging was clear. The participants had less time to reflect on clarity during instant messaging in synchronous sessions. The immediacy of texting, while seemingly easier to communicate than asynchronous sessions, caused some anxiety for some. For example, Joy and Otto felt worried about not being able to clearly communicate with their texting. Joy's concern also expanded to her fear that she was not using correct spelling and grammar. She did not want to give off an appearance of not knowing how to write adequately. In this light, some of the

participants seemed to feel they could not communicate as a peer in the text mode, but rather as an expert. Only one participant, Nani, felt the opposite about the text mode. She believed that tutors should make mistakes because it is human to make mistakes in writing. In this way, the participants were not entirely aligned on perspectives on professionalism in online synchronous text-based chatting tutoring sessions.

Social phenomena

Text-based communication was difficult for the participants. In fact, almost all of the study's participants disliked text-based tutoring because they felt it lacked rich social cues and nonverbal expressions that can be more easily detected in audio and video modes. One of the major concerns for the participants in both synchronous chatting and asynchronous commenting was centered on social and power dynamics. The participants worried about how they were communicating tone in their writing and were concerned about their ability to avoid hurting their students' feelings, which caused the participants to often be less direct in communicating in text-based interactions compared to video or audio modes. The participants also worried about status and tried to be more positive and friendlier to avoid students feeling intimidated or judged. They used emoticons to attempt to reduce any potential tone issues or attempt to make students feel more comfortable and less defensive with feedback that might be viewed as more direct. One participant, Parker, also felt it was important to use emoticons rather than emojis. He believed emoticons were representative of a user communicating on a computer, which he deemed as more professional compared to a tablet or smartphone device when tutoring.

The participants also discussed how they used exclamation marks to indicate positivity to their students. Both the female and male participants seemed to indicate that they frequently use exclamation marks during synchronous chatting to try to make their messaging more upbeat.

Lastly, text-based communication seems to have an added emotional labor element, a concept most closely tied to the role of the professional tutor. The participants seemed to feel a need to give off an appearance of always being friendly and positive in text-based tutoring, similar to a "good" customer service provider. However, this focus on friendliness was more frequently discussed and highlighted by the female participants, which might allude to female tutors engaging in more perceived emotional labor compared to their male counterparts.

Relationship to role

Closely related to social phenomena are the types of roles that the participants acknowledged adopting in text-based communication modes. In synchronous chatting sessions, several of the participants adopted a role that was akin to a non-directive supporter, brainstormer, coach, or cheerleader. However, in other instances, they adopted more directive roles like the editor. In asynchronous text-based email sessions, some of the participants played a role that was likened to a directive, letter-writer. The participants cited interaction and immediacy of dialogue as influencing factors related to their role adoption in text modes. When the participants could not dialogue with a student, they tended to become letter writers, but when they could interact with students, they tended to be less direct and more "smiley" to compensate for the loss of tone and nonverbal expression in text-based communication modes.

Graphic Mode

Graphic communication was cited by the participants during text-based interactions. This study found that tutors only occasionally communicated with students using static graphic drawings, also known as emojis. The following sections highlight the structure, meaning, interaction management, social phenomena, and relationship to the participants' online tutoring role.

Structure

Emojis were very occasionally used by the participants. When they were used by the participants, it was almost always within the context of text-based exchanges. However, Otto noted that he would sometimes use a “Reaction” tool embedded within a particular video conferencing system that acted as a type of temporary emoji. He used different “reaction” emojis when listening to his student talking. If a student said something that Otto felt would be appropriate to respond using a “reaction, then Otto would usually playfully demonstrate a reaction without interrupting the student.

Meaning

Smile emojis or emoticons were used by some of the participants in synchronous text-based chatting and email tutoring as a way to either mitigate potentially hurting students’ feelings when providing feedback or attempting to make communication seem more positive or encouraging.

Interaction management

Emojis were less commonly used as compared to emoticons, due to the ease that the emotions presented as well as the participants' beliefs that emoticons were seemingly more professional. Both Parker and Otto noted they preferred emoticons because they felt the emoticons appeared to be written from a computer in synchronous chatting tools or comment boxes in word processing documents. In this way, the perception of computer mediated communication was valued over smartphone or tablet mediated communication by the participants. Interestingly, this finding suggests that the study’s participants perceived communication as being more professional using a computer while tutoring. It also indicates that

online tutoring using a computer was perceived as being more potentially professional than using a different type of device.

Social phenomena

Emojis were used as a tool to demonstrate a number of different expressions including playful communication, encouragement, positivity, friendliness, casualness, and kindness, per the participants' experiences. Each of the participants discussed using emoticons to evoke some kind of positive relationship building with their students. However, the male participants indicated that they may use emoticons less frequently as compared to the female participants.

Relationship to role

Emojis and emoticons were used less frequently than any other communication mode; nevertheless, these communicative features seemed most closely related to the cheerleader and encourager, and were used in both directive and non-directive roles.

Audio Mode

Audio-based communication was a common mode of communication between the participants and their students within online synchronous writing tutoring sessions. Audio-only tutoring seemed to be used during tutoring sessions when users experienced low internet bandwidth. The following sections highlight the structure, meaning, interaction management, social phenomena, and relationship to the participants' online tutoring role.

Structure

The study's participants used the audio-only function in synchronous video conferencing tool to talk with students. The participants discussed the value of audio tutoring sessions because they could, at minimum, hear important tone, accents, intonation, and other linguistic features that helped the tutors better identify and assess their students. Some of the participants discussed

the challenge of silence and tried to minimize what they deemed as “awkward” moments of silence with their students. Otto, in particular, talked about whenever there were moments where his student was looking for a file or he was waiting for his student to share the screen, he did not like to wait in silence; and so, he used those moments to ask questions or discuss more casual conversations with his students.

Meaning

The participants also valued tone and felt that tone was a major benefit in audio modes, as opposed to text and graphic modes, and they felt it enhanced their ability to more clearly communicate with students. However, the participants still felt that they lost out on their ability to adequately observe or read their students with the audio tutoring sessions and preferred video conferencing, which intermixed audio and video modes.

Interaction management

The participants noted that they preferred audio-only tutoring over text-only chatting or commenting. Using the audio communicative mode, the participants would talk with students using a synchronous tool, while usually viewing a screenshare of a student's paper, assignment, or relevant website. The participants seemed to most frequently communicate and ask questions with their students while screen-sharing an essay, website, or relevant resource. Nevertheless, while audio-only communication did not happen as frequently, the participants did state that bandwidth challenges often influenced themselves and their students to turn off their videos and engage in audio-only tutoring sessions. During audio-online tutoring sessions, there was usually two-way communication between the participants and students. Each communicator took turns exchanging ideas, information, questions, and the like.

Social phenomena

Audio-only communication was the participants second rated preference for communicating with students, among the four communication modes available. They valued being able to talk things at with students and found audio-online communication helped to streamline communication. Although they found value in audio-online communication, the participants also struggled with audio-online communication because of the lack of nonverbal expression. Each of the participants discussed the limitations of audio-based communication in light of the inability to observe participants' facial expressions. The inability to assess facial expressions and other nonverbal cues caused some anxiety and worry for the participants. In particular, the participants felt that communication in audio-only sessions was not always clear or complete.

Relationship to role

Many of the participants discussed using more role flexibility with the audio mode, as they felt their ability to communicate was more fluid, and their ability to explain, coach, or direct the session was easier. In fact, almost all the participants discussed using a mixture of directive and nondirective role strategies using the audio mode. They also discussed being both a teacher and peer, expert and collaborator during audio-online sessions. Hence, the audio mode invited more nuanced roles, compared to text or graphic communicative modes.

Even though the participants suggested that they played different roles, depending on the student they work with, this seemed more dependent on audio or video modes. Using the audio communicative mode, the participants would talk with students using a synchronous tool while usually viewing a screenshare of a student's paper, assignment, or relevant website.

Video Mode

The participants unanimously agreed that the video mode was their favorite and most desired communicative mode during online tutoring sessions. The participants valued the ability to see and hear their students, which might have been more akin to a campus-based tutoring session. The following sections highlight the structure, meaning, interaction management, social phenomena, and relationship to the participants' online tutoring role.

Structure

The study's participants used the video function in a synchronous video conferencing tool to communicate with students. The participants discussed the value of using a computer camera and audio feature to both see and hear their students during online tutoring sessions. In this way, when discussing video mode, the audio mode overlapped, as the participants always used video and audio simultaneously to communicate with their students during video sessions.

Even though most of the participants felt video sessions did not fully represent all their students' nonverbal expressions, the participants felt that at least it offered some expressions from the chest-up, which they believed was important. However, some of the participants complained about the usability of some video conferencing tools. For example, Parker talked about when sharing a screen, users' videos would shrink, and both Parker and Alana found it difficult to read their students' faces when they shrunk down in size and shifted over to one corner of their screen. They complained that the small video and large paper on the screen was weird and made it difficult to observe or read their students. Alana questioned if the video was even helpful for students, as they felt sometimes students would not appear to be looking at the tutor and rather the students' paper or screen. Despite challenges, the participants preferred

synchronous video conferencing because they felt it most closely related to a campus-based session.

Meaning

During video tutoring sessions, participants turned their cameras on and tried to build more of a connection with their students. Even though they felt that video tutoring was sometimes awkward, especially with students they had never worked with before, the participants still felt it was important to share their video. They found that students reciprocated this gesture, and the participants noted that students almost always turned their camera on to communicate with their tutor. This was especially true if the tutor turned on their camera; students would usually follow suit.

During video tutoring sessions, the participants and students would participate in two-way conversations. During conversations, the participants tried to observe their students to determine what they needed and how to best support them, including role adoption and strategies.

Interaction management

Video conferencing was a unique phenomenon. The participants valued video conferencing, but they also viewed it as slightly awkward. The participants most frequently found video conferencing awkward when they were working with a student they did not know. Some of the participants discussed how strange it was to see themselves while they were tutoring, while others felt their computer-mediated self did not represent themselves accurately. Several participants cited feeling they sounded “harsh” and others felt they looked larger and less visually appealing, which they did not like. During video conferencing, the participants often used gestures to aid in their efforts to communicate with their students.

Social phenomena

Video communication was almost always paired with audio interaction. The participants valued online synchronous sessions and perceived the video mode as the most ideal mode of interacting with students. Typically, when the participants turned on their cameras, students would follow suit. The participants seemed to differ in their approach to connecting with students. While they all valued the ability to observe students, although observation was more limited than campus-based sessions, the participants ranged in their approach to communicating with students. Interestingly, Otto tried to engaged in talking story with students online as much as possible, but Parker found his ability to talk story with students stifled. Alana and Joy felt awkward communicating online and seeing themselves via their camera, but Nani did not seem to face difficulties. There seemed to be a degree of potential gendered differences between self-confidence interacting online. For example, two of the female participants described feeling more self-conscious regarding their voices online, as compared to the other participants.

Relationship to role

Like audio-only sessions, tutors adopted a wide-range of roles in their video conferencing sessions and attributed their flexible roles to attempting to meet their students' unique needs. The participants discussed using nondirective and directive roles during video mode communication.

Overview of Multimodal CMC results

Overall, the study revealed that the participants favored the video mode. They valued this mode because they liked seeing their students’ nonverbal expressions. The second most favored mode was audio. The participants discussed the importance of tone when communicating with students online. While not as desired, the participants valued the text mode as an option to communicate with students. Interestingly, the study’s participants did not seem to value graphic

modes as much, but when discussing graphic modes, the participants almost always discussed this mode along with the text mode. This study also reinforced Herring's (2014) argument that mode choice on platforms affects the nature of discourse. These results suggests that the participants used different ways of communicating via the text-mode in synchronous and asynchronous online sessions. An additional insight of this study found that the participants used different roles depending on the types of modes they were using to communicate with students.

Herring (2019) issued a call for more research on the different ways CMC multimodal modes may be used in congruence within IMPs. It is important to highlight that this study did not capture a great deal of overlap between the use of multiple communicative modes at once. In fact, the study only found that text and graphic modes had overlap through the use of emojis or emoticons integrated during text-based communication or reactions integrated during audio or video modes. It also found that video and audio modes overlapped during online synchronous tutoring sessions where the participants used their cameras and mics to communicate with students.

Summary of Multimodal CMC and Role Acquisition Theories

This study offered a sequential analysis of the way's participants might have engaged in role acquisition via communicative modes. It also offered a surface-level analysis of the types of multimodal communication used in online writing tutoring sessions. What is clear is that communication and interaction are inherently built within the role acquisition process and the ways tutors' roles were acquired online were through multimodal mediated forms of communication. The study revealed that tutoring role characteristics might be largely connected to different types of multimodal communication modes. For example, in text-based and graphic modes, tutors may naturally adopt behaviors that are more aligned with non-directive roles, but

in audio modes and video modes, tutors may adopt behaviors that are naturally more connected to directive roles. The findings suggest video-conferencing, specifically video modes may ease communication, lending to potentially less role conflict. That said, a deeper and more focused analysis is needed to more comprehensively understand why individuals are influenced to adopt specific roles and behaviors and the ways communicative modes may or may not aid in role adoption or acquisition for online writing tutors.

Implications for Practice

The following section provides implications for practice, which may assist writing or learning center directors, staff members, tutors, and any person interested in the area of online writing tutoring in higher education. The research outlined in Chapter 2 outlined the history of writing centers, stemming from the beginning of the twentieth century and adapting practices over the years to be centers that provide spaces for talking about writing and who often serve women, students of color, English language learners, and more (Salem, 2016). The purpose of writing centers has not changed much, even as centers shifted online. Even though the fundamental purpose of writing centers remained the same over the past several decades, regardless of delivery format, an increased focus on providing more accessible and equitable opportunities has been a major benefit of twenty-first century online writing centers (Robinson, 2009; Bell, 2009; Summer, 2013). Additionally, some additions to writing centers have been noted such as the focus on supporting English language learners with reading and grammatical skills (Harris, 2017). The following sections highlight a variety of implications for practice.

Tutor Training - Demystifying the Online Environment

The need for new and different tasks within online tutoring sessions beckons a broader need regarding training and preparedness. Literature asserts that tutor training is important to

support tutors' online preparedness (Gallager & Maxfield, 2019). Other scholars argue that tutor training is also important for role clarity and student-to-tutor boundaries (McFarlane, 2016). This study's findings support the need and value for online tutor training and preparedness.

Formal training

Prior to starting to tutor in the online environment, each of the study's participants felt concern about the loss of learning and comfort. They believed the online space was not conducive for learning or tutoring. This finding suggests that some individuals may have unrealistic expectations or perceptions of the online environment in relation to learning or tutoring.

To address a perceived loss of learning, demystifying the online environment and establishing realistic expectations or perceptions may be valuable for learning or writing centers to implement prior to the start of an individual's online tutoring journey. Most of the participants did not receive formal or robust tutor training for the online environment, prior to their transition online. This presents an opportunity to create purposeful training for online tutors.

Authentic learning experiences

This study also discovered that comfort was important to tutors. When shifting into a new, unknown environment or context, people may experience fear, concern, anxiety, and an overall loss of comfort. This may be normal for most people faced with an expectation to perform. While knowledge building is important, skill and ability building are arguably important too. Theoretical or conceptual knowledge of tutoring topics and strategies can be valuable, but it might not adequately address feelings of discomfort prior to starting online tutoring sessions. While it may be unrealistic to attempt to dispel all feelings of discomfort for tutors prior to the start of their online tutoring journey, it may be reasonable to consider ways to

reduce feelings of discomfort through authentic learning experiences. For example, knowledge of synchronous tools and relevant resources used in online tutoring sessions may be helpful, but applied learning experiences that focus on tutors actually tutoring online or using tools and practicing troubleshooting or communicating in different modes may help to further mitigate discomfort and potentially better prepare new tutors for the online environment.

Likewise, while this study demonstrated tutors' perseverance and ability to overcome challenges in the online environment, it also highlighted that without authentic learning experiences, both new and seasoned tutors can experience stress and anxiety prior to their first online tutoring experiences. Even though relief can be gained with positive role partner interaction, more purposeful tutor preparation may assist new tutors gain greater exposure and comfort through authentic learning experiences.

In all, authentic learning experiences should focus on attempting to increase tutor knowledge, skill, comfort and confidence. The study found that when shifting online, tutors did not feel comfortable and lacked overall know-how of what to do online, with some tutors struggling with technological literacy skills. Actual training that invites tutors to explore, discuss, act, and construct meaningful concepts, knowledge, and skills embedded in the work of online tutoring is important. Examples of authentic learning experiences for tutors include simulation-based learning and tutoring (e.g. tutors engage in hands-on sessions where they practice facilitating an online session with a non-actor [AI] or actor [mock tutoring]); engage and discuss standards for the online environment including what tutors should expect to do and not do (e.g. tutors are not all-knowing experts and should establish boundaries to communicate this reality); engage in skill and troubleshooting development (e.g. tutors are given a technological problem

that they must troubleshoot to solve); engage with a community of tutors and work together to share ideas, help one another, brainstorm, and more.

Greater focus on technological skills

The study revealed that, like professional tutors, peer tutors see value in online tutor technology training to better prepare themselves to tutor online. More specifically, tutors in the study saw the need for more technology-focused on-boarding and upskilling not just with whatever technology tool or system they were expected to use but also basic computer knowledge and technological troubleshooting. In this light, more systematic upskilling about technology is recommended by the study's participants. Tutor training and/or ongoing skill building that integrates a greater focus on technological skill building is recommended.

Online tutoring strategies

The study discovered that campus-based tutoring strategies might not always work as planned or anticipated in online environments. In fact, all the participants struggled and were self-critical about their online performance and this concern seemed to connect back partly to difficulty in determining how to navigate tutoring strategies. For example, in campus-based settings, almost all the participants relied on their ability to observe nonverbal cues to aid in assessing students' needs and communicating with students. Since observation was either reduced to a small screen or sometimes not available, some communication strategies that worked in campus-based environments did not always work in online environments. This is certainly true with different types of communicative modes. The study highlighted various strategies tutors embraced when communicating in audio, video, text-based, or graphic modes. Hence, becoming familiar with using less observation techniques and instead different ways to

communicate, based on mode, as well as other techniques might be important for successful tutor performance in online sessions.

The study also highlights tutors' grit and adaptability. Each of the study's participants adjusted their strategies, in one way or another, to change the way they tutored for the online environment. This change brought the creation of new strategies, roles, or self and assisted in reducing stress, as their transition continued. Integrating more purposeful online specific strategies within tutor training might be valuable in not only bringing awareness to the nuances of the online and campus-based environments but also help tutors to begin to practice different ways to approach tutoring in online settings. Additionally, pairing seasoned online tutors with new hires could be a valuable mentoring strategy that may assist new hires in gaining a richer understanding of what it is like to tutor online and strategies to do so.

Defining Online Tutoring Roles and Responsibilities

Tutoring roles and responsibilities were not the same in campus-based and online settings. This study identified deep friction for tutors around their roles and responsibilities in campus-based settings compared to online settings. Without clear roles and responsibilities and empowerment from their centers on what tutors should or should not be doing, the study's participants carved their own path and personal policies around what was acceptable and unacceptable. The participants experienced an overall lack of role clarity and empowerment in responsibilities online. This reality influenced the study's participants to question not just their roles but an even broader sense of identity, as they faced conflict around whether or not they were or should be technological experts or teachers or directive leaders. This indicates that people adapt and make changes to themselves, based on their environment. And, arguably, these adjustments and changes to self were wrapped up in role negotiation and performance (Yellin,

1999). The study's participants wanted to perform well in their role and that meant changing how they traditionally were trained to tutor in campus-based settings. Consequently, writing and learning centers should consider conducting deeper task and job analyses to more accurately identify the roles and responsibilities of online tutors. Engaging in this process might also influence policies, processes, training, and support that could be unique for tutors working in the online environment.

Reimagining Writing Centers

Role variations

While literature suggests that the purpose and focus of writing centers remains stable, this study indicates that the purpose of online writing centers has shifted from its traditional campus-based roots. Rather than building a space for writing, tutors see value in more applied-work with students, building in spaces for development, talking, modeling, brainstorming, editing, coaching, practicing and more. The online writing center may be more than a space for talking out loud. The study's participants revealed that it is more multifaceted, and tutors provide different services to students, based on their students' unique needs, rather than a one-size fits all approach.

Tutors may adopt more nuanced roles online and shift more frequently between directive and nondirective roles among a variety of role types of strategies, based on a tutors' assessment of their students' unique needs. In this way, sticking to one particular role becomes less important and being able to adequately read or assess a learner and make changes to fit the needs of each student, through a computer-mediated environment, becomes more important. Additionally, having the ability to assess and then choose to adopt the most appropriate role for a learner, based on a tutors' scope and abilities, becomes a new strategy and skill that tutors must develop

to best support their students in online environments. Consequently, if writing or learning center policies or philosophies focus on the importance of avoiding teaching, such perspectives might need to be reconsidered or clarified for technology support in the online environment.

Online roles can be ambiguous at times and shift constantly. These changes in roles compared to campus-based environments caused challenges for the study's participants. The participants second guessed themselves when using roles that were typically not-allowed in campus-based settings. Without training or clear guidelines on what to expect and what to do in situations where students cannot navigate systems or tools or are experiencing computer malfunctions, the participants acted to attempt to mitigate or remedy situations. They were forced to navigate unknown online territories without clear guidance or direction. The unknown-ness of the online environment produced stress, anxiety, and worry among the tutors. To address these challenges, writing and learning centers should consider building a series of programmatic elements such as robust online tutor training programs that include important topics such as online tutoring expectations, ranges in roles, and boundary settings, overcoming communication challenges, troubleshooting; policies and expectations with online tutoring support; and more. Integrating more systematic support to upskill and prepare tutors may benefit tutors' self-confidence and ensure a greater degree of consistency in experiences and expectations among students when working with online tutors.

Integrated virtual community and relationship support

The study illustrated that tutors may feel increased worry about potential isolation or lack of support when working online. The participants talked with me about experiencing feelings of loneliness, as they navigated the unfamiliar world of online tutoring. Their experiences as online tutors were often antithetical to their campus-based employee experiences. In particular, the

participants struggled with building community with their learners, which confirmed an earlier study on tutors' challenges with socialization and relationship building online (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018). Not only did the study's participants struggle with building relationships and community with their students, they also felt isolated from their center. Although most research studies focus on students and community, there is a lack of literacy focused on tutors' perception of community with their peers. This study revealed that community amongst online tutors was highly valued in campus-based settings, and when tutors shifted online, they missed the experiences and organic connection moments with their peers.

When considering how to mitigate feelings of a loss of space and relationships online, writing and learning centers might consider integrated virtual support systems for their staff. This may be in the form of building more purposeful staff connection points such as ongoing virtual "teaming" events, building and maintaining more online communities, creating messaging channels, or facilitating purposeful connection syncs throughout the day or week, as this may help tutors and staff members to connect, flourish, and grow the center's community and help maintain more creative and positive working environments. Simply put, building in structures to help with relationship building and support for internal employees like tutors and professional staff members working in virtual environments might help to mitigate feelings of isolation, loneliness, and increased support when working online.

Additional support and guidance around what it can mean to facilitate online social conversations in different modes may also be valuable for tutors to consider purposeful relationship-building strategies with their students. In this way, tutors may be more equipped to build relationships that were "easier" or "more natural" to build in campus-based settings.

Performance support

This study discovered the impact external factors can have on performance. For one, it revealed that positive first tutoring session interactions might benefit a tutor's self-esteem, confidence, and motivation to continue tutoring online. However, it is unclear how negative feedback during early tutoring sessions may influence motivation. Regardless, positive student reactions were shown to bring the study's participants relief and satisfaction in their role performance. In addition to positive student feedback, tutors may also need positive affirmation from center leadership to encourage or motivate tutors to remain in their roles. Writing and learning center staff might consider ways to stay engaged with how students' sessions are progressing to determine if affirmation or encouragement is needed to support their tutoring staff. This beckons the potential value in mentorship and the value in connection points with tutors throughout the day or week, as a form of role performance support and retention.

The study also showed that self-esteem might be a challenge for some tutors. For a variety of reasons, tutors may struggle with their authentic self in online settings. This suggests that not everyone may be suited towards a role they are attempting to acquire, such as the role of an online tutor. In these situations, job or role fit should not engender shame. That said, it can be natural for some individuals to feel disappointment or ashamed of "failing," based on their measure of failure. Training and mentorship may be two important elements to structure experiences that build comfort and bring a measure of confidence for new tutors, especially those who may struggle with self-esteem. These sessions might also be valuable to highlight job and experience clarity and potential career pathways. If online tutoring is not the right fit for every tutor, it does not mean that campus-based tutoring would also not be the right fit and vice-versa. Center staff might consider opportunities to build out spaces for career conversations, clearer

descriptions of online tutoring roles and responsibilities, and greater visibility on what it looks like to work online for individuals who are potentially interested in working as an online tutor.

Growth and differences online

While tutoring on campus and online offer a number of similarities, there were noticeable differences that were significant in terms of the participants' growth. In terms of similarities, tutors attempted to follow a sequential structure when moving through tutoring sessions, including greeting students, asking questions to determine needs, engaging with students to address needs, and wrapping up or ending sessions. Situational roles were used in both delivery formats, such as the cheerleader or coach to offer encouragement and support to students. Likewise, the focus on writing brainstorming, feedback, and questions were also consistent actions used by tutors in both campus and online environments.

The aspects most unique to the online environment that revealed tutor growth included computer-mediated communication, tutoring strategies, teaching role and technological knowledge and skills. Communication was noticeably different when tutoring online because of the range in possible communicative modes: text, audio, video, graphics, or all three. Tutors had to be open and flexible when communicating with students. The text-mode was very different, and it took time for tutors to gain comfort and confidence communicating with students. Another clear difference was tutoring strategies. On campus, tutors relied on observation as a strategy to assess students. This strategy is limited or sometimes unavailable online, which required tutors to engage more frequently with students using knowledge checks, questions, or similar communicative strategies to gain clarity of students' thoughts or feelings during tutoring sessions. While the concept of teaching might be present, to a degree, in campus-based environments, the concept of the teaching role is much more pervasive online. Tutors might be

expected to teach students how to use and operate technology during online tutoring sessions, or tutors might be expected to have a degree of technological literacy to support students with troubleshooting. Regardless, the degree in teaching technology and technological troubleshooting is a necessity in online sessions as compared to campus-based sessions. In all, communication, strategies, roles, and technical acumen were significant in online environments. Writing centers should be mindful of this reality and determine if support, practice, and/or additional training are needed to support online tutors' growth and development online.

Hybridization

Not all students were able to access online tutoring sessions, even though the online environment is sometimes broadcasted as more accessible. This study found that critical considerations around access should be considered. A mixture of tutoring offered in multiple delivery formats including campus-based, online synchronous, asynchronous, and other potential delivery blends or options should be considered to provide access to various students and tutors.

Resources

Reimagining the writing center can only be adequately implemented with adequate staffing and resources. The study found that several writing centers received budget cuts or experienced tutoring cuts after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring writing centers are provided with appropriate funding is critical to the continued presence of these centers on campus and online. Likewise, student employment and faculty specialist positions are critical to the function of any center. Not only is student employment a valuable tool for retention (Burnside et al., 2019), but faculty specialists and center staff are critical to centers and offer a range of benefits, including building a healthy and thriving safe environment for tutors and

students to work together and focus on strategies for learning transfer, among a range of other areas (Devet, 2015).

Yet, many writing center directors, coordinators, and staff members face burnout and are overworked and underpaid (Jackson, McKinney & Caswell, 2016), which warrants more support. While these individuals often facilitate tutor training, many seemed absent from facilitating online tutor training. This reality could be due to a number of reasons; regardless, it is recommended that additional faculty specialists be hired, including a specialist in online learning. If centers begin to offer hybrid services, more faculty specialists will be needed to support the split services. Additionally, having a specialist to support the center with aspects related to online elements may help ease the burden writing center staff might face, as they build and grow their online component.

Relatedly, the participants received varying degrees of training, with most tutors receiving a brief tour of the online synchronous tool they were expected to use and not much else. If writing centers expect their staff and tutors to engage and work in the online environment, it is critical to build comprehensive tutor training that equips online tutors to learn what to expect and also engage in authentic learning experiences. Writing centers should be supplied with quality technology and tools to be able to conduct their work including AI or VR tools and resources for training creation as well as high-quality equipment such as computers and head-sets. Time and resources must be invested into college writing centers, so they can adequately support students while also ensuring employees are well equipped and feel supported in their work. Additionally, writing centers, in general, may be unknown on campus, and cross-divisional leadership awareness and training on the use and function of these centers is

recommended to educate leaders, faculty, and staff about the benefits and value writing centers offer not only to students, but to employees across campuses.

Embracing a State of Transition

This study highlighted the seemingly endless transition for tutors working in the online environment. The online transition process, on one hand, might be longer than anyone might have imagined. And, on the other hand, it might not ever really end. Being aware of this journey online and state of "transitionness" is important for writing and learning centers staff and tutors to acknowledge. The online environment is always changing and there are countless opportunities for staff and tutors to continuously engage in learning and growing online. This reality is not meant to discourage staff and tutors but rather encourage writing and learning centers to continue to engage, learn, and explore opportunities to support students in different ways. It also reveals that once a tutor begins tutoring online, it does not mean that they become an all-knowing expert, who is fully transitioned online. Rather, it means that tutors may gradually gain comfort, and eventually, through mere experience, obtain a transformational mindset in how they view the online environment. Being cognizant of the need for a growth mindset when working online is important for writing center staff and tutors. It also suggests the need to continuously be checking in with staff and tutors and learning and growing together about what it means to tutor online through a semblance of online tutoring experiences.

Future Looking

The technological era might be viewed as a bulldozer of sorts; if centers do not get behind the force, their existence may be threatened. In other words, writing centers might expect to encounter inevitable changes in their services and practices, due to technology. If centers choose not to become technological adopters, they risk becoming too inaccessible. For example,

the more the online environment becomes normalized across higher education, the more students might expect online tutoring services.

For centers seeking to proactively enhance their online tutoring services, it is important to consider the use of campus-based spaces for students. Often times, writing centers are homey spaces that students visit and often stay, as a result of community formation (Nordstrom, 2019). Although, this study indicated that students do not hang-out online and there is an overall lack of community within virtual writing centers. The participants initially feared the loss of community and that fear became a reality when they shifted their work completely online. Tutors felt a sense of loss because they lacked access to their community of students, peers, and mentors. In the future, centers should consider ways to build and maintain community with their tutors as well as their students. There are a number of ways to form community online, such as daily online check-ins with staff and tutors; weekly team meetings to discuss major center updates; individual meetings with a staff member and tutor to discuss performance support, non-productive meetings where staff and tutors engage in games, ice-breakers, or fun online activities; text-based chatting systems where staff and tutors can engage in workplace updates, share memes, and participate in engaging challenges. Regardless of the approach, purposeful virtual teaming and community is needed among writing centers to build and maintain a sense of community for tutors. Additionally, students might also be given access to engage in non-productive meetings or events, connect over IM systems to engage with staff or tutors who are working, and more. In this way, community might be built internally across tutors and staff members as well as externally across students, staff, and tutors.

While speculating, online writing centers, in the future, might look more similar to campus-based settings; they may be spaces of engagement and fun and offer a comfy homey feel

online, just as they often do on campus. What is evident is that there are countless opportunities to explore, and writing centers might only be scratching the surface of potential for their online spaces.

Implications for Theory

Based on the comments provided by the study's participants regarding their roles and mediated communicative modes, the study's findings may have implications for Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory and Herring's (2019) Multimodal Communication theory. While this study supported the notion that individuals communicate in a variety of ways using multimodal communication, it only offered a surface level of analysis regarding Herring's (2019) Multimodal Communication theory. Even though the study only captured data on four of the five theorized multimodal communication elements, it confirmed Herring's argument that IMPs include four modes of communication: audio, text-based, graphic, and video interactions. It also found that these four communication modes are important and used during online tutoring sessions. Perhaps even more insightful though, this study revealed that communicative modes may be related to roles or role tasks and expectations. This suggests that tutors may adopt specific roles or characteristics, based on each respective communicative mode they are tutoring in coupled with their perceptions of role expectations through negotiation with role partners. These insights add to the CMC theory by revealing the ways communicative modes may inform tutoring roles online through negotiation with role partners.

This study did not fully confirm or disconfirm Yellin's (1999) Role Acquisition theory. It found that role acquisition phases and events, markers, or occasions can be representative of tutors' journey transitioning into the online tutoring role. However, the study did not find evidence to support a person's role exit. That said, the study suggests that Yellin's (1999) theory

may be too broad and does not adequately consider specific role tasks or expectations. For instance, when compared with the participants' experiences, the study revealed that roles were complex and multifaceted. Yellin's (1999) theory looked at roles from a broad perspective, but it did not highlight role tasks and the ways those expectations might influence movement or transition into various stages of affective orientation. For instance, the study concluded that while most of the participants reached the last affective orientation of confidence with most aspects or characteristics of their role as an online tutor, it is unclear if, from a micro perspective, this is true for all the participants. The reality of this challenge is shown in one participant's affective orientation. On one hand, the participant felt committed to certain aspects of their role such as editing, teaching, brainstorming, and being directive and non-directive. However, the same participant seemed to feel at a loss when it came to the technological expectations of their role. In this way, there is friction between role tasks and expectations, which suggests Yellin's (1999) theory may oversimplify the role acquisition process.

Additionally, the participants alluded to a shifting between orientations during different stages of their online journeys. For example, the participants seemed to gain relief and comfort after their first online tutoring session, which influenced their affective orientation. However, the more they began to tutor, the more the participants reverted back to feelings of anxiety and distress, as outlined in an earlier affective orientation and stage in Yellin's process. If role phases focus on an individual's affective orientation, it may be that there is more vacillation between the orientations than Yellin's theory suggests. In fact, her theory does not highlight the potential for movement between affective orientations, rather her theory focused on linear movement from one phase to another, with mention of movement backwards to a previous orientation. These

findings take Yellin's theory further by suggesting more multifaceted role aspects and the potential for affective orientation vacillation.

Phenomenological, Heuristic, and Idiographic Reflection

This study examined the unique lived experiences of five individuals from various walks of life. Using a phenomenological approach, I attempted to capture the study's participants' lived experiences with online tutoring. At the same time, I also tried to interpret the participants' attempts to make sense of their own experiences, which resulted in a double-hermeneutic. While the focus on phenomenological and heuristic perspectives are essential to an IPA study, it is also important to highlight the study in light of nomothetic and idiographic perceptions of knowledge. On one hand, a nomothetic viewpoint, which is common in science fields, yields a tendency to seek to generalize and determine broader understandings of the world. On the other hand, an idiographic perspective tends to focus on deeper understandings of specific human experiences, which is common in the humanities field. This chapter has illustrated, in some ways, a nomothetic lens up to this point. However, an idiographic perspective is important to an IPA, and I spent considerable time focusing on each individual's context and experiences in an attempt to ensure their unique stories were brought to life in this study. Although the significance of this study's participants can be generalized by a variety of tropes or "isms," a reductionist perspective may lessen each individual's experiences and ignore what makes their journeys special and different. From this perspective, the uniqueness of the participants' world-views, and the inherent personal value of their experiences should be both recognized and celebrated.

Using a reflexive approach, I offer an interpretation of the participant's unique experiences by highlighting my significant reflections and understandings. In short, the

following table illustrates my attempt at interpreting each of the participants' attempts at meaning-making within their unique contexts and settings (see Table 12).

Table 12. Significant Philosophical Reflections

Participant	Reflections of Participants	Reflections on Meaningful Learning
Alana	The word "loss" comes to mind when reflecting on Alana's experiences. During our time together, Alana discussed loss and challenges in detail. Loss of things, spaces, and experiences forced Alana to make changes to herself, as she shifted online. While Alana did not entirely like or want to transition her work online, she accepted it. Even though Alana tutored online, she had a desire to return to work in campus-based settings. She viewed the online environment as a temporary fix, yet she confessed that online had some value for individuals who could not attend campus-based tutoring. Alana's initial online experiences were laced with difficulties and challenges. She faced grief, loss, and seemed to mourn her forced transition online. Her transition experience was tough, and I cannot help but imagine what these experiences mean for her. From talking and listening to Alana, she seemed isolated and alone. She craved the ingrained community of her campus-based experiences, and she did not find the same comfort and community online as she had in campus-based settings. Alana's experiences reflect a sort of grief philosophy, which might be viewed in light of Stoicism. She believed that her experiences with loss were mostly out of her control, and she recognized that she had to manage her emotions. In this way, Alana viewed herself as a hostage to her fortune. She was dealt cards in life, and she has accepted them and will continue to endure them.	Alana has learned and grown through her journey online, and she has certainly come to view the online environment more positively. Yet, I get a sense that she is still not completely satisfied. This perhaps reinforces Manslow's theory on love and belonging. Without a sense of connectedness and community, individuals may not experience as deep or meaningful learning experiences. That said, Alana's story had glimmers of hope. She emphasized feeling "normal" when she experienced online tutoring sessions where she was able to connect with her students and not exclusively talk about writing. In this way, meaningful learning, for Alana, means, at least in part, engagement with others.
Parker	Relationships were important for Parker. He focused largely on the value of relationships and described challenges that he faced with his relationships with others in the online environment. Parker had a drive to overcome challenges with his relationships online though.	For Parker, being empowered and given agency to explore, experiment and be heard by staff members was incredibly meaningful. This suggests that, for Parker, agency and autonomy were valued and impacted his view of meaningful learning experiences.

	Even though he struggled to figure out the best way to adjust strategies to facilitate relationship building online, Parker still saw great potential and value after transitioning online. He viewed the online environment as a great mediator. For Parker, the online environment was full of potential. He believed that the online environment was the delivery method of the future. While he faced some challenges, he was able to overcome almost all of them. He also believed new tools in the future would help to mitigate some of the relationship challenges he faced. He was full of hope. Parker's experiences illustrate a worldview that is aligned with existentialism. He viewed himself as a free, capable, and responsible person who could determine his own development and growth through action he chose based on his own will.	
Otto	Performance was a constant worry and focus for Otto during our interview together. He repeatedly discussed his views on performance, his ability to perform, and his concerns about aspects of his performance after transitioning online. Otto also highlighted the ways he viewed his performance as being more positive online than in campus-based settings. Otto valued the online environment, noting that he felt students had a higher opinion of him as a tutor in online sessions compared to campus-based sessions. Otto valued the online environment for its accessibility, flexibility, and perhaps the affirmation he received from his students. However, he did face frustration with the lack of nonverbal expressions that he used to leverage during his campus-based sessions. Even though Otto faced challenges in his ability to observe his students, he still valued the online environment and viewed it more positively than negatively. The ability to be liked seems connected to Otto's motivation to successfully perform. This reality seems to present a deeper sense of perfectionism. Otto recognized that sometimes he performed well and other times did not perform so well. Interestingly, Otto seems to believe that through a degree of steadfast	Deeply meaningful learning experiences, for Otto, seemed tied to an ability to successfully perform. He values positive feedback from peers, especially after a successful performance. Positive emotions and learning environments were valued by Otto. In this way, meaningful learning for Otto includes an ability to perform successfully and obtain positive feedback. When Otto performs well and receives affirmation, it impacts his perceived value of experiences.

	perseverance, he can obtain the best possible state of tutoring and perhaps living.	
Nani	The concept of similarity seemed to be Nani's overriding perspective of the online environment. During our time together, Nani highlighted how her past views of tutoring were different from her current views. She used to see online and campus-based tutoring as different, but she now views the two delivery formats as one in the same. Nani acknowledged there are some differences to campus-based and online tutoring, but she felt both types of tutoring should simply be considered tutoring. Nani valued the online environment and saw it as a useful tool to be able to connect with students at any time and from anywhere. Plus, she grew to view the online environment as both positive and essential for tutoring in the twenty-first century. Even though Nani recognized that she cannot use all the same exact tutoring strategies in online environments and vice versa, she also valued the online environment because she gained rich relationships and connections from her experiences tutoring students in online settings. Her focus on "sameness" suggests a deeper philosophical relationship to identity. Previously, Nani viewed online and campus-based tutoring as sharing properties but not being the same thing. Later though, Nani changed her viewpoint and exhibited a sense of numerical sameness over qualitative sameness. The revelation of numerical sameness, meaning there should be virtually no difference in tutoring experiences in online and campus-based settings, allowed Nani to gain a sense of ease and comfort, as she had previously struggled with viewing online tutoring as the other or lesser than campus-based settings at the start of her tutoring journey.	Nani's unique experiences suggest that gaining exposure and experience in working with students in the online environment impacted her perception and understanding of online tutoring. Her experiences in campus-based and online settings influenced and ultimately pivoted her value of the online environment and helped produce meaningful learning experiences. Nani's experiences were the most transformational; she arrived at a place where she could see such a convergence of sameness that her mindset shifted to view the essence of tutoring as the same, regardless of delivery format. For Nani, more exposure to tutoring in different delivery formats impacted her own understanding of the online environment and changed her views. From this perspective, experience is what caused meaningful learning for Nani.
Joy	During my conversation with Joy, I could not help but notice her intent to focus on professionalism and pleasing her students. Throughout our conversation, Joy kept referencing her worry and concern about how well she was doing at presenting herself as a professional representation of her center.	It seems that meaningful learning experiences for Joy meant being rooted in a comfortable environment. Joy wanted to be able to learn and work in a comfortable space where she was confident and did not face anything unexpected in her role or work.

	Additionally, Joy worried about her students and tried everything in her power to give her students' the best experience, even if it meant doing things to change her authentic self. Joy valued the online environment for ease of access and convenience when switching between school work and her job as an online writing tutor. However, Joy faced difficulties with technological literacy, which made her continue to feel anxious when tutoring online. Joy's experiences suggest a drive to please her students, but this seems to reveal a deeper behavior that may be rooted in a white knight syndrome. Joy seems worried about being a good representation for her center, but also worries about being able to help her students create good products. In this way, Joy seems to view herself as an agent who is partly responsible for the success of others. Joy plays a role, even though she does not feel entirely comfortable or confident in that role. She has accepted the online environment, but it does not mean that she likes it. In fact, Joy rather shifted to the campus-based environment. Her biggest driver in returning to campus-based tutoring is her concern of low technological literacy and potential inability to assist students with troubleshooting. Yet, although Joy may prefer to tutor in campus-based settings, she has gotten more comfortable with tutoring online. She has built a routine and has accepted that she will need to try to help students with technological troubleshooting at some point in the future.	Interestingly, while talking with Joy, she reflected several times on her primary school experiences. This consistent connection to her formative years suggests that, for Joy, a consistent learning environment is critical for her to have a meaningful learning experience.

The reflections offered in Table 12 are my attempt to answer the question: "Who am I?" on behalf of each of my participants. I acknowledge that only the participants can most truly know and express who they are. Nonetheless, I hope that this study has helped to more richly reveal aspects of the participants' stories, based on my engagement in learning more about them and their lived experiences. My efforts in this section were to celebrate the uniqueness of each of the study's participants and help to represent their individual contexts and the ways their transition

journey related to meaningful learning experiences for each person. In doing so, I also hoped to place special attention to the value of an idiographic perspective alongside nomothetic viewpoints described earlier in this chapter. After all, who am I to answer others' "Who am I"?

Recommendations for Further Research

This qualitative research study included a small group of study participants, but their meaning making assisted in informing future research opportunities. The study includes several recommendations for further research, based on the findings.

The first recommendation is to conduct a research that explores the relationship of the Multimodal CMC theory and tutoring roles, as this study discovered there could be a relationship between multimodal communicative modes and roles. Based on what this study revealed, there is an opportunity to dive deeper and explore the ways tutors may use communicative modes in online sessions and how those decisions might impact role adoption.

The second recommendation is to use qualitative methods to dive deeper into how online tutors communicate and interact with students with various communicative modes. This deeper analysis might even be conducted with the same data set collected from this study or additional studies to better understand how and why tutors communicate online.

The third recommendation is to conduct design-based research on different ways tutor training may be built with authentic learning experiences. There is an opportunity to reimagine strategies and ways to experiment and explore with training that offers different authentic learning experiences such as mock-sessions, AI, field observations, or the like.

The fourth recommendation is to conduct more qualitative research, perhaps using grounded theory, to explore tutors' role acquisition process and determine how role characteristics may align or not align with Yellin's (1999) role acquisition theory. The study

found that role characteristics were more nuanced than Yellin's theory suggests. Further inquiry is needed to better understand how role acquisition may take place and whether or not all aspects of Yellin's theory can be confirmed.

The fifth recommendation is to engage in further inquiry around systematic equity around tutoring support services in a virtual-centric world. The study revealed evident systematic failures, as only students with technology access and literacy could receive online support. This indicates the need for a greater system analysis, perhaps from a higher education administration perspective, to determine how to better serve and support students seeking tutoring support services, regardless of delivery format.

Lastly, the study identified unexpected revelations related to privacy and the physical locations writing center tutors used to conduct their work remotely. For example, some but not all of the study's participants conducted their sessions in private spaces. When considering important federal policies such as FERPA, it is unclear how university-system employees, such as tutors, should navigate these policies while working remotely. This begs the question: To what extent are employees, including tutors, required to protect students' privacy when working in personal and/or digital spaces? Additionally, what are reasonable actions that employees should take to protect student privacy when working in personal and/or digital spaces? Further research related to the impact of privacy and personal space is recommended.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic ushered in a swift transition for many different writing and learning centers by forcing these centers to make a physical shift online (Educause, 2021). Yet, with almost the entire U.S. population of tutors shifting online, due to the pandemic (Educause,

2021), not much is known about tutors' experiences or roles online (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018; Baumann et al., 2008).

Some challenges highlighting tutors' experiences in prior research were prevalent within the study findings. The study participants mentioned being coaches (Severino & Prim, 2016), socializing with students less and taking on the added role as a technological troubleshooter (de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018), as they described tutoring in their bedrooms, offices, or hallways. In addition, research on tutoring issued a call for studies that focus more on the experiences, perspectives, and voices of tutors over students (Abbot et al., 2018; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018), which this study sought to fulfill. This study highlighted the tremendous need for more studies focused on tutors' experiences, voices, and the like, and I hope further research studies are conducted to help inform administrators and higher education leaders to continue support of writing and learning center programs and support.

This study gave a voice to tutors and sought to highlight a variety of tutor experiences transitioning into online environments as well as their reflective meaning-making of their unique lived experiences. It illuminated the need for different types of tutor training and professional development such as authentic learning experiences that invite tutors to explore, discuss, act, and construct meaningful concepts, knowable, and skills related to their work. It also addressed the need to reimagine policies and practices related to online tutoring such as accepting role variations and technological teaching as well as the need for more virtual teaming and support to build community for remote tutors. While tutors are one form of employee hired by colleges and universities, the participants experiences transitioning their work online illuminate the potential need for more overall investment and professional development support for remote employees.

In all, the study findings detailed how the participants journey online was complex yet transformational and manifested itself in new strategies, roles, and self to adapt to the needs of the online environment. Clearly, the value of experience, in light of this study, has impacted the participants' mindset towards the online environment and has influenced their personal and professional views towards the value, challenges, and opportunities the online environment can offer not only for remote work feasibility and flexibly, but also for learning. What is more, the online environment revealed that it can offer a unique centralized portal that allowed the participants to connect, work with, and support a greater range of students from different places and walks of life.

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APPENDIX A. STUDY DEFINITIONS

The following table details the definition of key terms used within this study.

Key Terms	Definitions
Identity Theory	More specifically, identity theory defines who an individual is in relation to three bases for identities including: 1) their groups or categories that they belong to which includes social identities, 2) roles they occupy, and 3) personal identities (Burke & Harrod, 2005; Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Burke & Stets, 2009; Stets & Burke, 2000, 2003; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Social identity defines a person to groups or categories; roles are complementary to role partners (i.e. a student is complementary to the counter-role of professor; the role of a daughter is complementary to mother); and, person identities are aspects that make an individual unique (Burke & Harrod, 2005; Stets & Burke, 2000, 2003; Stryker & Burke, 2000).
Role Theory	Role Theory is concerned with "the tendency for human behaviors to form characteristic patterns that may be predicted if one knows the social context in which those behaviors appear" (Biddle, 2000).
Symbolic Interactionism and Role Theory	Symbolic interactionism views roles as emerging from symbolic communication in a reciprocal relationship between the society and the individual. "Here, individuals are credited with being active, creative, mindful, and volitional in their identity. The basic premise is that the self emerges through symbolic interactions with socially recognized categories and the roles that correspond with those categories" (Goffman, 1965).
Role Concepts	Role concepts are most frequently employed in group research and consist of four areas: "1) role identity (i.e. the attitudes and behaviors consistent with a role), 2) role perception (i.e. an individual's view of how-to behavior in a given situation), 3) role expectations (i.e. other's beliefs of how one should act in a given situation), and 4) role conflict (i.e. the contradiction of two role's expectations)" (Goodman et al. 1987). *Note*: This study specifically focuses on role perception.
Role	A role is a set of expectations that are placed on a person that occupies a particular social status (Gross et al., 1959). These expectations are made of a number of "behaviors, attitudes, skills, or knowledge" that the status occupant is "socially expected to display, as perceived by role partners, others in the same role, the self, society, mass media, etc." (Yellin, 1999, p. 238).
Role Acquisition	"Role acquisition is the process by which these expectations are initially encountered, learned, and enacted. However, individuals do not simply conform to expectations; rather, they actively modify and negotiate them. Thus, role acquisition is a dynamic process in which role expectations shape, and are partially shaped by, the person taking on the role" (Yellin, 1999).

	According to Yellin (1999), role acquisition is defined as the process in which an individual achieves a role. Yellin (1999) theorized that the process of role acquisition is sequential and is dependent on social expectations that mark the facilitation and "negotiation of acceptable role performance" (p. 242). Yellin's role acquisition model has four phases that make up the role acquisition process. A specific event between each phase signifies a transition into the next phase, until a role is adopted at the end of the fourth phase.
Stages of Yelling's (1999) Role Acquisition	Stage 1. Ambivalence The first phase is ambivalence. In this phase, individuals are exposed to a new social network. The achievement of a new status initiatives interaction with a new social network. This situation begins the start towards a new role. Role acquisition brings "a rapid change in the way the self, others, and the social context are perceived" (p. 245). Stage 2. Absorption The second phase is absorption, which happens when individuals familiarize themselves with their new role through negotiation or performance. "To achieve competence in the new role, a role performance must be negotiated that yields sufficient positive sanctions to keep the novice willing to enact the role. Individuals' self-image usually rapidly changes. Information overload is a common problem at this stage. To achieve satisfaction in the new role, the individual must acquire sufficient knowledge and skill to successfully negotiate the new role. Training prior to role entry does not mitigate this problem; such preparation never fully equips the person to ease into the new role." Stage 3. Commitment The third phase is commitment. In this phase, individuals receive positive feedback from others. Frequently, the individual is not fully cognizant of having identified with the new role until interaction with others brings it to awareness. "As the novice repeatedly labels the self with the new role appellation, the role label usually comes to feel routine and "comfortable." This is true even in devalued roles. The novice's commitment and identification with the new role, in turn, evoke recognition and acceptance from role partners. They validate the individual's commitment to the new identity by treating the novice as a full-fledged role incumbent." Stage 4. Confidence The fourth and final phase is confidence. This phase is defined as when individuals plan to perform a role. "Role partners typically react to the individual's longevity and success in negotiating the role with respect or jealousy. Even when role partners view the role as illegitimate (e.g., bookie), they frequently accord the incumbent a measure of deference. Role partners acknowledge incumbents in higher prestige roles, conferring respect or expressing envy for a performance well-done (e.g., husband, father) or one done at all (e.g., pilot, firefighter). A common problem facing the individual at this stage is establishing a mechanism for self-renewal. A role incumbent who has given the same performance each day for years (e.g., cashier, clerk) may

	feel bored, alienated, and unmotivated to continue. This is common in simple or highly repetitive roles but also occurs in more complex and variable roles." For the person to remain in the role, interest and motivation must be cultivated and maintained. "One way to do so is by altering or adding to the content of the work done (e.g., taking on a new project). An alternative strategy for self-renewal is the adding of a new role. This commonly occurs by the person taking on a new hobby, developing a new friendship, or assuming the role of mentor to another individual navigating the role acquisition process."
Affective Orientation	According to Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1994), the term affective orientation is defined as "the degree to which people are aware of their emotions, perceive them as important, and actively consider their affective responses in making judgments and interacting with others."
Transition	The concept of transition is defined as the transition from face-to-face contacts to distance learning modalities (Muratova & Nikadembeava, 2020;Cochran & Benuto, 2016). This transition includes but is not limited to the following: pedagogical, technological, and role transition within the digital environment (Muratova & Nikadembeava, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). According to Cochran and Benuto (2016), transition is on a spectrum. Some individuals might always perceive themselves in a constant state of transitioning, whereas other individuals might perceive themselves as transitioned.
Transition Process	Implied by Shakeeb (2020) and Lederman (2020), the transition process from teaching in campus-based to online environments can be defined as having three parts: pre-transition, transitioning, and post-transition. Each transition has specific attributes. The pre-transition stage can be a time that is filled with preparation and anxiety for instructors and students (Lederman, 2020). The transitioning part is the time when the transition is actively taking place (Shakeeb, 2020). This part can be filled with concerns and challenges with shifting to a new learning platform, learning to do their work, adopting new roles and identities, etc (Shakeeb, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016). The post-transition stage is when the transition has been completed. This stage is when individuals have gained experience and have increased levels of confidence and comfortability in their work online (Thanaraj, 2016; Cochran & Benuto, 2016).
Adaptation	An educator's ability to make localized changes to resources (Pepin, Gueudet & Trouche, 2013), content areas, activities, or practices in or for a given delivery format (Johnson, Araujo & Cossa, 2017).
Transformation	An educator's ability to use different or new practices in or for a given delivery format (Thanaraj, 2016; Hager & Hodkinson, 2009; Serdyukov, 2015; Shakeeb, 2020; Cochran & Benuto, 2016).

Positionality	Positionality refers to how differences in social position and power shape identities and access in society. For Duarte (2017), positionality is a process which "requires researchers to identify their own degrees of privilege through factors of race, class, educational attainment, income, ability, gender, and citizenship, among others" for the purpose of analyzing and acting from one's social position" (p. 135). However, positionality has also been applied in the context of spaces. For example, in speaking to the writing center, Denny (2005) has argued that these spaces were "both privileged and illegitimate" (p. 41). Relatedly, Banks and Banks (2001) argued that both student behavior and learning was largely influenced by dominant social systems that exist in any educational system. Relatedly, instructors' teaching pedagogy can be largely connected to individual learning communities, indicating that teaching positionality can shape learning (Bank & Banks, 2001). Tutors hold a unique positionality, as they reside in a nebulous position that is not-quite-student and not-quite-professor (Abbot, 2018). This unique in-betweenness can lead to difficulties in tutors' ability to build authority and legitimacy and navigate their roles (Abbot, 2018). Positionality then, is a layered concept, as writing centers can have a unique positionality and tutors too. This poses questions related to how writing or learning centers might be influenced by their respective dominant social systems and, in turn, what that might do to tutors and their own navigation with positionality.
Phenomenology	An advantage of using a phenomenology design for this study is its focus on gaining an understanding of ways events invoke meaning for individuals in particular situations (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine & Walker, 2019). A phenomenology operates under the assumption that there are "multiple realities" and as such subjects perceive situations differently (Ary, et al., 2019, p. 15), rather than making assumptions of participants, which has been a common approach in tutoring research (Abbot et al., 2018; de Metz & Bezuidenhout, 2018).
Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, also known as IPA, is a contemporary phenomenological approach that prioritizes the: 1) diversity related to lived experiences, 2) freedom to explore the context of a phenomenon, and 3) relationship of life narratives (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Miller, Chan & Farmer, 2018). The philosophical perspective of this approach is that IPA assumes that the process of understanding how individuals make sense of their experiences is interpretive in nature and most effective when paired with a detailed examination of particular cases within a phenomenon of interest (Smith et al., 2009). The ultimate goal of IPA is to make sense of the participants making sense of their own experience (Smith et al., 2009).
Idiography	According to Smith et al. (2009), idiography is focused on "the particular." It contrasts the "nomothetic," which is mostly concerned about making claims about groups. Whereas an IPA study focuses on the particular and seeks to understand the ways in which a particular experiential phenomenon is understood from the perspective of particular individuals in very specific contexts. In this way, an IPA study's use of ididiography does not focus on

	generalizability but rather highlights different ways to establish generalizes (Smith et al., 2009; Harre, 1979).
Phenomenology	A phenomenology, according to Smith et al. (2009) is a particular approach to the study of experience that has a philosophical nature. The focus of phenomenological philosophy is to think and learn about what the experience of "being human is like" (Smith et al., 2009). Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sarte are leading figures that have all added to research on the complexities of seeking to understand the "experience" that a lived process can bring, in terms of both perspectives and of mearings, regarding a person's "situated relationship to the world" (Smith et al., 2009).
Hermeneutics	Hermeneutics is a theoretical approach based on interpretation. Initially, hermeneutics was used to interpret biblical texts, and it has developed into its own philosophy (Smith et al., 2009). The philosophy of hermeneutics was influenced by Schleirmacher, Heidegger, and Gadamer (Smith et al., 2009). Overall, the function of hermeneutics is to determine the "dynamic relationship beaten the part and the while, at a series of levels;" in short, it is the concept that the meaning of a text can be defined through a variety of different levels of analysis and in the ways they relate to one other to offer a range of perceptions from the part and whole of the text (Smith et al., 2009).
Superordinate Theme	A superordinate theme is defined as a cluster which captures most strongly the respondent's concerns on a particular topic (Smith & Osborne, 2012). A superordinate theme is based on subordinate themes, while also guided by theoretical knowledge (Jeong & Othman, 2016). A superordinate theme is selected based on two factors including: 1) prevalence within data and 2) richness of passages that highlight the themes and how the theme helps to illuminate other aspects of the account (Smith & Osborne, 2012).
Subordinate Theme	A subordinate theme is defined as a cluster or list of themes that emerge from a transcript (Smith & Osborne, 1999).
Grouping Themes	This is a process which is situated between the superordinate and subordinate themes, once all cases are analyzed. The superordinate themes are compared and grouped and the subordinate themes are also grouped.
Identifier	"The identifier indicates where in the transcript instances of each theme can be found by giving key words from the particular extract plus the page number of the transcript" (Smith & Osborne, 2012).
Tutor	For this study, the term tutor is defined as a student peer who is knowledgeable in a particular content area or discipline and who provides supplemental support, collaboration, repetition, clarification, or practice to other peers (Utley & Mortweet, 1997).
Writing Tutor	A writing tutor is defined as an individual who provides peer writing support but does not grade students' writing (Hewett, 2015).
Professional Writing Tutor	Like peer writing tutors, professional writing tutors are defined as individuals who provide writing support but do not grade students' writing (Hewett, 2015).

Writing Center	The term writing center is defined in this study as an entity, within a higher education institution, that provides writing tutoring support, and might also include reading support, to college students (Harris, 2017).
Learning Center	The definition of learning centers for this study is defined as multifaceted places that can include tutoring and academic coaching, workshops, at-risk student services, disability services, academic advising, grant-funded programs, professional development services, and first year experience courses, among others (Truschel & Reedy, 2009).
University System	The term university system refers to campuses as part of a large public university in the state of Hawai‘i.
Modes	A mode is simply a means of communicating (Arola, Sheppard & Ball, 2014). In multimodal computer-mediated environments, there are five primary modes of communication: text, audio, video, robot, and graphics (Herring, 2019). In light of CMC, it is defined in this study as computer-mediated communication that includes a variety of ways humans communicate through computers. For Herring, modes can be audio, video, text, graphics, or robotics. Hence, when referring to modes in relation to CMC, the phrase communication mode will be used.
Delivery Format	Some scholarship in the writing center and composition fields refer to the term “modality” to reference delivery formats. However, in the communication and technology fields, “modality” is often used to refer to computer mediated communication outlets. For the purposes of this study, the term “delivery format” is used to define the environments in which teaching or tutoring occurs. A learning modality can be campus-based, online synchronous, and asynchronous, or it might include a hybrid approach to the learning environment.

APPENDIX B. INITIAL IRB APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I® MĀNOA

Office of Research Compliance
Human Studies Program

DATE:	April 01, 2021
TO:	Menchaca, Michael, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Department of Learning Design and Technology Hino, Kitty, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Department of Learning Design and Technology, Perez, Natalie, College of Education, University of Hawaii at Manoa
FROM:	Rivera, Victoria, Dir, Ofc of Rsch Compliance, Social&Behav Exempt
PROTOCOL TITLE:	#Who Am I?": A Phenomenological Study on Tutors ' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring
FUNDING SOURCE:	None
PROTOCOL NUMBER:	2021-00124
APPROVAL DATE:	April 01, 2021

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

This letter is your record of the Human Studies Program approval of this study as exempt.

On April 01, 2021, the University of Hawaii (UH) Human Studies Program approved this study as exempt from federal regulations pertaining to the protection of human research participants. The authority for the exemption applicable to your study is documented in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CFR 46.104(d) 2.

Exempt studies are subject to the ethical principles articulated in The Belmont Report, found at the OHRP Website www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html.

Exempt studies do not require regular continuing review by the Human Studies Program. However, if you propose to modify your study, you must receive approval from the Human Studies Program prior to implementing any changes. You can submit your proposed changes via the UH eProtocol application. The Human Studies Program may review the exempt status at that time and request an application for approval as non-exempt research.

In order to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so. Signed consent forms, as applicable to your study, should be maintained for at least the duration of your project.

This approval does not expire. However, please notify the Human Studies Program when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact the Human Studies Program by phone at 956-5007 or email uhirb@hawaii.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.

UH Human Studies Program, Office of Research Compliance
Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, University of Hawai'i, System
2425 Campus Road, Sinclair 10, Honolulu HI 96822
Phone: 808.956.5007 • Email: uhirb@hawaii.edu
https://www.hawaii.edu/researchcompliance/human-studies
An Equal Opportunity & Affirmative Action Institution

Full Accreditation

APPENDIX C. IRB APPROVAL FOR CHANGES TO PROJECT

Due to the pilot, several changes were made to the study, after initial IRB approval. Per IRB policies, the researcher submitted a request for IRB approval, based on changes to the research project.

UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I® MĀNOA

Office of Research Compliance
Human Studies Program

DATE:	May 20, 2021
TO:	Menchaca, Michael, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Department of Learning Design and Technology Hino, Kitty, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Department of Learning Design and Technology, Perez, Natalie, College of Education, University of Hawaii at Manoa
FROM:	Rivera, Victoria, Dir, Ofc of Rsch Compliance, Social&Behav Exempt
PROTOCOL TITLE:	#Who Am I?": A Phenomenological Study on Tutors ' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring
FUNDING SOURCE:	None
PROTOCOL NUMBER:	2021-00124
	Approval Date: May 20, 2021 Expiration Date: March 31, 2071

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

This letter is your record of the Human Studies Program approval of this study as exempt.

On May 20, 2021, the request for IRB approval of changes to your exempt project noted above has been reviewed and approved. The proposed amendments will be added into your current project file. The proposed changes do not alter the exempt status of your project. The authority for the exemption applicable to your study is documented in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CFR 46.101(b) 2.

This approval does not expire. However, please notify the Human Studies Program when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact the Human Studies Program by phone at 956-5007 or email uhirb@hawaii.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.

APPENDIX D. SURVEY RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Aloha,

My name is Natalie Perez, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in the Department of Learning Design and Technology. I am conducting a research study to understand writing tutors' experiences with online tutoring. My study is titled: "Who am I?": A Phenomenological Study on Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring.

The study criteria
Currently, I'm conducting a pilot study to fine-tune my research instruments. To assist me in this process, I am seeking research participants. You are being asked to answer the below questions:

- Do you work at a learning or writing center within the community college or university system?
- Do you provide writing tutoring support to two-year, four-year, or graduate students in the community college or university system?
- Do you work in a position where you provide writing tutoring as a tutor, writing tutor, mentor, teaching assistant, specialist, consultant, or professional tutor?
- Have you had campus-based tutoring experience first, prior to online tutoring experience?

Are you interested in participating?
If you are interested in participating in this pilot study, please review and complete the following steps:

1. If you answered *yes,* to all the above study criteria questions and are interested in participating in this study, please review the survey consent document (attached to this message) with a linked online survey.
2. After reviewing the consent information, you may access and complete the brief online survey (located in the attachment), which will be considered as your consent to participate in this study.

Questions?
If you have any questions about the study, feel free to email me at natalie.perez@hawaii.edu. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Michael Menchca at mikepm@hawaii.edu.You may also contact the UH Human Studies Program 808.956.5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu, reference # 2020-00442 to discuss problems, concerns and questions; obtain information, or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration!
Natalie

Natalie Perez
PhD Candidate, Learning Design and Technology
University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa
Email: natalie.perez@hawaii.edu

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW/DIARY RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear [Participant's First Name],

Thank you for completing my survey and for your willingness to participate in my research project titled: "Who Am I"?: A Phenomenological Study of Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring.

Interview/reflection entries
You are being asked to participate in one interview and three reflection diary recordings. The interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes and will be conducted online with the researcher at a time that is convenient for you. The audio reflection diary entries can be completed at your leisure. In total, the audio diary entries will take 20-30 minutes.

Interested in participating?
If you would like to participate in the interview and audio diary entries, please review the interview and diary consent (attached to this message), complete it, and return the document to Natalie Perez (researcher) at natalie.perez@hawaii.edu. After receiving the signed consent, an email with detailed information about the interview and audio diary entries will be provided in another follow-up email.

Gift card for willingness to participate
You will receive a $25 gift card to one of the following, either Jamba Juice or Starbucks or Amazon, for your time and effort in participating in this research project.

Questions?
If you have any questions about the study, feel free to call or email me at natalie.perez@hawaii.edu. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Michael Menchca mikepm@hawaii.edu. You may also contact the UH Human Studies Program 808.956.5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu, reference # 2020-00442 to discuss problems, concerns and questions; obtain information, or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol.

Thank you for your consideration!

Best Regards,

Natalie

Natalie Perez
PhD Candidate, Learning Design and Technology
University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa
Email: natalie.perez@hawaii.edu

APPENDIX F. SURVEY CONSENT FORM

University of Hawai'i
Consent to Participate in a Research Project
Natalie Perez, Principal Investigator
Project title: "Who Am I"?: A Phenomenological Study on Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring

Aloha! My name is Natalie Perez, and you are invited to take part in a research study. I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in the Department of Education. As part of the requirements for earning my graduate degree, I am doing a research project.

What am I being asked to do?
If you participate in this project, you will be asked to fill out an online survey. You will be asked later if you would like to participate in another part of the study.

Taking part in this study is your choice.
Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your rights to services at the UH tutoring programs and centers or your work within the University of Hawai'i-system.

Why is this study being done?
The purpose of my project is to explore the lived-experiences of tutors providing online writing tutoring support. I am asking you to participate because you provide writing tutoring to students.

What will happen if I decide to take part in this study?
The survey will consist of 24 multiple choice and open-ended questions. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The survey questions will include questions like, "What campus do you work for as a tutor?" "How much experience, in terms of years, do you have in online tutoring?" "How comfortable are you using technology?" "How do you perceive your tutoring role?" The survey is accessed on a website to which I will provide you a link.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part in this study?
I believe there is little risk to you for participating in this research project. You may become stressed or uncomfortable answering any of the survey questions. If you do become stressed or uncomfortable, you can skip the question or take a break. You can also stop taking the survey or you can withdraw from the project altogether.

There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in this survey. The results of this project may help to benefit future tutors and students.

Privacy and Confidentiality:
I will not ask you for any personal information, such as your name or address. Please do not include any personal information in your survey responses. I will keep all study data secure in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office/encrypted on a password protected computer. Only my University of Hawai'i advisor and I will have access to the information. Other agencies that have legal permission have the right to review research records. The University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program has the right to review research records for this study.

Future Research Studies:
Identifiers will be removed from your identifiable private information and after removal of identifiers, the data may be used for future research studies for future research studies and we will not seek further approval from you for these future studies.

Questions:
If you have any questions about this study, please email me natalie.perez@hawaii.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Michael Menchaca, at mikepm@hawaii.edu. You may contact the UH Human Studies Program at 808.956.5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu to discuss problems, concerns and questions, obtain information, or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol. Please visit http://go.hawaii.edu/jRd for more information on your rights as a research participant.

To Access the Survey:
Please go click on the following link to access the survey: https://forms.gle/LkxDNF7QBESqWef89. After clicking the link, the first page of the survey contains instructions for completing the survey. Going to the first page of the survey implies your consent to participate in this study.

Please print or save a copy of this page for your reference.

Mahalo!

APPENDIX G. INTERVIEW/DIARY CONSENT FORM

University of Hawai'i
Consent to Participate in a Research Project
Natalie Perez, Principal Investigator
Project title: "Who Am I"?: A Phenomenological Study on Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring

Aloha! My name is Natalie Perez, and you are invited to take part in a research study. I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in the Department of Education. As part of the requirements for earning my graduate degree, I am doing a research project.

What am I being asked to do?
If you participate in this project, you will be asked to participate in an interview and complete three recorded reflection diary prompt entries.

Taking part in this study is your choice.
Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your rights to services at the UH tutoring programs and centers or your work within the University of Hawai'i-system.

Why is this study being done?
The purpose of my project is to explore the lived-experiences of tutors providing online writing tutoring support. I am asking you to participate because you provide writing tutoring to students.

What will happen if I decide to take part in this study?
The interview will be online and scheduled at a time that is convenient for you. The interview will consist of 12 open ended questions. It will take 45 minutes to an hour. The interview questions will include questions like, "What is it like to work as an online tutor?" "What is it like to transition from campus-based tutoring to online tutoring?" "How do you feel about this transition?" Only you and I will be present during the interview. With your permission, I will audio-record the interview so that I can later transcribe the interview and analyze the responses. You will be one of up to 10 participants.

The three audio diary prompt entries are housed in a confidential online platform and can be completed at a time that is convenient for you. This will take 20-30 minutes to complete in total. An email and link with instructions on how to access the confidential online platform and how to record and submit audio recordings will be provided to you. The diary prompts will include questions about tutoring such as: "What roles, if any, did you use during your tutoring session?" "What did you like about your tutoring session?" "What made your online tutoring session different from traditional, campus-based tutoring sessions?" You will be one of up to 10 participants.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part in this study?
I believe there is little risk to you for participating in this research project. You may become stressed or uncomfortable answering any of the questions or discussing topics with me during the interview or diary prompts. If you do become stressed or uncomfortable, you can skip the question or take a break. You can also stop the interview and diary recordings at any time or you can withdraw from the project altogether.

There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in this interview or diary entries. The results of this project may help to benefit future tutors and students.

Privacy and Confidentiality:
I will keep all study data secure in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office/encrypted on a password protected computer. Only my University of Hawai'i advisor and I will have access to the information. Other agencies that have legal permission have the right to review research records. The University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program has the right to review research records for this study.

After I write a copy of the interview and diary entries, I will erase or destroy the audio-recordings. When I report the results of my research project, I will not use your name. I will not use any other personal identifying information that can identify you. I will use pseudonyms (fake names) and report my findings in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality to the extent allowed by law.

Compensation:
You will receive a $25 gift card to one of the following Jamba Juice or Starbucks or Amazon for your time and effort in participating in this research project. No other compensation will be provided.

Future Research Studies:
Identifiers will be removed from your identifiable private information and after removal of identifiers, the data may be used for future research studies for future research studies and we will not seek further approval from you for these future studies.

Questions:
If you have any questions about this study, please email me natalie.perez@hawaii.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Michael Menchaca, at mikepm@hawaii.edu. You may contact the UH Human Studies Program at 808.956.5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu to discuss problems, concerns and questions, obtain information, or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol. Please visit http://go.hawaii.edu/jRd for more information on your rights as a research participant.

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign and date this signature page and return it to: Natalie Perez (researcher) at natalie.perez@hawaii.edu.

Keep a copy of the informed consent for your records and reference.

Signature(s) for Consent:

I give permission to join the research project entitled, *"Who Am I"?: A Phenomenological Study on Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring*

Please initial next to either "Yes" or "No" to the following:

_____ Yes _____ No I consent to be audio-recorded for the interview portion of this research.

Name of Participant (Print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Signature of the Person Obtaining Consent: _____

Date: _____

Mahalo!

APPENDIX H. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INTRODUCTION (3-5 minutes)

- Thank you for joining me today for the interview for my research project titled: "Who Am I?: A Phenomenological Study on Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring

Introduction of the interviewer (myself)

- I'm Natalie Perez, and I am a current LTEC Ph.D. student at COE UH Manoa. You can reach out to my dissertation advisor and/or the UH Human Studies program, and that contact information is listed within the consent form that you signed.

Interview purpose

The purpose of this research study aims to better understand your perceptions of online tutoring and your reflections on your tutoring role and transition into the online environment.

Informed consent

Key points

- There is a low level of risk to you with the design of this interview. Your identity will be kept confidential and will not be linked to your responses. I will not report any information that could potentially make the respondent identifiable. The data collected today will be kept confidential. Only my dissertation advisor will have timed access to the transcript but not the audio-recording.

- You have the right to review the interview transcript or any data collected today. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. You can also leave or not continue at any time during our interview. You have the right not to answer any of the interview questions if you feel uncomfortable doing so. If you don't feel comfortable answering a question, please let me know. You can simply say, "I'd rather than not" or "can we move on to the next question," or in whatever way is most comfortable for you. The only purpose of this interview is to form a part of this research project.

Confirm permission to record the interview session

- As a part of the coursework requirement, I need to audio record our interview. Only the interviewer has access to the audio recordings. Transcripts will be submitted to the course instructor for review but will be destroyed as soon as the project is completed. I will not use any names but will use descriptors in the transcripts
- I will never share information that could enable you to be identified for this interview. The interview data is collected for the coursework only.

Check for understanding and obtain consent

- Do you have any questions about the informed consent information?
- Do I have your consent to proceed with the interview?

Ground rules

- There are no right or wrong answers. Your perceptions and experiences are the core focus of the interview.
- Your responses are completely confidential.
- Our interview should approximately take 45-60 minutes to complete.
- Please let me know if you need to take a break, pause or stop at any time during our interview.

Check for understanding

- Do you have any questions regarding the ground rules that were just mentioned?
- Do you have any questions before we begin?
- I will begin recording the interview now. [click record].

BODY OF THE INTERVIEW/ASKING QUESTIONS (45 minutes)

Transition (4 questions)

We will begin by talking about your experiences with tutoring. When did you begin tutoring in campus-based settings? When did you begin providing online tutoring?

Pre-Online Tutoring: I'd like to take some time to reflect back in time before you began online tutoring and learn more about your thoughts about online tutoring.

1. Before you began online tutoring, to what extent did you imagine or not imagine your role would be like as an online tutor?

Starting Online Tutoring: Now, I'd like to learn more about your story transitioning to online tutoring. I'd like you to reflect back on the time that you started online tutoring.

1. Could you describe the feelings you experienced before starting your first session? What were your feelings like after getting through your online tutoring session?

    a. Did anything make it easy or not easy to transition?

    b. From your perspective, are there more differences or similarities between your campus-based tutoring sessions and your online tutoring sessions?
        i. Could you provide an example of the differences? or similarities?

Post-Online Tutoring: Now that you have been tutoring online for a time, I'd like to learn more about your perspectives from your experiences from starting to tutor online to your thoughts and experiences now.

2. To what extent has online tutoring been what you expected or not expected?
    a. To what extent has your role as an online tutor been the same or different than you had expected?

3. Have you fully transitioned online, or are you continuing to transition online?

Potential follow-up questions:

- Can you share an example of this?
- How did you overcome those challenges or conflicts?

Role (5 questions)

Next, I'd like to learn more about your thoughts, feelings, and experiences about tutoring roles.

1. What do tutor roles mean to you?
    a. How would you define your role as a campus-based tutor?
    b. How would you define your role as an online tutor?

2. What do you think about online tutoring and your role?
    a. Has your role changed or not changed as a result of online environments? (Asynchronous? Online Synchronous?)

3. What is an ideal tutor role?
    a. Is this ideal role the same or different for traditional and online environments?
    b. To what extent have you achieved or not achieved that ideal role?

4. How do you see the role of a writing tutor in the future?

5. How do you imagine the role of an online writing tutor in the future?

Online Environment (3 questions)

Our final few questions focus on the online environment. I'd like to learn more about your thoughts and feelings about tutoring online. My first question is:

1. How do you feel about the online environment through your transition online?
    a. What has made you feel this way?

2. What do online tutoring sessions mean to you?
    a. What made you think this way?

3. Is there anything in the online environment that you have learned, are learning, or need to learn for online tutoring?
    a. How do you feel about this?

WRAP UP (3-5 minutes)

Is there anything else you would like to add or is there anything that I should have asked that I didn't?

- Thank you so much for your participation today. Please be reassured that I will not report any information that could potentially make you identifiable. What you have shared with me during the interview will remain confidential.

- I may follow up with you to confirm the accuracy of the data I have collected. I would like to ensure that I have not misinterpreted anything said during the interview. Please contact me should you have any questions and or concerns.

APPENDIX I. AUDIO DIARY PROTOCOL

Aloha [PARTICIPANT]!

Thank you so much for participating in the audio diary recorded reflections for the research study titled: "Who am I?": A Phenomenological Study on Tutors' Lived Experiences Providing Online Writing Tutoring. Flipgrid is a free audio discussion platform from Microsoft, and it is the system that you will use to record your audio reflections. Your audio reflections will be kept confidential. The following provides information on the study reminders related to privacy and confidentiality as well as how to get started.

Study Reminders
As a reminder, your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your rights to services at the UH tutoring services.

Purpose of Reflective Diary Entries
The reflective diary entries focus on your experiences and reflections of online writing tutoring sessions. When possible please record your experiences of at least 3 online tutoring sessions, over the next two weeks (14 days). It is important that you try to record your experiences as soon after it happens, rather than relying on remembering what happened and/or how you felt, later on in the day or week. Please record your experiences of one online writing tutoring session per each reflective diary entry.

Recording Details
Record whatever is important and relevant to you at the time, however trivial it might sound. Each recording has a time limit of 10 minutes. I also ask that you avoid including personal information such as your address. Only you and Natalie (researcher) have access to the diary entries. To increase privacy and confidentiality, please record your diaries using the audio only feature.

Record Your Reflective Entries
Please review the brief video, How to Access and Record with FlipGrid [5 min]. Next, access each entry, by clicking on the unique URLs below to record your reflections:

1. Reflective Entry 1: [url for recording inserted here]
2. Reflective Entry 2: [url for recording inserted here]
3. Reflective Entry 3: [url for recording inserted here]

For additional guidance using FlipGrid, please refer to the Using FlipGrid directions. Please feel free to email Natalie Perez (researcher) for support as well.

Best Regards,
Natalie

Natalie Perez
PhD Candidate, Learning Design and Technology
University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa
Email: natalie.perez@hawaii.edu

APPENDIX J. AUDIO DIARY QUESTIONS

Note: The material on this page will be placed into the FlipGrid confidential website. It is placed in this document for your review and convenience.

Reminders
When possible please record your experiences of at least three online tutoring sessions, over the next two weeks (14 days). It is important that you try to record your experiences as soon after it happens, rather than relying on remembering what happened and how you felt, later on in the day or week. Record whatever is important and relevant to you at the time, however trivial it might sound. Each recording has a time limit of 10 minutes.

If you are not able to complete the responses over the next 14 days and/or for accommodations, please reach out to Natalie Perez (researcher) at natalie.perez@hawaii.edu.

General Questions

- What is the date? (please state the date of each recording)
- Are you alone? (please state if you are alone or not)
- What is going on around you? (please briefly describe what is going on around you)

Tutoring Session Questions

- What role(s), if any, did you use during your online session? Why did you use those role(s)?
- What did you like about your online session? What did you dislike or find difficult?
- What made your online session different than traditional, campus-based tutoring sessions?
- What types of skills have helped you transition online, so that you were able to successfully complete the online session?