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“YOU TELL *ME* HOW THEY WORK”: FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE COMPOSITION
INSTRUCTORS’ PURPOSES AND PRACTICES FOR CHOOSING AND USING WORKED
EXAMPLES

by

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B.S. University of Central Florida, 2016

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes and analyzes the how and why behind first-year college composition (FYC) instructors' practices for choosing and using examples for teaching writing at UCF. In educational research, developments related to cognitive load theory, analogical transfer, and worked examples reject discovery learning pedagogy, instead advocating for providing examples to aid in problem-solving. Scholars in ill-structured disciplines have studied the use of worked examples (Kyun et al.; Ondrusek et al; Rourke and Sweller), paving the way for fields such as composition studies to apply this concept in new contexts. Although composition scholarship recommends the use of models or sample texts in the practices of imitation, modeling, and genre-based pedagogies (D'Angelo; Pemberton; Dean; Dethier; Derewianka), examples have yet to be either the focus of research in the field or connected to research on learning by example or worked examples. Grounding composition instructors' current practices for using examples in theories of learning and writing instruction, my research theorizes UCF FYC instructors' purposes and practices for choosing and using examples, begins characterizing and defining worked examples in composition classrooms, and considers how they work for solving the ill-structured problem of writing. To examine these instructors' purposes and practices, I collected data through a survey, classroom observations, interviews, and course documents. When choosing and using examples, instructors' practices of providing multiple examples, noting specific elements of these examples, and revisiting and comparing examples, directly connected to their most common purposes of demonstrating assignment expectations, illustrating a genre or writing process in action, presenting possibilities of what students can do, and practicing reader response. Ultimately, I argue that, rather than simply providing students with worked examples,

FYC instructors engage students in the process of “working” examples for these purposes, as their practices guide students’ learning to problem-solve for upcoming assignments and future writing tasks.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

First-year college composition courses (FYC), sometimes referred to as first-year writing courses, are the most frequented writing courses for university students in the U.S., making them a fruitful site of debate for best practices for teaching writing. Composition scholarship recognizes that writing skills must be acquired through practice and experience with rhetorical exigencies, not taught or learned as generalizable skills universal to every writing situation (Petraglia 88-92). Therefore, FYC instructors cannot teach skills applicable to every writing situation students will encounter (Wardle 766-767). With this understanding that writing varies across disciplines and contexts, over the past decade, compositionists have researched best practices for teaching how writing works across different situations to best serve the diverse student writers in FYC classrooms. This scholarship on FYC instruction supports teaching writing as a social, contextual, and rhetorical process dependent on genre and rhetorical situation, an approach that makes this writing knowledge transferable beyond the composition classroom and university setting (Hardy et al.; Reiff and Bawarshi; Wardle). Pedagogies that reflect this approach to teaching writing, such as the one used by the University of Central Florida's First-Year Writing Program, are built upon research-based practices that prepare students to adapt to the contexts and genres within their academic, professional, and civic lives.

Among these practices used in FYC courses, modeling has long been central to effective writing pedagogy. Initial studies encouraged the use of models for imitating writing styles and structures and modeling composition processes, respectively (D'Angelo; Pemberton), but recent composition scholarship most frequently discusses modeling through the use of sample texts for learning genres or disciplinary conventions of writing (Bazerman; Dean; Dethier; Derewianka;

Hardy et al.). Although not discussed in this composition research, long-established theories in educational psychology related to example-based instruction and use of modeling strategies, such as cognitive load theory and analogical transfer, provide insight into the role of examples or models in learning to solve new problems. In Gick and Holyoak's study on solving problems using analogs (examples), they found that *analogical transfer* occurs when learners compare two analogs for the purpose of abstracting them into a more general schema (2). By transferring this knowledge to other contexts, learners are able to solve new problems more easily (2). Emerging from cognitive load theory and the process of analogical transfer, Sweller et al.'s concept of "worked examples," or "step-by-step solutions to a problem," facilitates novice learners' creation of problem-solving schemas by providing the means to borrow from others' knowledge in order to solve the problem at hand (99). Initial scholarship in educational psychology characterizes worked examples in fields with well-structured problem-solving (e.g. mathematics and sciences) in two ways: as a similar sample problem and solution showing each step to solve (Sweller and Cooper 73) or as a story or diagram that mirrors the problem at hand (Gick and Holyoak 3-4). However, newer scholarship in this field applies worked examples to fields with ill-structured problems (e.g. arts and humanities) and works to define what worked examples look like and how they function for problem-solving in these contexts. Research testing worked examples in various ill-structured domains proves their overall effectiveness for ill-structured problem-solving (Rourke and Sweller 197-198; Kyun et al. 401; Ondrusek et al. 835-838), inspiring further research implementing worked examples in other fields with ill-structured problem-solving, such as composition studies.

While composition studies scholarship promoting genre-based pedagogies often recommends using sample texts or models to guide students' learning of genres (Dean; Derewianka; Dethier; Hardy et al.), this research does not address specific pedagogies or practices for using sample texts or models. Therefore, instructors using examples must develop their own rationale for choosing which examples to use and how to incorporate them into their teaching. Though the field has yet to research example use in composition instruction or frame it as an evidence-based practice, discovering current pedagogies and instructional strategies around examples in writing classrooms is an opportunity for compositionists to begin this conversation. By investigating composition instructors' practices for example-based learning, we can better understand not only the affordances and challenges of this instructional practice but also the connection between instructors' writing pedagogies and the choices they make in using examples. Drawing connections between their practices and the implications of theory and research in educational psychology on worked examples and analogical transfer could provide a foundation for developing practices grounded in educational learning theory.

This thesis project pursues this avenue of research by describing and analyzing the how and why behind first-year college composition instructors' practices for choosing and using examples as instructional tools for teaching in FYC courses within the First-Year Writing Program at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Although my project forwards research on best practices for teaching transferable writing knowledge in FYC, this inquiry originates from Denny et al.'s opposition to the "discovery learning" approach that writing centers often promote. In "'Tell Me Exactly What It Was That I Was Doing That Was So Bad': Understanding the Needs and Expectations of Working-Class Students in Writing Centers," they argue for a

directive approach when teaching working-class students to write an appropriate paper for a particular situation (87). Citing their findings and research from educational psychology to support this claim, they note that these students benefit from being given a worked example of what the final text looks like (87). After reading further into this research and becoming interested in theories of learning and worked examples, I developed this project to bridge scholarly research between the fields of educational psychology and composition studies around example use in classroom instruction.

For the purpose of this study, I will use the term *examples* when referring to any texts that instructors offer to students as samples or models in teaching writing. However, because previous composition research--and some of the composition instructors from my research--refer to these instructional tools as *models* or *sample texts*, these terms are used interchangeably with the term *examples* in this thesis. Nonetheless, I believe that the results of this study demonstrate how the term *example* best represents the rhetorical meaning embodied in the context of composition instruction. Also, as part of my aim to apply theories of learning and transfer and the concept of worked examples from educational psychology to composition instruction, referring to these instructional tools as *examples* is the first step in theorizing what a worked example looks like and how it works in our field.

My goal for this research study is to prompt composition instructors to reflect on and examine their own practices for using examples to teach writing. From this goal and research focus, my study worked to answer the following three research questions:

- What pedagogical theories and principles underpin instructors' purposes for using examples to teach writing?

- In what ways do UCF teachers of First-Year College Composition (ENC 1101 & ENC 1102) use examples to teach writing?
- How do UCF teachers of First-Year College Composition (ENC 1101 & ENC 1102) choose which examples to use in their composition courses?

Through these three questions surrounding example use, my research connects instructors' writing pedagogies to their rationale when choosing and using examples in their classroom.

This chapter provides an introduction to my project, establishing how research on instructors' practices for using examples in FYC courses begins a significant scholarly conversation between two fields and responds to their calls for additional research on worked examples and best practices for teaching FYC. The next chapter situates my study within both fields' relevant scholarship by synthesizing theory and research from educational psychology and composition studies. The third chapter explains my methodology for this study of how and why FYC instructors are using examples to teach writing by reviewing my positionality as a researcher, research site, theoretical framework, data collection methods, and approach to data analysis. The fourth chapter reports my data analysis and findings on instructors' purposes and practices for choosing and using examples to teach writing. The fifth and final chapter summarizes my conclusions and my project's contributions to the fields of educational psychology and composition studies and poses potential opportunities for future research on the practice of using examples to teach writing.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE & THEORY

As previously discussed in my introduction, the exigence for this research is that composition studies research has not yet connected or applied theories for using examples from educational psychology to writing instruction in order to develop evidence-based practices for our classrooms. Therefore, my goal is to theorize examples as instructional tools by grounding composition instructors' current practices for using examples in theories of learning and writing instruction. To give a fuller picture of each field's scholarship and theory, this review of the literature is split into two distinct sections. The first section narrates the development of theories of learning and the concept of worked examples from the prior scholarly conversation in educational psychology. This section also includes research studies testing the effectiveness of using worked examples across various disciplines. Though most studies testing worked examples have applied them to well-structured problems, the majority of the research I've included tests worked examples in ill-structured domains. Within these studies, research in library information studies and English literature tests using worked examples within ill-structured problems, which, in these studies, take the form of writing. The second section describes recent scholarship on compositionists' practices involving sample texts, including imitation, modeling, and genre-based pedagogies. Though model or sample texts are commonly associated with teaching genres of writing, this scholarship has not specifically studied model or sample texts as instructional tools. By exploring how this practice works in these classrooms, my research furthers the scholarly inquiry around best practices for teaching FYC. In putting these fields' scholarship in conversation with one another, this literature review develops a foundation for studying example-based instruction in composition classrooms.

Educational Psychology

Theories of Learning and Cognitive Load

When novices are not provided with guidance or information to solve an unfamiliar problem, they must rely on prior knowledge to search for appropriate solutions via trial and error. In early educational theory, this method of “discovery learning,” also known as problem-based or inquiry-based learning, was widely supported as a beneficial process for learning (Sweller et al. 11). In approaches within discovery learning, novice learners are forced to discover solutions to a problem independently, as explicit instruction and guiding information that would aid them in finding the answer is withheld (12). However, cognitive load theorists determined that this process places a heavy cognitive load on novice learners’ working memory, making it difficult for them to develop the necessary strategies to solve the problem (Sweller et al. 99).

In “Acquiring Information: The Borrowing and Reorganising Principle and Randomness as Genesis Principle,” Sweller et al. explicate the two natural processes of human cognition that work together to acquire information and generate knowledge to be stored in long-term memory: the *borrowing and reorganizing principle* and the *random generate and test procedure* (27). In the borrowing and reorganizing principle, which is responsible for the majority of stored information, learners imitate information or behaviors, reorganize them into their prior knowledge and schemas, and then store this information into their long-term memory (28-30). In this reorganizing process, learners combine the knowledge borrowed from others with their own to “construct new schemas,” which differ from the original content they are borrowing (28-30).

When information to borrow from is unavailable, learners' only option for problem-solving is the random generate and test procedure, or randomness as genesis principle (33), which is reflective of the principles of discovery learning. Although prior knowledge can assist learners in narrowing down which moves or solutions to test, they are still generating a random solution to test based solely on their existing knowledge, which may or may not be useful to the problem (33). Without other instruction, this process often leads novices to several dead ends before finding success, suggesting that novices need materials to borrow knowledge and learn from in order to reduce their cognitive load during problem-solving (33-34). Therefore, cognitive load theory, and the lack of evidence for the benefits of discovery learning, support explicitly providing learners with relevant instruction and resources that they can borrow and reorganize for their own learning.

Analogical Transfer and Transfer of Learning

To aid in the borrowing and reorganizing process, scholars suggest analogical problem solving, a process in which learners combine effectively tested analogs (i.e. analogies, examples, or metaphors) with their prior knowledge, guiding them to a proper solution through testing modeled problem-solving moves (Gick and Holyoak 2; Sweller et al. 34; Sweller 166). In their initial study in 1980 on analogical transfer, Gick and Holyoak found that 75% of students who received an analog were able to solve a similar problem, while only 10% of those who received no analog were successful (4). Gick and Holyoak's second study in 1983 found that comparing two analogs engages learners in a process of abstraction through *mapping*, which involves "finding a set of one-to-one correspondences (often incomplete) between aspects of one body of

information and aspects of another” (2). From this process, learners developed a problem-solving schema that was transferable to problem-solving in other contexts (31-32). This evidence for analogical problem-solving supports providing learners with examples from which they can borrow information, guiding schema acquisition in a way that promotes transfer of learning.

Perkins and Salomon define *transfer of learning* as “learning in one context or with one set of materials impact[ing] performance in another context or with other related materials” (3). They distinguish two types of transfer which can work together to help a learner complete a task: *low road* and *high road* (7). While *low road transfer* happens “semi-automatically” due to similar circumstances within the learning context that guides a learner’s use of prior knowledge, *high road transfer* requires more “deliberate” application of prior knowledge to situations that do not have similar learning contexts to which that knowledge can be applied (7). Their strategies for “teaching for transfer” recommend explicit instruction in two ways: *hugging*, which simulates practice leading up to a performance, and *bridging*, which addresses connections, abstractions of concepts, and metacognition (8). Hugging allows for low road transfer to take over in a similar context, while bridging promotes high road transfer across contexts by making a plan for transfer in the learner’s mind (8). Citing Gick and Holyoak’s results on fostering transfer through analogous problems, Perkins and Salomon identify *explicit abstraction*, which involves determining the important characteristics of a particular learning “situation,” as one of the conditions typically needed for any transfer to occur (6). Another condition they identify is “using a metaphor or analogy,” arguing that “transfer is facilitated when new material is studied in light of previously learned material that serves as an analogy or metaphor” (6). This

recognition that analogies are useful tools for fostering transfer suggests the need for more research on example-based instruction and its role in diverse educational contexts.

Worked Examples and their Characteristics

As a counter argument to the initially favored discovery learning, example-based learning is supported by these current theories of learning and analogical transfer. Though learning by example had been long discussed and used in educational practice and research (Atkinson et al. 182), these new developments around the role of analogs in the process of transfer of learning and abstraction led cognitive load theorists to define the more concrete concept of *worked examples*, or “step-by-step solutions to a problem” (Sweller et al. 99). Grounded in the borrowing and reorganizing principle, worked examples provide the means for learners to borrow from in order to solve similar problems and facilitate learners’ creation of problem-solving schemas (99). By supplying them with a worked example, learners’ use of the randomness as genesis principle is avoided (99). Borrowing from worked examples reduces learners’ cognitive load, thereby preventing overexerting their working memory during problem-solving (99). Although the term does not have one “precise definition” when applied across various contexts, worked examples are generally considered to be instructional devices that “provide an expert’s problem-solving model for the learner to study and emulate” (Atkinson et al. 181-182). They are also considered synonymous with “learning from examples, example-based learning, learning from model answers and studying expert solutions” (Sweller et al.100).

Research across disciplines shows that worked examples work best with novices, or learners who are less knowledgeable about the problem, task, or subject at hand (Sweller et al.

99; Sweller 168; Ondrusek et al. 829; Kyun et al. 401; Rourke and Sweller 188). The experiments within this research demonstrate that the additional guidance provided by examples is especially useful for novices who are learning to solve unfamiliar problems in comparison to their effectiveness for more knowledgeable learners. For example, in “The Effect of Worked Examples When Learning To Write Essays in English Literature,” Kyun et al. provide sample literary analysis essays as worked examples to students in two different levels of English literature courses and students in a general psychology course. The less knowledgeable students were about English literature, the more effective worked examples became (401). While more knowledgeable learners have the relevant prior knowledge needed to more easily find a solution, worked examples are exceptionally successful at scaffolding novices through the steps necessary for solving a problem by providing them with knowledge from which to borrow.

Scholars also suggest the importance of using multiple worked examples in guiding learners’ schema acquisition (Gick and Holyoak 32; Atkinson et al 191-192; Sweller 167; Sweller and Cooper 87). Gick and Holyoak’s study found that, while a single example is useful, it does not engage learners in a mapping process that leads to schema acquisition (32); however, they discovered that “two analogs can be mapped together to derive a more general schema” (32), enabling learners to store that schema in long-term memory for future problems. Results from Gick and Holyoak’s studies on analogical transfer prove the success not only of using multiple examples but also of accompanying examples with verbal and diagram representations that guide learners in drawing on similarities between the two examples (32). Similarly, in the instructional design for using multiple worked examples, Atkinson et al. note the importance of varying surface features to emphasize structure and pairing examples with problems during

practice (191). In addition, prior research finds that successful worked examples integrate text and diagrams, aural and visual information, and steps and subgoals (Atkinson et al. 186). To accomplish this in a way that avoids extraneous cognitive load, this research suggests using multimodal examples that include all relevant sources of information and use labels/annotations to highlight key steps or moves within the example for learning the “structure” to solve the problem at hand (191). Overall, how a worked example is characterized differs based on the discipline and context in which it is used, and a review of the studies testing the worked example effect across disciplines illustrates several different types of worked examples and how they benefit learners in both well-structured and ill-structured domains/problems.

Studies on the “Worked Example Effect”

Most of the prior research studying worked examples focuses on testing the *worked example effect*, where learners demonstrate more success in solving a similar problem after studying a worked example (Sweller et al. 99). The majority of this research tests the benefits of worked examples on learners’ ability to solve problems in the fields of math, technology, science, and engineering, all of which contain well-structured problems, or problems in which “we can clearly specify the various problem states and the problem-solving operators (e.g. the rules of algebra) required to move from one state to another” (Sweller et al. 102). For example, the worked example effect was first tested by Sweller and Cooper in 1985 with algebra problems, sparking a trend of experiments on the worked example effect in similar well-structured problems. Sweller and Cooper’s results proved the usefulness of worked examples for learning to solve algebra equations by providing the means to efficiently acquire appropriate

schemas and abstractions relevant to the problem at hand. These worked examples aided learners in obtaining an expertise and proficiency for solving these problems, preventing extra time spent using trial and error with no increase in mistakes (76-77).

Despite the plethora of research on worked examples in well-structured domains, scholars in ill-defined domains observed a lack of studies applying worked examples to fields containing ill-structured problems, or problems that “do not have clearly specified problem states or problem-solving operators” (Sweller et al. 102). In fact, it had been presumed that the worked example effect would not be achieved in ill-structured problems or “problems requiring natural language, humanities, or other areas related to artistic endeavors” (Sweller et al. 102). This assumption spurred a more recent trend for research on worked examples within these diverse ill-structured learning domains. Rourke and Sweller, Kyun et al., and Ondrusek et al. each respond to this call for further research on the design and instruction of worked examples in ill-structured problems and demonstrate the value and relevance of worked examples and the worked example effect in ill-defined domains.

For example, Rourke and Sweller conducted one of the first studies to test worked examples in solving ill-structured problems, investigating how students solved problems related to chair designs and identifying features of a designer’s work in an art education class. Despite previous research in art education advocating for the use of discovery learning, Rourke and Sweller hypothesized that, because these students lack knowledge and language specific to art and design, they are forced to use the randomness as genesis principle, overworking their working memory (188). They concluded that learners who are new to domain-specific knowledge and problem-solving, even when ill-structured, do not experience extraneous

cognitive load and can more easily solve near and, sometimes, far transfer problems when provided worked examples (197-198).

In two other studies testing worked examples in ill-structured domains, worked examples take the form of writing, with a written task as the problem to be solved. Ondrusek et al.'s study in the discipline of library information science tests the usefulness of worked examples for helping novices build necessary problem-solving schemas when solving ill-structured problems. With the discipline now requiring experience with research methods and design, instructors needed to teach students the elements of writing an abstract, inspiring Ondrusek et al. to use worked examples as “an instructional method for modeling abstract writing” and for “promoting knowledge and skill acquisition” in this new domain (827). Though levels of exposure to worked examples did not significantly affect how effectively students' abstracts were written, the results demonstrate that those with medium- and high-exposure to the worked examples scored significantly higher on the criteria for a “complete” abstract and were successful at identifying the features of research design (835-838). Kyun et al.'s research also confirmed the success of the worked example effect when teaching students to write essays in English literature. In this setting, worked examples were model answers to an essay question in literary analysis, which assisted students in scoring higher on the near transfer posttest question and reducing their cognitive load when answering these questions (401). Though this study on worked examples in English literature instruction comes closest to my study of examples in composition instruction, Kyun et al.'s methods test the worked example effect. However, my study only analyzes composition instructors' purposes and practices for using examples and does not measure the effectiveness of using examples on students' learning.

Together, these developments related to cognitive load theory, analogical transfer, and worked examples in educational theory reject the pedagogy of discovery learning, instead advocating for providing auxiliary examples to aid in problem-solving. This research in educational psychology on worked examples laid the groundwork for other scholars to adapt this concept to problems within their fields, whether well-structured or ill-structured. Many scholars in ill-structured domains have taken up the call for studying the use of worked examples in their classrooms, paving the way for fields such as composition studies to explore implications for applying this concept in new contexts.

Composition Studies

Writing as Ill-Structured Problem-Solving

A cognitivist perspective of writing as ill-structured problem-solving situates composition instruction as an ill-structured domain that is suitable for research on worked examples or learning by example. Through a cognitivist perspective, Joseph Petraglia argues that writing is considered ill-structured problem-solving because it functions as “an instrumental, transactional, rhetorical task,” and has a “strategic nature” (82). Because writing serves as a tool for communication and getting work done, the meaning that must be negotiated between the writer and audience is dependent on context and style, making it a rhetorical problem to be solved (80-82). Petraglia demonstrates “writing’s strategic nature” through a principle in Flower and Hayes’ cognitivist approach to writing: writers engage in goal-setting and decision making around their purposes and goals, making adjustments based upon what they’ve learned (82). This principle frames writing as a problem necessitating a set of strategies and goals, a problem that is

contextual and social and, therefore, differs in every instance. According to Petraglia, “[i]n ill-structured problem-solving, the contingency permeates the task environment and solutions are always equivocal” (83). Similarly, writing is dependent on the rhetorical situation, making more than one solution or response possible. A solution for a written task isn’t a given. As Petraglia notes, “the idea of ‘getting it right’ gives way to ‘making it acceptable in the circumstances’” (83). The circumstances, or the context around the writing task, dictate what is considered an acceptable solution or appropriate response to the rhetorical situation at hand. This cognitivist perspective frames writing tasks as problems with multiple potential solutions, solutions which can be exemplified through modeling.

Modeling Theory and Writing Process

In response to the uptick of research on modeling the processes and activities of composing as cognitive processes, Michael Pemberton applies modeling theory to the writing process and emphasizes the importance of models in writing instruction. Admitting the need for further research to provide a clearer definition for what constitutes a model in composition studies, Pemberton defines *models* as “conceptual frameworks that allow us to interpret, structure, and comprehend our environment” and attempt to “help us to systematize the world by revealing underlying patterns and regularities” (42). Whether they exist in textual form or a diagram representation (49), Pemberton argues for using models as a guide or starting point to understand a particular process--in this case, the writing process (52). Because models cannot be flawless representations of the task at hand, he acknowledges that they can simplify or misrepresent their subjects, and they often demonstrate some, but not all features (46). Despite

these imperfections, he believes that models should not be discarded for these inherent flaws (52-53), as explicitly studying the limitations of a model allows learners to see what is working effectively and where adjustments may be needed or other aspects that the model cannot account for.

Models for Imitation

Similar to proponents of discovery learning in educational psychology, some compositionists believe writers should rely solely on invention, or “the process of discovering alternate modes of expression,” when developing their style of writing (D’Angelo 238). However, in “Imitation and Style,” Frank D’Angelo observes writers’ need for models through his experience teaching “incoming freshman [with] an inability to read analytically and to structure their ideas in writing,” and he insists that imitation is “one important means to achieve these ends” (290). Similar to the principle of borrowing and reorganizing and theories of cognitive load in educational research, *imitation* allows students to engage in “the process of duplicating these modes of expression as precisely as possible” to avoid “the fumbings of the novice writer” (283). He suggests this specific step-by-step approach for using models to help students with creative imitation and discovery of their own writing style: preliminary reading of the model, careful analysis of the model, and interpretation of the model, followed by close, then loose, imitation of the model (D’Angelo 284). Although D’Angelo’s study was meant to help students in crafting short stories rather than create nonfiction texts in a composition classroom, his conclusions still advocate for a combination of invention and imitation when learning to write. This combination equips writers with models of structures and styles to imitate as they

develop their own creative style and unique responses to the particular situations for which they are writing.

Models or Sample Texts in Genre Theory and Pedagogies

Despite these early discussions of the value of imitation and modeling, research on these two practices in today's composition classrooms is scarce. More recent scholarly research discussing the use of models or sample texts in composition classrooms concentrates on their role in genre theory and genre-based pedagogies. As genre theory and pedagogy emerged as an effective method for teaching transferable writing knowledge (Bazerman; Dean; Hardy et al.; Reiff and Bawarshi; Wardle), practices for teaching genre often involve the use of models or sample texts as examples of particular genres. In "Genres as Social Action," Miller defines genres as "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (159), and composition scholars agree with this characterization of genre as a rhetorical concept (Bawarshi 23-24; Bazerman 22; Wardle 767; Dean 8; Reiff and Bawarshi 318; Rounsaville). Bazerman also theorizes genres beyond just "forms," describing genres as "the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guideposts we use to explore the unfamiliar" (19). He asserts that university students who are learning to write in new academic genres need these "guideposts" from those who are familiar with these genres (19). In the writing classroom, he views genres as a means for analyzing the structure and rhetorical moves that meet the context and circumstances a piece of writing functions within (23). Teaching genres enables students to respond to other writing situations with strategies from "at least one set of well-developed practices to draw analogies from and contrasts to," strategies that can be transferred to

new problems (26). Finally, Bazerman reminds us that students are motivated to engage in the complex work of writing in new genres when they are assigned “the kinds of writing problems they will want to solve” (26). Thus, writing becomes an authentic and engaging problem for students to solve when they can see the real work genres do in personal, professional, academic, and civic communities.

Scholarship on writing in new genres or genre-based pedagogies mention a use models or sample texts for helping writers to observe and analyze features and moves within a genre (Dean; Derewianka; Dethier; Hardy et al.). According to Deborah Dean, the theories of “genre as text” and “genre as rhetoric” lead compositionists to use sample texts in their scaffolding instruction, though in different ways and at different moments in their instructional sequence (24-26).

Theorists who view genre as text focus on form and textual features, typically providing a stable model to guide students through the formal features for learning the new genre before imitating it as a group and then independently (24). Genre as rhetoric theorists emphasize features of the situation instead of the text, using the text to determine how the genre is a response to the features within its rhetorical situation (25). These theorists also point students to rhetorical choices made in the genre to investigate their effectiveness for the audience and situation (25).

Within the genre as rhetoric approach, Beverly Derewianka offers steps for immersing writers in studying a genre and then learning to write within this genre on their own. After choosing a genre for students to study, Derewianka advises familiarizing students with a genre through sample texts, using them to analyze and model the main rhetorical and/or language features of a genre for the purpose of creatively exploiting or critiquing a genre (146-149). These examples

demonstrate some of the differing roles that models and sample texts already fulfill within genre theories.

Research on best practices for teaching writing in FYC also references using models or sample texts, often for the same goal of teaching genres of writing in conjunction with goals for transfer of learning. Because Petraglia affirms that writing cannot be taught as a “body of practical, practiceable skills” (88) and current composition research recognizes that FYC instructors do not have the genre and disciplinary knowledge to prepare students to write effectively in all future contexts, scholars have sought approaches for teaching FYC that promote transfer of learning, such as genre-based pedagogies (Hardy et al.; Reiff and Bawarshi; Wardle). Realizing FYC courses are unable to meet the university’s expectations for teaching students to write for all contexts within academia, Wardle argues for instructors to prioritize teaching genre analysis to students rather than teaching styles of writing in fields that are unfamiliar to them (783), a teaching practice that requires using models or sample texts.

The closest that our field has come to studying the use of models or sample texts for teaching genres of writing in composition classrooms is Hardy et al.’s study highlighting students’ need for relevant models in the genres and disciplines in which they are learning to write in. While Hardy et al. acknowledge that FYC instructors do not have the knowledge to teach writing in every genre and discipline, they speculated that the Michigan Corpus of Upper-Level Student Papers (MICUSP), an online collection of 892 highly scored papers “written by final year undergraduate and first, second, and third year graduate students at the University of Michigan” and organized by “academic discipline, student level, student nativeness status, and

paper type,” could serve as an archive for FYC students to research how writing works across disciplines and learn the moves for writing in these genres (4). Spanning sixteen disciplines and seven paper types, the papers can be filtered by eight textual features that FYC instructors identified as common features of the examples (4). To test this tool, Hardy structured his FYC course as an investigation of MICUSP’s sample texts, facilitating students’ control of their own learning about writing in their chosen discipline. In a follow-up survey, students reported gaining genre awareness through studying sample texts, proving the advantage of genre analysis of multiple examples across disciplines.

Despite example-based instruction being a ubiquitous practice in composition classrooms and prior research in composition studies advocating for the use of models or sample texts, scholarship has yet to investigate composition instructors’ purposes and pedagogies for choosing and using models or sample texts as instructional tools. In other words, although compositionists agree that models and sample texts provide beneficial learning opportunities for novice writers through imitation, modeling, and genre-based pedagogies, I found no existing research studying models or sample texts or how and why compositionists incorporate examples into their instruction. More specifically, while learning theories and composition praxis both share the goal of using models or sample texts to promote transfer of learning, scholars have yet to connect educational theories of learning and research on worked examples in order to study composition instructors’ use of models in this way.

Therefore, my research examines composition instructors’ use of examples to teach writing, enabling our field to theorize how and why to use examples in first-year composition classrooms. By responding to education psychology’s call for additional research on worked

examples in ill-structured domains as well as composition's call for additional research on best practices for teaching FYC, this project begins to determine what constitutes a worked example in our discipline and the ways in which worked examples support instructors' pedagogies for teaching writing in FYC classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

As shown by the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, there is a gap in composition studies research on instructors' use of examples for teaching writing, demonstrating an exigency for examining their purposes and practices. This chapter details the design of my study by explaining my positionality as researcher, methodology, and data collection and analysis methods. Designed as an empirical study, my qualitative research project describes FYC instructors' practices for using examples. In this way, I respond to the call for research on best practices for teaching writing in FYC that promotes transfer of learning, as stated in Chapters One and Two. Although composition scholarship recommends the use of models or sample texts in the practices of imitation, modeling, and genre-based pedagogies, models or sample texts have yet to be either the focus of research in the field or to be connected to educational research on learning by example or worked examples.

It is important to note that, while educational research on worked examples often tests their effectiveness for helping students build problem-solving skills, my research does not investigate or make any claims about the effectiveness of examples on student learning. Due to the time period and the specific interests of this research, the scope of my study focused only on instructors' pedagogical choices and use of examples for teaching writing in FYC. In the future, I have an interest in studying the worked example effect in composition studies. However, I believe that our field should first describe instructors' current practices for using examples in order to theorize these practices. My hope for this project is that it serves as the first in a continued line of inquiry into this subject.

Exploring this line of inquiry stems from my personal interest in composition instructors' practices using examples, making it essential to address how my positionality as a researcher shaped my methodological choices in this project. As a Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA) whose pedagogy is genre-based, my rationale for using examples in my composition instruction derives from my belief that examples are beneficial resources for student writers to learn from. In my own experiences as an instructor and a writer, examples assist me not only in teaching students new genres or rhetorical moves but also in learning them myself. I've frequently used examples for teaching writing in my FYC courses. For these classes, I usually choose example texts from the UCF edition of Wardle and Downs' FYC textbook, *Writing about Writing*, which contains both professional and student examples, and *Stylus*, the UCF Department of Writing and Rhetoric's (DWR) online journal of first-year student writing. In my classroom, I most often use examples as instructional tools to illustrate genre moves and engage students in genre analysis. In preparation for a writing assignment, I assign one or two example texts for students to read before coming to class. I then lead a discussion of the assignment's genre, using a series of questions to analyze the texts for the connection between their rhetorical situation and their genre moves. I have tried several approaches for using these examples to teach genre, both in whole-class discussions and as small-group activities: finding the moves within an example that exemplify a particular genre, modeling a particular genre move by focusing only on specific excerpts of an example, and comparing two examples to discern repeated patterns in a genre. When planning lessons involving examples, I've faced a particular challenge in using these texts as instructional tools to scaffold students' understanding of how writing works. Students may mistake examples as the "right" or only way to write for a particular assignment or rhetorical

situation, leading them to rely on the examples as a template to copy. However, following examples as a formula goes directly against the writing conceptions I work to instill in my students. I teach my students that writing is not formulaic or perfectible, so I want students to understand that the examples I provide to them are not the only way to write for a particular situation, nor are they perfect representations of an assignment or genre. Though the overall genre moves remain similar across examples of a given genre, every example has its own strengths and weaknesses and can only represent one writer's approach and rhetorical moves. This challenge presents difficulties when choosing and using examples in the lessons I design, and I often feel unsure of the best approaches for engaging students with examples that guide them instead of limiting them in their writing style or rhetorical choices. Therefore, every time I utilize examples in my classroom, several questions arise:

- Am I providing one example or multiple examples? Which example(s) should I choose and why?
- Should students read the example texts before class or during?
- Should my lesson with examples include small-group activities, whole-class discussion, or independent practice? What should students *do* with the example(s)?

I wondered if other instructors might have similar questions when creating lessons using examples in order to scaffold students' learning and accomplish the course's learning goals. These questions and curiosities around the various uses of examples in composition classrooms led to this study on compositionists' pedagogical and instructional choices for incorporating examples into their courses. To illustrate how this research study was conducted, this chapter

outlines my research questions, research sites, participants, and data collection and analysis methods.

Research Questions

This research project emerged from my interest in compositionists' use of examples and my objective to theorize their practices. My study of the use of examples in UCF's FYC courses responds to the following three research questions:

- What pedagogical theories and principles underpin instructors' purposes for using examples to teach writing?
- In what ways do UCF teachers of First-Year College Composition (ENC 1101 & ENC 1102) use examples to teach writing?
- How do UCF teachers of First-Year College Composition (ENC 1101 & ENC 1102) choose which examples to use in their composition courses?

These questions about composition instructors' purposes and practices for choosing and using examples help me to connect these practices to their composition pedagogies and to educational theories of learning. Theorizing FYC instructors' practices for choosing and using examples through this research begins the process of characterizing worked examples in composition classrooms and considering how they work for solving the ill-structured problem of writing.

Research Sites

The main research site for this thesis project is the University of Central Florida (UCF) Department of Writing and Rhetoric's (DWR) First-Year Writing (FYW) Program. Instructors in

this program typically ground their pedagogies in the Writing about Writing approach, as illustrated by the UCF edition of Wardle and Downs' FYC textbook, *Writing about Writing*. This approach is evident in its two FYC courses: ENC 1101 Composition I and ENC 1102 Composition II. Drawing on composition studies theory and research, these courses “provide instruction on both the what and the how of writing and are designed to teach writing in a way that makes it transferable to later writing situations” (“First-Year Writing Program”). To better understand how this department frames these two FYC courses, I offer the FYW Program’s descriptions of each course. This program describes ENC 1101 Composition I’s focus as follows:

ENC 1101 develops students’ knowledge of what writing is and how it functions in the world. By examining writing as an object of study, the ENC 1101 curriculum invites students to understand their writing as situated within academic, professional, civic, and personal contexts and to develop their identities and abilities as writers across these settings. (“ENC 1101”)

This program describes ENC 1102 Composition II’s focus as follows:

Building on the key concepts of writing and rhetoric emphasized in ENC 1101, ENC 1102 further strengthens students’ understanding of the work that writing and research do in the world. The primary and secondary research at the heart of ENC 1102’s semester-long inquiry projects invites students to identify, analyze, and contribute effectively to the complex, real-world rhetorical situations that animate their academic, professional, civic, and personal lives. (“ENC 1102”)

I chose this department and its instructors as the focus of my research because I had access to recruiting them as participants for this study and the ability to observe class sessions on UCF's main campus.

My classroom observations and interviews with department instructors took place in multiple research sites: various classrooms on UCF's main campus, and instructors' offices in Trevor Colbourn Hall (TCH), where the DWR's offices are located. Instructors' course schedules dictated the location of the classroom observations, as I let them choose which of their classes I observed. When scheduling interviews, I asked the instructors' permission to conduct the interviews in their individual offices, to which they all agreed. I chose this location for the interviews because instructors' office spaces are private as well as quiet enough to audio record the interview without other noise or disruptions.

Participants

Because my research site is the UCF Department of Writing and Rhetoric's First-Year Writing Program, any current DWR faculty members who previously taught or were currently teaching ENC 1101 or ENC 1102 were eligible to be participants in my study. To recruit faculty members to complete my survey, I sent an initial email to all DWR faculty through the DWR Listserv explaining my research project's purpose and design and the time commitments of being a participant (Appendix A). In this email, I also attached my IRB approval and included the link to my survey. I sent three additional reminder emails with the same information to faculty members through the DWR Listserv to encourage a higher response rate. Therefore, the

participants of my study were faculty members who previously taught or were currently teaching ENC 1101 or ENC 1102 and voluntarily completed my survey while it remained open.

In my survey, respondents had the opportunity to note their willingness to continue with my study through a classroom observation in which they are using examples in an FYC class in Spring 2020 and an interview in which they discuss their use of examples. Of the eight instructors who were eligible from these qualifications, I chose four instructors to be featured as case studies in my research. Two of these instructors were teaching ENC 1101 and two of these instructors were teaching ENC 1102 during the Spring 2020 semester. Because I am interested in how identity markers connect to pedagogical choices, my selection also ensured gender and racial/ethnic diversity among my four case studies. Of the eight eligible instructors, five identified as female and three identified as male, with one identifying as African American and seven identifying as white. I chose two instructors who identified as female and two instructors who identified as male; of these four, one instructor identified as African American and three instructors identified as white. Once I chose these four instructors, I emailed them requesting their continued participation in my research as a case study, explaining the purpose of my research and the time commitments involved. All four instructors agreed to continue their participation in my research. In the remaining chapters of this thesis, I will refer to these four instructors using the pseudonyms Juliette, Wes, Stephen, and Nicole to protect the confidentiality of their identities.

Data Collection

To examine how and why FYC instructors choose and use examples for teaching writing, I collected the following data during the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters:

- responses to fifteen survey questions from sixteen instructors,
- notes from my observations of four instructors' FYC class sessions,
- transcriptions of the interviews I conducted with four FYC instructors, and
- instructor-generated course documents (syllabi, handouts, etc.) provided during the case studies.

Through a survey, classroom observations, interviews, and provided course documents, this data details UCF FYC instructors' purposes and practices for choosing and using examples.

Survey

My first method for collecting data was a survey of instructors who currently teach or have taught FYC at UCF. Sixteen eligible UCF DWR faculty members responded to this survey and became the participants in my study. The 15-question, Google Forms online survey asked faculty questions about their choices and uses of models or sample texts as examples for teaching writing in ENC 1101 and/or ENC 1102 (Appendix B). These survey questions gathered both qualitative and quantitative data. After asking for participants' names and email addresses (as contact information for me to use if they were chosen to be one of the four case studies), I asked two close-ended questions: if instructors use examples in ENC 1101 and/or ENC 1102, and whether they use example texts written by student writers, professional writers, or both.

Then, through five open-ended response questions, I collected qualitative data on instructors' rationale for using examples, which specific examples they use, and how they use these examples in their teaching. Because I recognize that pedagogical choices are informed by a variety of identity markers, I also included some quantitative questions to collect demographic data about instructors' identities and experiences. Two optional questions on the survey asked participants about their gender identity and race/ethnicity.

Case Studies: Classroom Observations & Interviews

To further investigate the instructional strategies that accompany instructors' use of examples in FYC classrooms, I conducted case studies on four FYC instructors, each involving a classroom observation and an interview. Once the four instructors agreed to continue their participation in my research, I scheduled a classroom observation with each instructor to observe an FYC class in which they were using examples. During these classroom observations, I took detailed field notes. These notes depict my interpretation of instructors' strategies for using examples during a class lesson or activity.

Approximately one week after my classroom observation, I conducted a 30-45-minute interview with each of the instructors in their offices to discuss their use of examples, audio recording them on my computer and transcribing them in the following weeks. My interview questions delve into instructors' pedagogical choices for using examples (Appendix C), prompting each instructor to elaborate on their responses to the survey questions and discuss what I observed during their classroom instruction. Based on my observations of their teaching, I formed follow-up questions after each classroom observation about the instructors' specific

strategies around using examples. Overall, these interviews allowed me to gather more data on instructors' pedagogical principles for how, when, and why they select and use examples in their instructional sequence from their own perspective, rather than relying only on my interpretation based on my observations of their class.

Occasionally, I also collected instructor-generated course documents or materials that were relevant to the instructors' use of examples for that particular class observation. When instructors directly offered me a copy of these materials, I included them as part of my data, but I did not actively seek them out. For example, Nicole provided me with copies of her course syllabus and the homework assignment that students had completed prior to and discussed during the class I observed. Similarly, Stephen provided me with copies of the example texts he used and the assignment sheet he reviewed during the class I observed.

Data Analysis Methods

Theoretical Framework

With no existing framework that I can apply to my data, I chose to use grounded theory as a theoretical framework, a method in which codes arise from the data itself and not from a set of predetermined codes. Grounded theory approach, Kathy Charmaz explains, "fosters studying actions and processes" (113), which is useful in my study's aim to describe and analyze the actions and processes associated with FYC instructors' practices for choosing and using examples as instructional tools. Therefore, using grounded theory best enables me to articulate instructors' different pedagogies and instructional strategies for using examples in FYC to teach writing.

While my codes emerged from the data during analysis, they were created based on my interpretation of the data, which is inevitably informed by my prior knowledge of the scholarly conversations around teaching with worked examples in educational research and models or sample texts in composition research. For example, prior research in educational psychology addresses pedagogical options and justifications for providing students with models and sample texts, such as single vs. multiple examples, addition of verbal or visual guidance that may aid in abstraction, and the intra- and inter- features of designing worked examples. Composition studies notes options and justifications as well, such as practicing imitation, modeling processes, connections to genre-based pedagogies. These practices for example-based instruction discussed in the prior research informed my analysis of the purposes and practices around examples used by the FYC instructors in my study.

Coding Process

Kathy Charmaz describes grounded theory coding as “a powerful tool that can enable you to define what constitutes the data and to make implicit views, actions, and processes more visible” (113). This coding practice consists of two phases: an “initial coding phase” and a “focused, selective phase” (113). In the initial coding phase, researchers immerse themselves in the data with an open mind, studying and coding each word, line, or incident to make comparisons (113). Because Charmaz encourages beginning the initial coding process early in data collection to allow for further investigation of curiosities that arise from initial codes (114), I began my initial phase of coding as soon as I received my survey responses, which are the first part of my data. In my initial phase of coding, I sorted the survey responses by each question,

then coded each question's responses "line-by-line" to construct initial codes from this data (Charmaz 121). The "line-by-line" approach lent itself to coding the survey responses because it "helps to define implicit meanings and actions, gives researchers directions to explore, spurs making comparisons between data, and suggests emergent links between processes in the data to pursue and check" (Charmaz 121), which were important factors for my initial phase of coding. As I coded this survey data line-by-line, I discovered several patterns across instructors' responses and developed initial codes that represented these patterns. I then sorted quotes from instructors' responses into the codes I developed, noting which codes were most frequent. Coding the instructors' survey responses early in the process also allowed me to form additional interview questions for the instructors in my case studies based on their specific responses.

Beginning in my initial coding phase, I used two practices of grounded theory coding outlined by Charmaz in my data analysis: "coding with gerunds," and "in vivo codes" (120; 134). Coding with gerunds maintains a focus on describing actions and processes and avoids reducing data to thematic patterns (120-121). I created initial codes with gerunds, which represented my descriptions of the actions for choosing and using examples that FYC instructors discussed in the survey responses. These initial codes were often in vivo codes, which are codes formed from research participants' own words (134). These in vivo codes helped my findings to represent not only my interpretation but also instructors' understanding of their own purposes and practices for choosing and using examples. The following initial codes with gerunds were also in vivo codes: analyzing genres/rhetorical situation, learning reader response, critiquing writers' choices, showing possibilities of what they can do, and demonstrating assignment expectations.

After observing and interviewing the four chosen instructors, I typed up my observation notes and transcribed the interviews from my audio recordings. While I coded the interview transcriptions line-by-line as I did the survey responses, I coded the fieldnotes taken during my observations of FYC classes “incident by incident” (Charmaz 128). As Charmaz argues, “making comparisons between incidents may work better than word-by-word or line-by-line coding, in part, because fieldnotes consist of your words, your framing of events, and your way of recording these events to make them comprehensible” (128). Because the fieldnotes taken during my observations of FYC classes were framed from my perspective of what I observed, coding these incident by incident worked best for analyzing and comparing my interpretations of instructors’ actions as they used examples in their classrooms. Continuing my initial phase of coding, I first coded this data using my initial codes from the survey responses. As new patterns emerged from my observation notes and instructors’ interview responses, I developed additional codes with gerunds and in vivo codes to describe these purposes and practices. I continuously made comparisons across participants and methods (surveys, observations, and interviews) within my data throughout my initial coding phase.

Once my data collection and initial coding phase was complete, I re-analyzed my data during my focused coding phase. Charmaz’s second phase of grounded theory coding, “focused, selective coding . . . uses the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize large amounts of data” (113). In this second coding phase, I revisited all my data, assigning any codes that emerged later in my analysis to other relevant syntactic units. I then used the most common and notable codes to sort all of my data into my final coding categories. Because my research set out to describe and analyze FYC instructors’ practices (how)

and purposes (why) for both choosing and using examples when teaching writing, I sorted all of my data and codes into categories that related to these different aspects of my research questions. I first segmented the data into categories based on their connection to *choosing examples, using examples, or both*. Once I had separated my initial codes and data into these two groups, I then sorted each group of data again based on their connection to *practices for choosing/using examples in the classroom vs purposes for choosing/using examples for teaching writing*. While my survey asked separate questions about the how and why behind choosing and using examples, instructors tended to discuss their purposes and practices together across various responses. Therefore, when I coded the data, I didn't rely on the questions as my only categorization of this data and separated these purposes and practices on my own. Once the data was reorganized into these four categories, I drew connections between instructors' purposes and practices for both choosing and using examples based on units from my data. The codes that emerged from my data during this second phase of coding demonstrate how it is being categorized and understood based on my interpretation.

The patterns I identified in instructors' purposes and practices for *choosing* examples provided insight into my research question regarding how UCF FYC instructors choose which examples to use in their composition courses. For choosing examples, each of the purposes (why they choose examples) instructors discussed in my data directly connected to their practices (how they choose examples) (see Table 1). The patterns I identified in instructors' purposes and practices for *using* examples provided insight into my research question regarding why UCF FYC instructors use examples to teach writing in their composition courses. For using examples, instructors' practices (how they use examples) were supported by the various purposes (why they

use examples) they discussed in my data (see Table 2). All of these categories were developed through patterns related to FYC instructors' choosing and using of examples to teach writing that I identified across my survey responses, fieldnotes, and interview transcripts.

Table 1: Coding Categories and Examples for Choosing Examples

Practices (How)	Purposes (Why)	Examples
Selecting texts written by student writers	Seeing their writing capabilities Reflecting similar writing expectations	“Sometimes I use sample texts, from UCF’s <i>Stylus</i> , for example, to show current students just what former students have achieved in First-Year Composition. I want students to see them as aspirational, that they, too, may be able to write and revise and publish in Stylus.” “. . .when I choose a student model, it's one that performs the same literacy tasks as the full-fledged model but does so in a way that's more accessible to the students.”
Selecting texts written by professional writers	Showing specific writing moves Detailing content and concepts	“Or I might show just a few sentences from a scholarly source, to show a specific move, like how to introduce a source...” “Whereas if I use a model by a published author...a modeling text that also has a theoretical component, then I can get them to cite from the theory aspect of it.”
Texts that offer opportunities for critique	Demonstrating writing isn't perfectible	“Sometimes it's to show a 'good' example, while other times it's to show an example that makes common mistakes that we can critique.”
Selecting texts that explicitly illustrate genres, writing moves, or assignment requirements	Illustrating a genre, move, or assignment that students will write	“The Celestine piece, I thought, was most closely related to the sort of genre I was asking them to write for their first assignment.”
Selecting texts that are written by writers with diverse identities	Representing writers with diverse identities	“Similarly, I want them to see themselves represented not only as students but as individuals within academia, so I work to choose examples from women and people of color as well as those with differing experiences.”

Table 2: Coding Categories and Examples for Using Examples in the Classroom

Practices (How)	Purposes (Why)	Examples
Asking students to read text	Teaching content	“We read them first for content, then for structure, then for a particular technique or idea I’ve chosen to highlight.”
Facilitating discussions of examples	Illustrating a genre or writing process in action	“The one constant in all this is the class discussion--I want to make sure students talk through what’s happening in a model so that they see for themselves how what the genre (and what I’m asking for) plays out in the writer’s moves.”
	Demonstrating assignment expectations	
Analyzing or noting elements of the text	Presenting possibilities of what students can do	“I mostly use model texts to engage in genre analyses with a focus on ‘moves’ of a particular genre and how effectively an author is (or isn’t) employing the expectations of the genre.”
	Practicing reader response	“To try to emulate certain skills I want them working toward (using sources, using their own voice, analyzing, synthesizing, getting sources in a conversation with each other, intros & conclusions, claims, themes, profiles, ideas, etc.)”
	Guiding students’ imitation of similar writing moves	
Critiquing writers’ choices, strengths, and weaknesses		“I use model texts also to practice peer review, so students get used to providing feedback as a reader instead of as a ‘grader’ and so they can see the value in reading other’s work.”
Revisiting an example		“I also use the article initially for their content, then they double as models for their major assignments and of some of the argument skills we practice in class--so they really do three jobs from one reading.”

By coding with gerunds, I captured FYC instructors’ rationales and actions behind their choosing and using of examples to teach writing, allowing me to draw conclusions about the how and why of example-based instruction in composition. To answer my final research question about the pedagogical theories and principles underpinning instructors’ purposes for using examples to

teach writing, I make connections between the practices and purposes for choosing and using examples and the writing pedagogies of the four instructors featured as case studies in my findings. Overall, this process of grounded theory coding reduced my data into specific categories related to instructors' practices and purposes for both choosing and using examples, which I explore individually in detail through numerous examples from my data in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

While my data only encompasses the perspective of sixteen UCF FYC instructors, all of whom teach within the same department, my findings provide descriptions of these instructors' choices and uses of examples for teaching writing, based on their responses to my survey questions and my observations and interviews. My research questions inquire about FYC instructors' purposes and classroom practices for choosing and using examples to teach writing and the pedagogical theories and principles guiding these purposes and practices. By comparing my data across the survey responses, fieldnotes, and interview transcripts, my findings represent the patterns related to FYC instructors' choosing and using of examples to teach writing that emerged during my data analysis. The results from my case studies, consisting of classroom observations and interviews with four instructors, offer insight into how these instructors' writing pedagogies and goals for teaching FYC connect to their purposes and classroom practices for choosing and using examples to teach writing. This chapter explains my findings from investigating FYC instructors' practices and purposes for choosing and using examples to teach writing through the process of grounded theory coding discussed in Chapter Three.

To preface my explanation of the findings, there are a few important details to note about the identities of the sixteen instructors who participated in my survey. Of these sixteen instructors, eleven instructors identify as female and five instructors identify as male. Fourteen of the sixteen instructors identify as White/Caucasian, one instructor identifies as Hispanic/Latino/a and one instructor identifies as African American. Although there is a lack of diversity in the race/ethnicity represented by my participants, my results do include instructors who identify as either male and female and instructors with varying levels of experience teaching FYC. These

instructors range in experience, teaching FYC for as little as one semester to as long as thirteen years, though most instructors have between one and five years of FYC teaching experience. Throughout this chapter, I work to acknowledge these identity markers and their possible connections to my findings throughout this chapter.

While these sixteen instructors differed across identity markers and years of experience teaching composition, they all have one thing in common. In the survey, when asked if they use model texts as examples of writing in ENC1101 and/or ENC1102, all sixteen instructors answered “yes.” The commonality of this practice prompted the need for research into instructors’ purposes and practices when choosing and using examples to teach writing. In the first section, I report these FYC instructors’ purposes and practices for choosing examples through the codes that emerged from my data. In the second section, I detail each of my four case studies on FYC instructors, combining their purposes and practices for using examples to teach writing with data from my survey to argue the how and why of worked examples in FYC classrooms. I discuss each of my four case studies separately to demonstrate how the writing pedagogies and goals described by each FYC instructor in their interview is linked to their purposes and practices for using examples to teach writing. As a reminder, the four instructors in my case studies are given the pseudonyms Juliette, Wes, Stephen, and Nicole to protect the confidentiality of their identities. For the same reason, my survey respondents are also assigned pseudonyms when discussing their responses (Hannah, David, Jim, Rachel, Marissa, Annie, Lily, Blaire, Alex, Rebecca) for the same reason.

Contextualizing Findings within UCF's FYW Program

Before summarizing these findings, it is also essential that I contextualize my study within this specific research site, as its qualities directly impact this research and thereby make these findings connected to this context. To clarify, my results are situated within UCF's FYW program, which encourages particular principles of writing that guide instructors' pedagogies to FYC.¹ Two of the course textbooks that instructors can choose for their course, *Writing about Writing* and *EasyWriter*, are specifically UCF editions, which means they include content related specifically to UCF's two FYC courses and contain several student examples of assignments from these courses that were originally published in *Stylus*, the UCF online journal of first-year student writing. Beginning its first issue in 2010, *Stylus* publishes two issues per year, with each issue containing four to five examples of student writing from ENC 1101 or ENC 1102, such as research articles, literacy narratives, and rhetorical or genre analyses. The availability of student examples from this journal and those published in *Writing about Writing* and *EasyWriter* likely influences instructors' purposes and practices for choosing and using examples.

Instructors' Purposes and Practices for Choosing Examples

Examples Written by Student Writers vs. Professional Writers

When choosing an example, composition instructors may select an example written by a student writer or a professional writer. In my survey responses, thirteen of the sixteen instructors

¹ For more information on the UCF FYW Program's guiding principles for ENC 1101 and ENC 1102, visit <https://writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/first-year-writing/curriculum-and-principles/>.

noted choosing texts written by both students and professionals. The remaining three instructors pick examples written by student writers only. Student-written examples are the more popular choice for examples in these FYC classrooms, a result supported by the texts instructors listed when asked which model texts are most central to their teaching. Instructors listed by name 49 specific example texts written by UCF FYC students and published in *Stylus*, but only 14 specific example texts written by professionals as central to their teaching.² Instructors who did not list specific model texts by name in their response noted that they choose student-written texts from *Stylus* as well as texts written by their previous students. In two of my four classroom observations, instructors paired a text written by a student with a text written by a professional. In the other two classroom observations, the instructors used at least four examples, all texts written by students. All of these findings suggest that UCF FYC instructors more frequently choose examples written by student writers, contradictory to definitions of worked examples in research from other disciplines.

In my survey and interviews, instructors described why they might choose a student text over a professional text for showing students what they are looking for in an assignment. For example, Stephen justifies choosing student-written examples because he sees them as “more reflective of the sort of writing” he expects:

I want to authentically engage them in the work of a literature review, but it would be unfair for me to expect it to look like the literature review of somebody with a doctorate that’s working on a research article—that’s just an unfair standard to hold them to. So I

² Of the 36 texts that instructors listed by name, several of these texts were repeated across different instructors’ lists; therefore, they are counted multiple times within these totals.

feel like when I choose a student model, it's one that performs the same literacy tasks as the full-fledged model but does so in a way that's more accessible to the students.

Stephen sees student-written texts as “less intense” versions of the same literacy tasks composed by professional writers, a view that guides his rationale for choosing only examples written by students. Though Wes sometimes chooses scholarly written texts, he also recognizes that these texts tend to be more “difficult.” For this reason, he is careful to assign just a few texts written by professionals, only assigning a few sections of these readings to avoid “overwhelming” students.

Instructors also choose student-written texts for the purpose of helping students visualize the possibilities their writing can accomplish. David, a survey respondent, selects sample student texts from *Stylus* “to show current students just what former students have achieved in First-Year Composition,” allowing “students to see them as aspirational, that they, too, may be able to write and revise and publish in *Stylus*.” Another survey respondent, Hannah, offers similar reasoning:

I like using student samples, both from *Stylus* and from previous classes (when available), because they really drive home for students that they CAN write in this genre--others have, and they can, too. My 1101 students this semester were extremely impressed when they found out that Lucas Pasqualin was a UCF student when he wrote his literacy narrative--they really identified with him as a fellow student (now alum) and were excited to see that he'd been published in a textbook.

Like Hannah, survey respondent Jim believes “students learn best from their peers” and sees student examples as “a good way for them to get a grasp of the genre they're being asked to produce and see what kind of stuff they're capable of producing in a first-year writing class.”

There were only two occasions in which instructors noted a reason for specifically choosing an example written by a professional writer. First, David chooses texts written by professionals to “show different approaches to the same task.” While his choice of student texts shows students what they can achieve, his choice of professional writers’ texts shows students ways they can write a particular piece, a rationale that differs from other instructors’ choosing student texts that demonstrate a specific genre. Second, instructors choose texts written by professionals because scholarly texts often include course content that students can use for support in their writing. Though she usually chooses student examples to give to students, Juliette explains in her interview that, by choosing a professional writer’s text “that also has a theoretical component, then I can get them to cite from the theory aspect of it.” Hannah seems to agree that this “conceptual information” is usually “met through readings like Grant-Davie for rhetorical situation and Sommers for revision strategies, for example.” These two instructors point out that student-written examples do not provide these connections, while a professional’s text can double as an example and a course reading. Overall, my findings demonstrate that though these instructors expressed distinct reasons for choosing texts written by students and professionals, they more commonly choose student examples.

Texts that Offer Opportunities for Critique

It’s likely that these FYC instructors do not prioritize choosing an “expert’s” solution to the problem because composition scholarship argues that no writer is perfect (Rose 61), so there are always areas to improve in writing. Instructors’ responses in my survey revealed that it is not their intention to show only things a writer has done effectively or a “perfect” model text. As

Juliette clarifies in her survey response, “Sometimes it’s to show a ‘good’ example, while other times it’s to show an example that makes common mistakes that we can critique.” When asking Juliette about her choice of the example text for the class I observed, she revealed that Wan’s text “does all the things I don’t want them to do in a lot of ways.” Choosing an example with both “good” elements as well as areas to critique is reiterated by Hannah, who states, “Though the example may not do everything I’m looking for (or do some things I’m not looking for), it gives me a chance to point out and discuss these issues with students so that they can be aware of them as they begin writing their drafts.” Likewise, Wes recognizes that examples “are not always perfect pieces; however, they were deemed good in many ways or good models for many reasons.” Therefore, like Juliette and Hannah, Wes says, “I always make sure to have my students try to critique those.” Finally, Stephen constantly changes the example he chooses, which “is in part because I don’t use models as perfect example texts--just as a way to show students what a genre looks like in action.” All of these instructors choose examples with strengths and weaknesses for an opportunity to address these details with students in class.

Texts that Explicitly Illustrate Genres, Writing Moves, or Assignment Requirements

When asked in his interview about his process for choosing examples, Stephen notes that “the explicitness with which [his previous students’ texts] fulfill those [literacy] tasks can be helpful” to show his current students. Along with Stephen, instructors commonly connect their choice of example texts to genres or writing moves related to their assignment requirements. For example, instructors who did not list example texts central to their teaching by name mention researched journal articles, annotated bibliographies, and sample literacy narratives as examples

that are central to their teaching. Juliette and Wes discuss similar reasons for choosing each of the student texts that I observed them share with students. Juliette explains that, in her students' drafts of their literacy narratives, she wants them to "tell [her] specific stories like who, what, when, where, why, how" and "practice evidence and arguments" in a way similar to what they see presented in Julie Wan's text, rather than "give broad overviews of time periods," which she sees other literacy narratives do. Wes also chooses student-written examples to show what he expects to see in the genres he assigns students to write in: "The Celestine piece, I thought, was most closely related to the sort of genre I was asking them to write for their first assignment." Additionally, he finds "a lot of the readings I chose for the second unit are just to show possible things they could do and structurally, certainly, what I'm expecting to see." In general, Hannah states, "I choose models that reflect the assignment goals and purposes" and "for their genre moves." She specifies, "I look for examples that demonstrate differing approaches to writing up that section," an approach shared by Juliette:

If I give them a sample research article, I give them one where the Results and Discussion sections are together, one where [they] are separate, one where the discussion has subheadings and one where it doesn't, one that used interviews, one that used textual collection, one that has pictures, one that has tables.

Although she is still choosing examples to demonstrate the moves of a Results and Discussion section within the genre of a research article, she chooses examples with various approaches to these genre moves to exemplify options for writing the assignment. Therefore, instructors may choose examples with differing approaches not only to show students there is no one "right" answer for writing in the genre but also to show them a genre or assignment in action.

Texts Written by Writers with Diverse Identities

Regardless of whether the text is written by a student or professional writer, 18 of the 63 texts that instructors listed as central to their teaching were written by writers who identify as a race or ethnicity other than white. Hannah and Juliette each emphasized that selecting texts written by writers of diverse identities is an important factor when choosing examples. In her survey response, Hannah, who identifies as a female Hispanic/Latina, points out, “I want them to see themselves represented not only as students but as individuals within academia, so I work to choose examples from women and people of color as well as those with differing experiences.” Though I didn’t interview Hannah to confirm her thought process, it is possible that the value she places on including diverse voices in her choice of examples connects to her own experiences in academia as a Hispanic/Latina woman, as she is one of only two survey respondents who identifies as racially/ethnically diverse. In my classroom observation of Juliette, who identifies as White, she not only paired an example text written by a student with an example text written by a professional writer, but she also chose texts written by writers who purposefully describe their diverse backgrounds in these texts. Juliette commented about her rationale behind this choice in a follow-up interview question:

I love that Adichie is from Nigeria, I love that Julie Wan is from China, and then the following week I usually use a short clip of a Mexican anchor from Texas. She talks about her experiences as a Chicana woman in Texas and the different people that judge her based on her language use. So, if I’m going to present diversity, I want it to actually

be diverse. I don't want to only show Hispanic voices or only show black voices—I want there to be as many as I can in there.

Regarding her choice to use the student example by Julie Wan, Juliette explained that in “thinking about linguistic diversity and my multilingual students, she is multilingual, and she does talk a lot about the anxiety and fears that non-native English speakers have.” Given that her class consists of fourteen students from UCF's international program, this writer's language experiences make Wan's text particularly relatable for them. Taken together, these instructors clearly felt the significance of choosing example texts by writers whose experiences and identities may connect with the diversity of students in composition classrooms.

All in all, when these FYC instructors choose example texts, they look for specific features of a text or characteristics of writers' identities in connection with what they want to show their students. For textual features, these instructors typically choose texts that offer opportunities for critique and/or explicitly illustrate particular genres, writing moves, or assignment requirements related to their FYC course. Because FYC instructors recognize that no model text is perfect, they demonstrate this writing studies threshold concept to students by choosing examples with strengths and weaknesses to point out during class discussions. Instructors also commonly connect their choice of example texts to a specific genre or writing move from their assignments, but may choose examples with differing approaches to show students there is no one “right” answer for writing in the genre. Also, the identities of the writers of example texts is a point of consideration for some FYC instructors who value ensuring representation in their classrooms, leading them to choose example texts by writers whose range of experiences and identities may connect with their students. While these instructors also choose

texts written by professionals as examples, typically for purposes of showing writing moves or doubling as course content, my research found that FYC instructors more frequently choose texts written by students. According to their purposes for choosing examples written by students, they believe that these texts are closer to their expectations and assignments and help students to visualize the possibilities their writing can accomplish, while texts written by professionals may be overwhelming for students. Therefore, although prior research on worked examples shows that novices in other disciplines learn best from an expert's problem-solving process, these purposes and practices of FYC instructors for choosing examples imply that they think examples from novice writers are more helpful for the novice writers.

Instructors' Purposes and Practices for Using Examples

All sixteen instructors who participated in my study answered that they use examples in FYC, demonstrating the prevalence of providing and using examples to students to teach writing. Through my analysis of the practices described by composition instructors in their survey responses and noted during my classroom observations, I discovered FYC instructors' specific purposes for using examples with students. The following practices emerged from my data: asking students to read the text, facilitating discussions about the text, analyzing or noting specific elements of the text, and critiquing the writers' choices in the text and its strengths and weaknesses. Whether in the same lesson or in revisiting the same text at different moments of instruction, these FYC instructors' practices for using examples serve various purposes for teaching writing. These purposes include demonstrating assignment expectations, illustrating a

genre or writing process in action, guiding students' imitation of similar writing moves, presenting possibilities of what students can do, practicing reader response, and teaching content. In this section, I discuss each of my four case studies separately to demonstrate how the writing pedagogies and goals described by each FYC instructor in their interview is linked to their purposes and practices for using examples. I also connect these instructors' purposes and practices for using examples with other instructors' survey responses to argue the how and why of worked examples in FYC classrooms. Although FYC instructors have specific purposes and practices for using examples to teach writing, overall, their reason for using examples coincides with other disciplines' use of worked examples from the prior research: to help learners problem-solve (Sweller et al.). However, though their rationale for using examples (their why) is similar to instructors' use of worked examples in other disciplines, their practices for using examples to teach writing as problem-solving (their how) is much different.

Noting Example Elements to Demonstrate Assignment Requirements and Present Possibilities

Wes, a White male faculty member who has been teaching FYC at UCF for a year and a half, taught ENC 1101 during the Spring 2020 semester. His primary field of study is writing process research and mobile communication. He uses example texts written by both students and professionals. Wes explained his teaching philosophy and goals for teaching FYC:

I see myself as both researcher and teacher simultaneously I always see, especially in a college class or writing class, the first-year writing class in particular, using the classroom space as an opportunity for myself and students to try to test things out and research things, things that they're curious related to their writing. I feel like that's kind

of always at the heart of what I'm doing Every unit is set up to interrogate your writing processes. The main goal of [the first assignment] is to get them to think about things that they think they know about their writing and to start thinking more critically like "Why do I do this thing?"

From this explanation and my observations of his classroom, Wes's classroom is a research site for both him and his students to interrogate their writing processes and conceptions. In the class I observed, students were in the process of drafting what he described as a formal reflection on their writing process. Prior to coming to class, students had read Jaydelle Celestine's "Did I Create the Process? Or Did the Process Create Me?," a student text published in *Stylus*, and a scholarly journal article written by Barry Zimmerman on self-regulatory processes. In class, Wes facilitated discussion between small groups and then the entire group as they worked to find evidence of self-regulation processes described in Zimmerman's article within Celestine's reflection. He asked students to identify specific passages in Celestine's piece that reflect Zimmerman's self-regulatory processes as well as passages in which Celestine addresses one of the prompt questions for their upcoming assignment.

Like Wes, other instructors assign the example text to read for homework and then facilitate group discussions, noting elements of an assignment. Survey respondents Rachel and Marissa both have students read examples and then note elements of the text related to their class lesson or assignment. Marissa explains that her students usually work in small groups to find elements of the assignment, "and then we talk about [their] answers" as a class. Instructors regularly move from small groups to a larger class discussion when analyzing examples related to their assignments. Wes also had the groups share with the class the passages they identified

before he explained the requirements for his first assignment. When going over the assignment with students, Wes made several references to Celestine’s piece to guide students in writing their own formal reflections “like Celestine did.” For example, when one group pointed to Celestine’s connection to “literacy sponsors” as a course concept, Wes affirmed this discussion of literacy sponsors as something his students could also include in their reflection. To show students that this reflection piece did not fit a five-paragraph essay structure, Wes pulled up Celestine’s piece and pointed to his structure of multiple sections and paragraphs, stating, “Look to his piece for a general structure to focus your narrative on.” In this lesson, he used Celestine’s example to guide students in organizing and developing their drafts.

As shown by his practices using examples, Wes noted in the survey that he uses example texts to “demonstrate mechanics that might be common to the specific genre of an assignment, as well as more broadly of different kinds of academic writing,” which gives students “tangible examples in order to plan their own writing.” Wes expanded on his rationale for planning this lesson using Celestine’s text as an example:

In class, I was stressing to them that they can use that piece for inspiration, not just for how to organize but also content, things that they could write about. And I had the in-class activity where I said, “Okay, he was writing for a different class—a different 1101 and a different instructor. Nevertheless, how did what he wrote about still kinda address some of the things that I [am] asking [you] to do for that first assignment?”

As Wes describes, he uses examples “to focus on some of those features as a way of getting students to think in connection to what their major assignment is and how they could use some of the lessons or observations from that piece to inspire their own.” Similarly, Marissa also uses

model texts for the purpose of “giv[ing] students examples of what the result of the prompt might look like.” Taken together, Wes, Rachel, and Marissa all use examples to demonstrate assignment expectations and present possibilities of what students can do. To do this, Wes facilitated a discussion to note elements of this student text that his students read in order to model this writer’s example as one approach that students could take in answering his assignment prompt.

Analyzing Examples to Present Possibilities and Critique their Strengths and Weaknesses

Nicole, whose primary field of study is Writing and Rhetoric, is an African-American female who has taught FYC at UCF for the past year and a half. She taught ENC 1102 during the Spring 2020 semester. When asked about her teaching philosophy and goals for teaching FYC, Nicole shared how her passion for and research interest in language diversity shapes her teaching philosophy through four action verbs--*value*, *affirm*, *sustain*, and *transgress*:

So, first of all, I want them to understand their diverse language resources that they are bringing to the classroom. They have lived experiences with language--some people have experienced language marginalization or discrimination, and this has affected how they access literacy and also practice their writing. So, we begin there, like “what kinds of language resources or language experiences have you had before coming to this class?” So . . . we begin with valuing--I tell them, maybe from where you’re coming from you have been told your language is bad or broken, but in this class, I want you to understand your language is valuable. And, then, I want them to affirm that and then through their writing, if possible, . . . I want to sustain those language resources through their writing

so I actually ask them to figure out how to bring those resources into their writing. . . .

For me, the goal is for them to use writing to challenge language ideologies, to transgress . . . to just write differently.

Nicole's value of language diversity not only guides her affirmation of her students' language practices but also inspires their research questions about their language practices and experiences. To encourage inquiry in language diversity, students read texts from the textbook *Language Diversity and Academic Writing*; in my classroom observation, she used texts written by students as examples.

In my observation of Nicole's class, she used examples to "show [students] how past students have used/applied various primary research methods in their papers," as she described in the survey. Before this class, Nicole assigned small groups of students to each read one of the four student example essays, which corresponded to a particular primary research method that students could use in their own research study (ethnography, case studies, genre analysis, and surveys). Sorting students into groups based on the student essay they had read, Nicole assigned these groups to discuss and analyze how that student applied that particular method in their research. In the survey, Marissa also noted using examples "to show a research method result in *Stylus*," as a way of modeling this component of drafting their research article. After the group discussion, students shared their answers to "how the ENC 1101/ENC1102 student applied the selected method in their study, what guiding principles of the primary method are most visible in the student's essay, [and] what they see as the strengths and weaknesses in terms of how the writer used the method in their essay." As a class, they discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the students' uses of each of these four primary research methods.

I identified this practice of using model texts exhibited by Nicole's lesson as *critiquing writers' choices, strengths, and weaknesses*. Though Wes did not use Celestine's example text for this particular purpose in his lesson I observed, he also identified a similar purpose for critiquing a model text, though more in ways closely related to his purpose for demonstrating assignment requirements: "I also like to get the students to examine these models with critical eyes (i.e. they may not reflect the same decisions that the students can make or that are appropriate for our class's rhetorical situation)." Similarly, Lily, a survey respondent, uses example texts in "peer response sessions," or small-group work where students "review and respond to sample student models and ask how well they met the assignment guidelines." In the survey, Rachel also responded that she hopes that examples help students to "be able to analyze the things the author is doing well and could do better," along with Annie, another respondent who noted examples may "be assigned to be read for homework with reading response questions that ask students to identify and respond to the effectiveness of the moves they see being made." Like Annie, Nicole's homework assignment asked students to respond to questions about the strengths and weaknesses of the essay and the researchers' primary research method. For these instructors, critiquing strengths and weaknesses of an example text provides practice for peer review and demonstrates assignment requirements.

In her survey responses, Nicole also describes using examples for the same purpose noted by Wes and other instructors: demonstrating assignment expectations and presenting possibilities of what students can do. Through examples, she wants students to understand "the processes and (products) that will be involved and completed to write the final essay" and "what type and quality of essay [she] expect[s] at the end of the semester." From my survey responses and

observations, instructors most often analyzed examples for this purpose of analyzing the texts for their assignment expectations. However, Nicole also wants students to understand that “there are various topics, writing styles, and research methods they can use to write their papers,” which she demonstrates through student examples from *Stylus*. After asking small groups to share their thoughts about each student essay with the class, Nicole asked each group to consider what methods they might use in their research projects and what things they could borrow from these examples based on how these methods are working to answer other students’ research questions. She used examples for presenting possibilities of what methods students could use in their research projects and for modeling the primary research process that they will engage in during their research project assignment. Nicole accomplished these purposes by facilitating a class discussion to both analyze and critique these writers’ methods in these examples in order to guide imitation of her students’ choices and use of primary research methods in their projects.

Analyzing Examples to Illustrate Genre Moves and Critique their Strengths and Weaknesses

A graduate of the DWR’s Rhetoric and Composition master’s program, Juliette has been teaching FYC at UCF for the past five years. This semester, she taught an ENC 1101 class of international students. Juliette described her teaching philosophy and goals for teaching FYC:

My teaching philosophy with first-year composition is that I have a dual purpose with those courses where part of me is trying to get students to appreciate and value the communication skills and literacy that they already have So thinking of ways we can take their language use and their knowledge and their skills and use those I often tell students it’s to prepare them for future social, professional, and academic situations.

I think the role of an educator is to build on students' prior knowledge no matter what the course is, and then I think it's also always almost like facilitating the course content rather than thinking of myself as a knowledge-haver but thinking about ways I can encourage the students to be knowledge-seekers and encourage them to see ways they can use resources and build on their knowledge in their own ways and then also how to ask for help. . . . It is not like I am a textbook you're reading—this is a discussion, knowledge is social, we're building on each other, things like that.

By tapping into her students' prior knowledge and building on it with the course content to prepare students to write in other contexts, Juliette believes the learning and knowledge in her course is generated through class discussions. This view of students' participation in knowledge-making is evident in Juliette's use of example texts to teach writing.

As she noted in her survey and demonstrated during my classroom observation, Juliette uses texts written by both students and professionals. She assigned a student example text, Julie Wan's "Chinks in my Armor," for students to read and annotate in preparation for their class discussion. Juliette began class by introducing the genre of a literacy narrative, their first major assignment, informing students that Wan's text is an example of a literacy narrative. She then led small-group discussions about Wan's overall point in the text, the examples she used to support her argument, what they liked about the piece, and what they would tell Wan to revise. As she described in the survey, Juliette uses model texts "to practice peer review, so students get used to providing feedback as a reader instead of as a 'grader' and so they can see the value in reading other's work," a purpose she hopes will enable her students "to articulate why and how

something is or isn't working." To do this, Juliette explains, "I often have them comment on the example, as well, to practice feedback," or engage in a class discussion like this one, where students identify "positive feedback" and "revision suggestions" for the writer. Juliette clarified this process in her interview:

I always want to phrase it as revision "suggestions" because the biggest issue students have with giving each other feedback is they always go "well what if there's nothing wrong?" and I'm like "You're not looking for errors--you're not looking for what they're doing *wrong*. You're looking for how it can be better because it can always be better." ... so if I already don't want them to see Julie Wan as the "copy this above anything else" then why wouldn't I use that as an opportunity to practice peer review feedback?

Because Juliette does not want students to copy examples as templates, she has her students critique writers' choices, strengths, and weaknesses through positive feedback and revision suggestions, which mirrors Nicole's focus on texts' strengths and weaknesses. This practice of critiquing the text and offering feedback guides students' rhetorical choices in their own writing.

After their discussion of Julie Wan's piece, Juliette had her students watch a TED Talk, "Danger of a Single Story," by professional writer Chimamanda Adichie, making her the only instructor to use a multimodal example in her lesson. She asked students to take notes on two things while they watched Adichie's talk: her main argument, and every example from her life that she used to support this argument. After watching the TED Talk, Juliette had students discuss their notes as well as the answer to this question: "How is this similar to Julie Wan's narrative?" Following their discussion, Juliette acknowledged that the "content is very different between Wan and Adichie," but then asked, "But what's similar? Besides comparing their

experiences, what kind of things/work were both of them doing? What seems most important for a literacy narrative to do?” By asking these questions, she prompted students to discuss the similarities across both texts as examples of the same genre. Blaire, a survey respondent, also uses examples for analyzing genres, stating, “I mostly use model texts to engage in genre analyses with a focus on ‘moves’ of a particular genre and how effectively an author is (or isn’t) employing the expectations of the genre.” Juliette also focused students’ attention on analyzing the examples for their similar moves, which assisted them in discerning the writing “moves” of a literacy narrative. Similar to Wes and Nicole’s practice of having students note specific elements of the example, Juliette asks students to analyze elements of each text during this discussion. However, while Wes and Nicole asked their students to point to elements of the text that were related to an assignment or primary research method, Juliette and Blaire, along with other instructors in the survey, use examples to practice genre analysis so that students can see the work of a genre from a reader’s perspective.

As the class began to discuss their ideas, Juliette turned to her next slide, “Telling a Story with a Point,” with three specific questions about the components of Adichie’s story. Creating an outline for them on the white board, she asked students to help her identify what Adiche’s introduction includes, the examples used to support her argument, and what her conclusion includes, filling in the outline from students’ responses. In analyzing these elements of Adichie’s text, Juliette illustrates the genre of a literacy narrative in action, using their outline to explain the moves they will make when writing their literacy narrative assignment. Through this outline, she guides students’ imitation of these writing moves. This practice was also evident in Hannah’s use of examples as she “use[s] them to help students see the moves a writer makes in a particular

genre, which can help them learn to make similar moves.” These instructors see examples as tools for borrowing from when writing in a new genre. Differing from Wes and Nicole’s purposes to demonstrate assignment requirements and model the processes of writing and research, Juliette uses examples because she wants her students to understand specific genres moves and practice reader response in preparation for this assignment. Through class discussions, Juliette achieved these purposes by having students compare these two examples through a genre analysis and give feedback on Wan’s text, practices to help them navigate writing their own literacy narratives.

Analyzing and Comparing Examples to Illustrate Genre Moves of an Assignment

Stephen, a White male, has been teaching FYC at UCF for a year and a half as a GTA in the DWR’s Rhetoric and Composition master’s program. He taught ENC 1102 in the Spring 2020 semester. Stephen detailed his teaching philosophy and goals for teaching FYC:

don’t like to treat the class as a skills class or “learn how to write a research paper” class. I want to get them, ideally, how to learn new genres or how to pick up a new discourse or to just recognize when they don’t know the genre or discourse they’re involved in. So, what I try to do when I’m teaching is try to give them opportunities to get them to engage with those different genres and discourses in a way that is authentic. . . . To do that, I focus on “Okay here’s this thing you have to write, but here are the skills you need to accomplish this task that I’ve put in front of you. We’re gonna go through those skills and we’ll talk about whatever it is you need to accomplish and we’ll practice it in class

and you'll try it on your own and then you'll eventually reach that stage of independently accomplishing a literature review or a research paper or whatever it is.”

Stephen immerses students in authentic writing situations and scaffolds them into writing genres and discourses important to their lives. This approach was visible in Stephen's lesson analyzing the genre of a research proposal and breaking down the steps needed to write a proposal for their research projects. At the beginning of class, Stephen told his students that they would “start by looking at a few sample research proposals to see what these things actually look like and where [they] will end up” with their own assignment. Lily also introduces example texts to students “when introducing a written assignment task” in hopes “that they will get a sense of (visually) what I'm expecting to receive from them in response to an assignment.” However, Stephen's practice for using examples is less about assignment expectations and more about genre moves.

Unlike the other instructors in my case studies, Stephen only uses example texts written by student writers and only has students read examples during class. He passed out two different sample research proposals written by his previous students and instructed his students to do a genre analysis in small groups. Like Stephen, Jim shared, “I ask[s] students to do genre analyses of the texts and students discuss the texts and their analyses as a class,” as did Juliette in my observation of her class. Similar to Juliette engaging students in a genre analysis through questions about the similarities between two texts, Stephen facilitated a discussion between his students, saying, “Look at the moves they're making and the features they have--what's the work they're doing? . . . That's how genre analysis works--you need more than one, two minimum, to look at the essence of a research proposal.” As shown by his practice of having students compare two examples in a genre analysis for an upcoming assignment, Stephen's main purpose for using

examples is to ensure that students “see the genre moves that authors make, so that they can see what makes those texts work.” Once students had finished their group discussion, he asked, “What things are happening in these examples? Could you point to where it’s happening?” Based on students’ responses, he organized these moves into a numbered outline on the white board, which is the same practice Juliette used with her students. Upon completing this outline, Stephen informed the class that they will make the moves in their research proposal assignment that they had outlined, thus guiding his students’ imitation of these genre moves in their proposals as Juliette did for her students’ narratives. I asked Stephen to elaborate on his choice to have students compare two examples through genre analysis in groups:

I value the group discussion because they always will talk to each other more earnestly and more openly than they will talk to the class to speak in response to a question of mine. . . . So, it’s like I try to get a bunch of different ways for them to interact with whatever example we are using. They read it, they talk about it, they hear about it from a classmate, they hear about it from me, and I usually preface the activity with a little explanation of what the thing is. That’s me just trying to get at multiple angles.

Stephen sees the students’ interaction with the example through group and class discussions as a beneficial practice that helps them learn what the example is doing. Hannah described a very similar activity and emphasis on this discussion in her classroom:

Previously, I’ve had students spend time in small groups looking for the moves the writer makes, then come together as a class to analyze the genre and discuss those moves. . . .

The one constant in all this is the class discussion--I want to make sure students talk

through what's happening in a model so that they see for themselves how what the genre (and what I'm asking for) plays out in the writer's moves.

Though all four instructors in my case studies led small-group and class discussions when using examples, Hannah and Stephen want their students to be engaged in the work of using an example to discover genre moves through working together to analyze a text. According to Alex, a survey respondent, in his class, examples are also “used to facilitate discussions with students regarding genre conventions of typical assignments [they] work on.” Instructors who noted this value for classroom discussion seem to view this practice as a moment where student learning takes place. Stephen's rationale for using examples in his classroom is highly connected to his understanding of how learning works:

[M]e telling them how it works isn't going to make them learn how it works. They've gotta engage with the material. So, it's really a way of getting them to take whatever it is they're supposed to be writing into their own hands and develop their own understanding of it. Like, when I used the sample research proposals, I didn't say “Here's how these things work. Look at these proposals, see how this works?” I said, “these are two research proposals—you tell *me* how they work,” and they've gotta dig into and make their own understanding . . . I can't just tell you how to do it and you do it because it's not a performative skill like that. It's something you've really got to grasp, in my opinion, and that's the best way to grasp it is to get your hands on it, play with it, and figure it out.

Though Stephen's purpose for using examples is to show students these genres in action, he does not point out things to students to show them how the genre works. Instead, Stephen encourages

his students to discuss and analyze the examples, comparing them to determine their common features so that they can see and recognize, for themselves, how writing works.

Revisiting an example

Finally, instructors revisit the same example texts for many of the purposes described in these case studies. Stephen noted that he revisits the same texts “because introducing another whole example and finding those things again isn’t the point.” Whether at the same time or at different moments of instruction throughout a semester, instructors make use of example texts to achieve more than one purpose. For example, Hannah tries “to make models do double-duty as much as possible--not only do they offer a good genre analysis, but they offer important content.” In this way, Hannah looks for ways to make examples accomplish two purposes at once, while Rebecca’s examples “do three jobs from one reading. . . . [They] read them first for content, then for structure, then for a particular technique or idea [she has] chosen it to highlight.” Highlighting specific skills or aspects of an assignment is also exemplified in Marissa’s practice for using examples to “pull out specific things related to the assignment . . . Then these examples are again pointed to when discussing certain skills or genre conventions.” Instructors circle back to examples at different times in the semester as well. In his course, Wes uses one example text “to demonstrate one approach to writing research, and then [he] continually return[s] to that piece in order to demonstrate mechanics, organization, and even methodological design. This usually occurs over multiple weeks.” For these FYC instructors, one text can serve as an example that is applicable for learning to solve various problems in writing.

Connection to Educational Psychology and Composition Scholarship

Because educational research defines a worked example as an “expert’s” solution to a problem (Atkinson et al. 181-182), scholarship that tests the worked example effect establishes worked examples as useful tools for novices, or learners who are less knowledgeable about the problem, task, or subject at hand (Sweller et al. 99; Sweller 168; Ondrusek et al. 829; Kyun et al. 401; Rourke and Sweller 188). Though this research does not specifically address who created the worked examples used in their experiments, the examples are already “worked” when provided to students, leaving students no role in their development and implying that novices are only capable of learning from an expert’s solution. However, my findings on FYC instructors’ choices and uses of examples contradict this characterization of worked examples and their development. Not only did the FYC instructors in my study typically choose example texts written by students instead of professional writers, or “experts,” but the “working” of the examples resulted from their practices of asking students to read the text, facilitating discussions about the text, analyzing or noting specific elements of the text, critiquing the writers’ choices in the text and its strengths and weaknesses, and revisiting examples. In identifying these five practices that FYC instructors employ to facilitate the “working” of the example, I argue that worked examples in FYC are developed through the knowledge generated through the collaboration and interaction between students and instructors during their discussions.

Carter et al. find the idea that “[s]tudents can learn to write by reading good models” is an “unsupported assumption” of effective composition instruction, as composition research illustrates that “students learn best from models when instruction includes explicit analysis of critical features to be subsequently practiced,” and they are unlikely to discern these features

independently without this instruction (6). In my research, no FYC instructors reported having students read an example with no instruction to accompany it. Instead, reading the text was instructors' first step in familiarizing students with an example, aligning with Carter et al.'s point that reading good models, alone, cannot teach students to write. Stephen clarified in his interview that "what [he's] trying to get [students] to get out of the example is not in the reading of it—reading it briefly—but more in the talking and discussion and thinking" about the example together in class. From the findings I've presented from the survey responses and case studies, I argue that FYC instructors' practices for using examples that go beyond having students read the text—analyzing elements; facilitating discussions; critiquing writers' choices, strengths, and weaknesses; and revisiting for multiple purposes—are those that produce worked examples which students can use to problem-solve in composition classrooms.

Prior educational research on worked examples advocates for the use of multiple examples, arguing the importance of learners' comparing multiple worked examples to guide their schema acquisition (Gick and Holyoak 32; Atkinson et al 191-192; Sweller 167; Sweller and Cooper 87). Gick and Holyoak find that, while a single example is useful, it does not engage learners in a mapping process that leads to schema acquisition (32). However, "two analogs can be mapped together to derive a more general schema" (32), enabling learners to store that schema in long-term memory for future problems. Though most instructors' survey responses did not clarify whether they use single or multiple examples in one occasion, three out of four of the instructors I observed used at least two examples. In my survey, instructors also discussed the use of multiple examples. For example, Hannah noted that her facilitation of group discussions around example texts "allows [her] to use 2-6 different articles at the same time, as each group

looks at different articles, then gives the class a synopsis and explains the moves they found.” From my results, it appears that composition instructors also see the value in the opportunity to examine multiple examples with their students. Through a comparison of multiple examples, Juliette and Stephen engaged their students in genre analysis, while Nicole and Juliette asked students to critique the different strengths and weaknesses of the texts. Within both of these practices, employing multiple examples demonstrates to students their possible choices as writers, the effects of those choices on a reader, and the idea that there is no one “correct” solution to the ill-structured problem of writing. David echoes this point in the survey, stating, “By examining various models, I hope that students will come to understand that good writing is about making choices, and different choices result in different consequences for readers.” When instructors use multiple examples, they enable students to analyze genres and writing skills while offering options to guide them as they borrow from and imitate examples for their own writing.

Through my analysis, I found that FYC instructors’ most common practice was using examples for genre analysis. Scholarship on writing in new genres or genre-based pedagogies mention use of models or sample texts for helping writers to observe and analyze features and moves within a genre (Dean; Derewianka; Dethier; Hardy et al.), but this scholarship has yet to specifically discuss composition instructors’ practices when using example texts. Brock Dethier believes that, when solving a writing problem, following a model guides writers in generating a new response in that particular genre. He suggests analyzing a genre, or investigating its conventions, as the first step in finding the right moves. Several of the FYC instructors in my study use examples to highlight conventions and moves common to the genres in students’ writing assignments. Dethier recommends that writers “read as many examples of the genre

[they]’re aiming for as possible, with an eye on what matters in that genre” (4). This recommendation is reflected in FYC instructors’ use of more than one example to assist students recognizing genre moves. Both Juliette and Stephen asked their students to identify similar moves across examples, discerning which moves are inherent to any literacy narrative and research proposal.

While the samples they each provided were from the same genre, their content and rhetorical features differed. In their review of educational research on the instructional design for using multiple worked examples, Atkinson et al. note the importance of varying surface features to emphasize structure (191). Comparing two examples that are not exactly the same, but are alike in genre, allows instructors to focus students’ attention on the similar genre moves happening in both texts. This focus on the texts’ similar features reflects practices of theorists who view genre as text: not only do they use models to “guide students through the formal features for learning the new genre before imitating it as a group and then independently” but “[t]hey also point students to rhetorical choices made in the genre to investigate their effectiveness for the audience and situation” (Dean 24-26). Similarly, FYC instructors help students analyze elements of the example related to its genre and critique the writers’ choices, strengths, and weaknesses as readers. These practices connect to Beverly Derewianka’s steps for familiarizing students with genres they will write in, using sample texts to analyze and model the main rhetorical and language features of a genre for the purpose of critiquing a genre (146-149). These practices of analyzing and critiquing a genre for the purpose of imitation reflect FYC instructors’ use of examples to teach students the genres that they will practice in their assignments.

Though FYC instructors' use of examples serves the purpose of encouraging students' imitation of the genres, moves, or writing skills shown by the example, classroom practices did not explicitly guide students in their writing. Rather, they spoke only to the assignment they would soon complete. D'Angelo's approach for using models to help students with creative imitation and discovery of their own writing style includes preliminary reading of the model, careful analysis of the model, and interpretation of the model, followed by close, then loose, imitation of the model (284). Like D'Angelo's suggestion for imitation of the model following analysis, Atkinson et al. note the importance of pairing worked examples with problems during practice (191). Though FYC instructors outlined elements of the text from students' analysis of examples, students' actual imitation of the model was meant to occur as they were drafting their assignments, not directly following this instruction. Considering D'Angelo's research on imitation, it is possible that transfer may be fostered by following an example with a task that explicitly guides students in practicing that writing move or genre, but this possibility remains unknown without composition research on effects of examples on student learning.

Altogether, FYC instructors' most common purposes for using examples include demonstrating assignment expectations, illustrating a genre or writing process in action, presenting possibilities of what students can do, and practicing reader response. They accomplish these purposes through their practices of comparing and critiquing multiple examples, analyzing their specific elements, and facilitating discussions of these texts. In this way, they engage students in assisting with the development of worked examples, a practice unlike that seen in other disciplines, where the instructors and examples are viewed as "expert" and students are viewed as novices who cannot contribute to the process of working the example. This idea of

involving students in working examples is seen in Hsu and Roth's investigation of the interactions between high school students and the lab technicians assisting them in learning biology. They found that scientific technicians were not a storehouse of knowledge used to scaffold the high school students' understanding. Instead, the transactions between technicians and students produced the knowledge and learning needed to understand the work, a notion they defined as "emergent expertise," or "knowledgeability that is not a property of individuals but the educational emergence produced and reproduced during the dual transaction process between participants and mediated by different resources including language (verbal and nonverbal) and tools" (8-9). In emergent expertise, the expertise is "the product of collective transactions" (9), which considers both teachers and students as experts, thus facilitating students' agency in their learning "as students now are not just deemed as receivers but as crucial contributors who could make their learning (and teaching) more efficient and successful" (22). Overall, rather than simply providing students with worked examples, FYC instructors engage students in the process of "working" examples for these purposes, as their practices guide students' learning to problem-solve for upcoming assignments and future writing tasks.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This study illustrates the multiplicity of purposes and practices that UCF FYC instructors have for choosing and using examples to teach writing and how they strive to make examples beneficial for students' learning. This research also reveals similarities and connections between these instructors' practices for using examples and theories of learning and research in educational psychology on worked examples. These findings help our field to identify what worked examples can look like and understand how they can work in composition classrooms to help students "solve" the ill-structured problem of writing.

This research provides insight into FYC instructors' practice of choosing texts written by students over those written by professionals and explains their purposes for choosing student work, based on what they want to show their students. Though much of my research on these instructors' use of examples aligns with the research on worked examples from educational psychologists, the more frequent use of student examples contradicts Atkinson et al.'s definition of worked examples as experts' solutions. My findings suggest that composition instructors prioritize choosing student examples in FYC because they see these texts as closer representations of their expectations and assignments and opportunities to demonstrate the possibilities that their students' writing can accomplish. The rationales that FYC instructors offer for choosing student examples demonstrate the value that they place on choosing examples that give students realistic expectations and encourage their writing aspirations.

This study also details FYC instructors' various purposes for using examples and the common practices that enable them to achieve those purposes, establishing an initial understanding for how and why examples work in composition classrooms. While prior

scholarship across various disciplines on worked examples argues their effectiveness for students' learning, students in these studies did not work the examples themselves (Sweller and Cooper 76-77; Rourke and Sweller 197-198; Kyun et al. 401; Ondrusek et al. 835-838. The guidance and instruction accompanying the worked example is provided solely by the instructor, or expert, and includes no input from the students. However, this is not true of worked examples in the FYC classrooms I observed, as these instructors facilitate discussions between students, guiding them in analyzing specific elements, often by comparing and critiquing multiple examples, to engage them in the process of working the example for their own problem-solving. My analysis of FYC instructors' practices for using examples within my case studies, in conjunction with instructors' explanations of their purposes through their survey responses, depict how worked examples are currently being used to help composition students problem-solve for upcoming assignments and future writing tasks. From this research, we might continue this conversation around example-based instruction in composition classrooms, as these findings establish a foundation for developing instructional practices grounded in both composition studies and educational theories.

Limitations

Before discussing the implications and contributions of this research, it is important to address several limitations of the scope of my project and the data I was able to collect. To start, this research set out to focus only on instructors in one university's writing and rhetoric department (the UCF DWR). Though this decision was necessary due to my access to this research site, the department responsible for teaching composition at every university has

particular writing pedagogies they promote. Without further research to compare my findings with the practices of instructors from other departments and universities, my findings cannot be generalized into claims about all composition instructors' use of examples. While I do draw conclusions about FYC instructors' purposes and practices for choosing and using examples from my findings, I recognize that these claims are only representative of instructors within this department.

Additionally, though I sent my recruitment email to faculty members with reminders about my survey on three separate occasions, I received only sixteen out of over seventy potential responses. This limited participation in my survey resulted in data representing less than 25% of instructors from our department, which was a smaller sample size than I had hoped for. Though the patterns that emerged from my data were prevalent across most of the instructors who participated, my findings still only represent a small group of UCF FYC instructors' choices and uses of examples.

Due to time constraints, I did case studies on only four composition instructors and observed and interviewed these instructors just once. If time and scope permitted, I would have liked to conduct this study over the course of a semester, allowing me the time to observe and interview more instructors from our department and complete more observations and interviews with the four instructors I studied. With more time for a larger scope, I could have extended this study to include instructors across institutions in order to broaden my findings to accommodate for that limitation. Additionally, time did not permit me the opportunity to conduct a participant-check following my data analysis to ensure that my interpretation of their meaning was accurate, making this a possible limitation of my study.

Finally, while not collecting data on the effect of examples on student learning could be viewed as a limitation of my study, it also encourages potential future research questions beyond my thesis project on worked examples in composition instruction beyond my thesis project that my research findings will hopefully inform. These limitations provide opportunities for future research that could build on my findings, which I address below.

Implications for Further Research

As stated in the introduction to my methodology in Chapter Three, research in other disciplines has conducted experiments to test the effectiveness of worked examples, known as the worked example effect, on students' problem-solving (Sweller and Cooper 76-77; Rourke and Sweller 197-198; Kyun et al. 401; Ondrusek et al. 835-838). While the scope of my study only had time and access to gather research on instructors' purposes and practices in example-based instruction, my hope for this project is that it serves as the first in a continued line of inquiry into this subject, eventually testing the worked example effect in composition studies. I say this because my research revealed that I am not the only FYC instructor who is interested in developing a better understanding of how their practices for using examples can support student learning. For example, in the survey, Hannah responded that she is always changing her practices "in hopes of helping students get more out of models," as she is "still trying to find better ways of using model texts to help students learn to write in a given genre." She also mentioned that she has yet to find research from our field or resources that provide insight into effectively using examples to teach composition, which she finds "disappointing," as she says "there's so much more [she] could do with these models to make students' engagement with them more effective

and interesting.” Hannah’s response demonstrates that other instructors share the wonderments that inspired this research, warranting more research on example-based research in composition studies. Similarly, though Stephen imagines that examples play a role in his students’ ability to write successfully in the genres he assigns, his interview response expands on this challenge of striving to use examples effectively, adding:

I don’t know if it works? I can’t really quantify—when they turn something in and I’m like ‘this looks great!’ but I’m also like “Where did you learn how to do it? Was it because you knew how to do it before? Did you go to the writing center? Was it the examples? The lessons? Was this just an easy thing for you to grasp because of prior experiences you’ve had?” So I really don’t know what works and what doesn’t . . .

Though the worked example effect was not part of the scope of this study, Hannah’s and Stephen’s questions about the effectiveness of their practices for using examples and what benefits they offer for student learning are important for instructors to ask. Using my findings, further research might investigate example-based learning in composition classrooms by developing studies to test the effect of using examples on students’ writing processes. This future research on the worked example effect might consider applying analogical transfer to composition. Researchers could test whether FYC instructors’ practices for engaging students in comparing multiple examples of a genre would aid students’ abstraction of genre moves that can be transferred to writing in that genre on their own.

Additionally, the scope of my study, which focused on instructors’ purposes and practices, did not allow for gathering data on students’ perceptions of FYC instructors’ choices and uses of examples or students’ purposes and practices for using examples when writing. For

example, in response to my questions about the benefits that examples offer to students, instructors discussed using examples to build students' confidence, make them more comfortable when writing for an unfamiliar situation, and inspire their goals for publication. In the survey, Rebecca noted this potential value of examples for students: "A lot of providing examples helps with feelings. They worry they will do something wrong, so the example is a tiny bit of hand-holding." Rebecca's mention of this use of examples implies that students have anxieties around meeting expectations or doing something "right" and that example-based instruction potentially mitigates those nerves. It is possible that these are benefits of example-based instruction in composition; however, without research that interviews students and observes their use of examples in learning to write, it is uncertain whether or not students experience or acknowledge these benefits. Therefore, further research on FYC students' purposes and practices for using examples, and the ways in which they feel examples engage or benefit their learning, would provide interesting data to compare with these findings about instructors.

Lastly, in their interviews, instructors described one more challenge: students' tendency to see examples as perfect models or templates that they are meant to copy. For example, Wes acknowledged encountering this difficulty with his students, stating:

Students will think, "If I write something just like this, it's going to get me an A." . . .

There was one student I had back at my previous university, and I stressed that, "These are good models demonstrating possible choices you could take over writing something exactly like these and the structure will not guarantee you an A." I had a student ask, "Well, then why are we even reading them?"

This question exhibits this student's fundamental misunderstanding of the purposes for looking at examples. From my findings, FYC instructors choose and use examples not to present a perfect model text but to present the possible approaches and genre moves of a given writing task. This misunderstanding can make it difficult to ensure students see and use examples in the ways instructors intend. Juliette also commented on this challenge for her students:

I have a really hard time where, if I give students a sample paper from my own course, for example, they always want to know what grade it is. They always want to know why I'm giving it to them if we're talking about the problems in it--they always ask if they can just see an "A" instead. They don't understand that they shouldn't be looking for the answer to the prompt, they should be looking at the moves the author is making.

Examples are meant to help students problem-solve writing tasks. However, FYC instructors do not want students to copy examples as the only right "answer" to the prompt or assignment. Rather, their purpose for using examples is to show student writers the possibilities available to them. While my data did not speak to the ways in which we can overcome this challenge beyond what instructors are already doing, future research may address practices for clarifying these purposes of using examples to students in order to overcome this challenge. Altogether, this study sparks interest in other research questions on teaching writing using worked examples and the worked example effect that can be addressed through additional composition research.

Contributions to the Field

The findings of this research respond to calls for research in both the fields of educational psychology and composition studies. Researchers from educational psychology and other

disciplines with ill-structured problems argue for the effectiveness of worked examples when learning to solve ill-structured problems and call for more research on worked examples in ill-structured domains. Although this research was not able to test the effect of worked examples in composition instruction, it does demonstrate how characteristics of worked examples from educational research are present in these FYC instructors' practices and purposes for using examples to teach writing. Borrowing from educational psychology, this study applies educational theories of learning to our discipline, arguing the potential usefulness of worked examples for student writers' problem-solving and for further composition research on worked examples.

This study also contributes to the field of composition studies in two ways. First, it offers a response to the call for additional research on effective practices for teaching FYC. Though unable to provide evidence for the effectiveness of using examples as an instructional practice, this study describes the current choices and uses of examples by FYC instructors in one university department, beginning this line of scholarly inquiry in our field. Second, as the first study on the choice and use of examples as an instructional practice for teaching composition, it gives insight into how and why we might choose and use examples for teaching writing. This research can encourage composition instructors who already use examples in their instruction to be purposeful in their practices when choosing and using examples. Also, because my findings share some FYC instructors' practices for using examples, other composition instructors with similar writing pedagogies or course goals may consider borrowing their approaches.

Overall, worked examples in FYC classrooms are not just sample problems solved by experts. In composition classrooms, the process of "working" an example and acquiring the

necessary knowledge for problem-solving emerges from interactions between students and instructors through analysis and discussion of the example. In this way, these practices for using examples allow FYC instructors to position students as active participants in their own learning process as well as novice experts by asking them, as Stephen does, “You tell *me* how they work.”

**APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT EMAIL TO UCF DEPARTMENT OF
WRITING & RHETORIC FACULTY WITH SURVEY**

Good morning DWR Faculty,

My name is Rena Perez, and I am a third-year master's candidate in Writing & Rhetoric and a GTA teaching ENC1101 this semester. My thesis focuses on researching how and why instructors incorporate examples, or models/sample texts, in first-year composition to teach writing.

If you have previously taught or currently teach first-year composition (ENC1101 and/or ENC1102) and are interested and willing to participate in my IRB-approved study, the first step is to complete a brief online survey before Wednesday December 4th, 2019 that should take no more than 10-15 minutes of your time. It consists of 15 questions about your use of model texts as examples in ENC1101 or ENC 1102. Here is the link to the initial survey:
<https://forms.gle/DjdbnU2eAmSjKpyV8>

Four participants will be chosen as case studies for my research from those who respond to my survey before the deadline. These case studies will include one observation of an ENC1101 or ENC 1102 class in which you are using models/sample texts to teach writing and an approximately 30-minute interview with you to gather more information about your rationale and instructional strategies for using these examples. Therefore, in terms of time commitment, being one of these four case studies should not take more than 2 hours of your time, including the survey time.

Overall, the purpose of my study is to discover the pedagogies and strategies around teaching from models/sample texts. My hope is for my research to bridge a connection between our field's current instructional principles for using models or sample texts in FYC and theories of learning and transfer grounded in the field of educational psychology.

I know this is a busy time in the semester, and I appreciate you taking the time to read this message and consider being a participant in my study.

If you have any questions about the study or the survey, please let me know, and I would be happy to answer them!

Thank you again for your consideration,
Rena Perez

APPENDIX B: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Using Model/Sample Texts as Examples in First-Year College Composition

1. Name & Email*: (open-ended response)
2. Do you use model texts as examples of writing in ENC1101 and/or ENC1102?* (yes/no)
3. If you use model texts as examples, do you use texts written by students, professional writers, or both?* (multiple choice—student writers, professional writers, both student and professional writers)
4. If you use model texts as examples, what specific model texts are most central to your teaching?* (open-ended response)
5. If you use model texts as examples, why do you use them?* (open-ended response)
6. If you use model texts as examples, what do you hope students will gain from encountering model texts in first-year composition?* (open-ended response)
7. If you use model texts as examples, how do you use them?* (open-ended response)
8. Tell me what differences you see, if any, in your use of model texts between ENC1101 and ENC1102. (open-ended response)
9. Which first-year composition course, if any, are you teaching in Spring 2020?* (multiple choice—ENC1101, ENC1102, Both ENC1101 and ENC1102, None of the above)
10. Do you have a face to face class within the first 4 weeks of Spring 2020 in which you are using model texts that you are willing to let me observe?* (yes/no)
11. Would you be willing to be interviewed for about 30 minutes about your use of model texts to teach writing?* (yes/no)
12. Gender identity: (open-ended response)
13. What best describes your race/ethnicity? (multiple choice--African American, Native American, Alaska Native, White/Caucasian, Pacific Islander, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a, Other)
14. What is your primary field of study?* (open-ended response)
15. How long have you been teaching first-year composition at UCF?* (open-ended response)

*Required questions

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

This follow-up interview will prompt each instructor to elaborate on their responses to the survey questions and discuss what I observed during their classroom instruction so that I can gather more data about their rationale for using model/sample texts as examples. The following questions will be asked based on their responses to the corresponding initial survey questions.

- Tell me about your overall teaching philosophy.
- What are your goals for teaching ENC1101 or ENC1102 and why?
- In general, what is your rationale for using model/sample texts to teach writing?
- You noted on the survey that you use model/sample texts written by ____ (students, professional writers, or a mix of both). Tell me about your rationale for choosing texts.
- Where in the sequence of instruction do each of these model/sample texts fit as examples? Why?
- Why did you choose each of the model/sample texts you've listed as central to your teaching of ENC1101 or ENC1102?
- Do students ever select examples used in your class for model texts? If so, tell me how that works and why you have them do choose examples.
- Explain to me how you go about using these model/sample texts during class to teach students about different aspects of writing. In what ways do students engage with model/sample texts as examples?
- What are some benefits for students of using a model/sample text as examples?
- What are some challenges you've observed students encounter when using model/sample texts?

Other follow-up questions may be formed after the classroom observation about the instructors' specific strategies around using model/sample texts based on observations I've made of their teaching.

**APPENDIX D: IRB LETTER OF APPROVAL OF EXEMPT HUMAN
RESEARCH**



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board
FWA00000351
IRB00001138
Office of Research
12201 Research Parkway
Orlando, FL 32826-3246

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

November 12, 2019

Dear Rena Perez:

On 11/12/2019, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Study, Category
Title:	Connecting Theories of Learning and Transfer to the Use of Model/Sample Texts as Examples for Teaching Writing in First-Year College Composition
Investigator:	Rena Perez
IRB ID:	STUDY00001089
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

Gillian Bernal
Designated Reviewer

APPENDIX E: EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH PROVIDED TO PARTICIPANTS



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL FLORIDA

EXPLANATION OF RESEARCH

Title of Project: Connecting Theories of Learning and Transfer to the Use of Model/Sample Texts as Examples for Teaching Writing in First-Year College Composition (FYC)

Principal Investigator: Rena Perez, Graduate Student

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. R. Mark Hall, Professor, Department of Writing & Rhetoric (DWR)

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Whether you take part is up to you.

The purpose of this research is to describe and analyze first-year composition instructors' current pedagogies and practices for selecting and using model/sample texts as examples for teaching writing.

Procedures of the Research:

- UCF Department of Writing and Rhetoric faculty who have previously taught or currently teach ENC1101 and/or ENC1102 will complete an online survey about their use of model/sample texts.
- If chosen to be one of the four case studies from the survey, you will also be observed at least once during an ENC1101 or ENC1102 class session in which you are teaching using model/sample text(s) as examples and be interviewed for 30-minutes about your pedagogical approach for teaching writing using model/sample texts as examples.

Location: UCF classrooms (observations) and faculty offices or TCH Room 157 or 158 (interviews)

Time required: 10-15 minutes total time for survey; 2 hours total time if chosen for case study with classroom observation and 30-minute follow up interview

Audio Recording: You will be audio recorded during this study if interviewed. If you do not want to be recorded, you will not be able to be in the study. Discuss this with the researcher. Interview recordings will be kept on my password-protected computer. The recording will be erased after the completion of my thesis and graduation (anticipated May 2020). Audio recordings will also be transcribed as data but I will use pseudonyms for all participants.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in this study at any time without prejudice or penalty. Your decision to participate or not participate in this study will in no way affect your relationship with UCF, including continued enrollment, grades, employment or your relationship with the individuals who may have an interest in this study. You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, please contact *Rena Perez, Graduate Student, Rhetoric and Composition Program, College of Arts and Humanities*, Rena.Perez@ucf.edu, (407) 823-1287 or *Dr. R. Mark Hall, Faculty Supervisor, Department of Writing and Rhetoric* at (407) 823-0504, RMarkHall@ucf.edu.

IRB contact about your rights in this study or to report a complaint: If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or have concerns about the conduct of this study, please contact Institutional Review Board (IRB), University of Central Florida, Office of Research, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901, or email irb@ucf.edu.

This study does not require written documentation of consent, but if you agree to participate, please keep a copy of this Explanation of Research for your records.

Revised 11/11/2019

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