CHAPTER 7

NEGOTIATING EXPECTATIONS: OVERCOMING OBSTACLES INTRODUCING WAC THROUGH COLLABORATION BETWEEN A GERMAN UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER AND GERMAN HIGH SCHOOLS

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The curricula of most German high schools still lack what writing research and writing pedagogy have been postulating for years: teaching and applying writing as a process and as a tool for critical, creative and reflective thinking and learning across subject borders. Instead, writing is widely taught and learned as linear process and applied as an instrument for testing knowledge. The writing process itself is left in a black box, as well as differences between product-oriented and process-oriented approaches to writing. The product-oriented approach is still prevailing in teaching and learning writing (Bräuer 20). In fact, writing activities, apart from the Aufsatzunterricht (essay lessons), mainly focus on transcribing text from a course book, a blackboard or from other text material (Merz-Grötsch 131). Only little or no room is provided for alternative approaches, revision practices, or constructive feedback.[1]

However, some initiatives exist that focus on enriching students' writing experiences by fostering writing as a tool for learning in and across the disciplines. Projects range from writing across the curriculum (WAC) workshops given by academic staff (Micheel and Vogel), to tutoring sessions in writing by university students (Rapp; Schiller), and peer tutoring sessions by high school students for their classmates (Pydde, Tschirpke, and Herkner) —mostly introduced to schools by external writing specialists. From our own experiences and from the experiences of colleagues, we know that such projects struggle mostly with changing the culture of writing on a long-term basis.

In this article, we use the opportunity to look at data we collected through-

out our project, *Peer Tutoring and Writing Workshops by High School Students for High School Students*, that focused on establishing student-run high school writing centers as a physical space for WAC activities and peer tutoring in writing. We, as university writing center peer tutors, were appointed to put the project into practice. Because it was not possible to establish sustainable structures, we focused this study on finding reasons for these shortcomings. We assume that the expectations of all participating project partners played an important role in the development and outcome of the program. Our research question for this article, therefore, is as follows: What expectations can arise in a collaboration between high schools and universities, and how did these expectations, if differing, develop? We will analyze our data according to Philipp Mayring's qualitative content analysis using teacher interviews and university tutors' field notes to filter teachers' and university tutors' expectations. We will then present and discuss our findings and give recommendations for similar future projects.

PROJECT "PEER TUTORING AND WRITING WORKSHOPS BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS"

The idea of bringing writing center practices to high schools grew strong in 2008, when the director of our writing center at the European University Viadrina (EUV), Katrin Girgensohn, wrote a concept for a project that would aim at establishing writing centers at German high schools. As a large part of the belief in successful learning stems from the concept of collaborative learning, it was understood that peer tutoring—as a learning and teaching method—would have to be at the heart of this project. Another reason to choose peer tutoring as our primary working method was that peer tutors are closer to students in terms of age and status. Peer tutors are able to relate to personal experiences, and thus can approach and reach writers differently than teachers (Harris 27). Having only a few years difference between us as peer tutors, as well as being students, we saw ourselves as possible peer tutors to juniors and seniors of the respective high schools.

After the Robert Bosch Stiftung,[2] an institution that grants funding for educational projects, approved the proposal, we started assembling a project team and actively searched for schools to partner with. Three university peer tutors formed the university team and selected schools that either approached us, knew the director of our writing center, or were one of the members of our project team.

In order to find suitable students to educate into peer tutors, we promoted our project among teacher assemblies and went into classrooms to pres-

ent our program to students. We asked applicants to write a letter of interest and discussed students' participation with their teachers. We then chose three to eight juniors or seniors from each school that showed social competence, commitment, and reliability. These students took part in a three-day training at our university and the writing center. This training took place once every year when a new project cycle with new juniors and seniors began.

In the three-day course, the university team imparted basic knowledge about writing processes, writing strategies, and academic working techniques, which the students practiced and reflected upon.[3] Principles of peer tutoring were elaborated upon and practiced in mock tutorials. A workshop for exploring ideas on how to implement the newly learned peer tutoring processes, strategies, and techniques at the respective schools was one of the most important units at training.

With these objectives, the implicit aims of the project were the following:

- Promote student autonomy;
- Promote collective acquisition of learning content on student level;
- Promote thinking and writing across disciplines;
- Build writing competencies as key competence for educational processes through targeting and linking students' creative likings and individual interests, maximizing the potential of writing as an educational medium at school;[4]
- Transfer research findings (didactics of writing) from university to high school; and
- Familiarize teachers with writing-specific, didactical findings to ensure the establishment of sustainable structures at the respective schools.

After the initial training, two members of the university team met frequently with the student peer tutors at their schools to set up workshops and one-on-one tutoring sessions. During the frequent meetings, we trained and developed the students' peer tutoring skills continuously, and made sure they were able to implement what they had learned. The third member of the university team was responsible for coordinating the project. Due to other commitments and university tutors finishing their degrees, studying abroad, etc., the composition of our team changed multiple times. Only the coordinator stayed with the project for all three years.

Although our team dynamics changed many times, we consistently worked on keeping a strong rapport with our student peer tutors. Our meetings were almost always informal and we held them at our own apartments more than once. We also tried to have many activities that didn't include work, but rather focused on personal writing. We wanted the peer tutors to enjoy writing,

and therefore, we went on explorative walks through Berlin, and asked them to document their impressions and write in any form they wanted to. These activities were the basis for making collages and other posters that were hung in their writing center in order to keep them motivated and to attract other students.

Unfortunately, we weren't able to devote the same time and energy to working with the teachers from the respective schools. One of our main concerns in working with the teachers and the board of schools was building a steering committee. We thought that a steering committee, consisting of teachers, parents and us as tutors, would ensure the project's sustainability. We knew that teachers were often at capacity, and we hoped that parents could become engaged and take active roles. Unfortunately, due to limited teacher involvement, we weren't able to form such a committee at any of the three schools.

After three years the project had the following results:

- Twenty-one high school students were trained and became peer tutors;
- High school peer tutors offered individual writing consultations;
- Thirty individual writing consultations were held;
- High school peer tutors gave multiple workshops;
- Social competence of high school peer tutors was nurtured through inter-year collaboration with peers;
- Writing competence of high school peer tutors, as well as some peers, was further developed;
- Writing centers and ongoing peer tutoring could not be established;
- One school wanted to continue peer tutoring by training a teacher that functions as trainer for future student peer tutors; and
- Teacher commitment was insufficient for establishing sustainable structures at their respective schools.

ANALYSIS OF DATA MATERIAL

Throughout the entire project, the university team compiled notes, reports, and other qualitative material. This material provided crucial information about varying aspects of the work of the project team. In order to filter the multiple expectations participants had, we performed a qualitative content analysis,[5] according to Philipp Mayring,[6] which will be summarized briefly.

Qualitative content analysis integrates elements of hermeneutics and, in general, aims at analyzing text material of every possible origin (Gläser; Flick). There are three types of qualitative content analysis: summary, explication, and structuring (Mayring *Grundlagen und Techniken*). For this study, the summary

technique is most important. The large amount of material is gradually reduced, and through methods of abstraction, the central content is extracted.

The qualitative content analysis is a very detailed method of analysis, and is strictly controlled methodologically (Mayring, Grundlagen und Techniken; Mayring, Forum). First, the text is put into the context of its communicational situation. Factors, such as who the author of the text is and the situation in which the piece has been written, play a crucial role (Mayring, Forum). Then, the material is segmented into small units and analyzed step-by-step (Flick; Mayring, Grundlagen und Techniken). The categories for the analysis are developed directly from the material (inductive categorization), but the whole analysis process is theoretically controlled. Categories, once developed, are revised constantly during the analytical process (Flick; Mayring, Forum; Grundlagen und Techniken 86). The following chart illustrates the procedure of a summarizing qualitative content analysis (Flick 201f), which was performed in this research:

Table 1: Procedure of a summarizing qualitative content analysis (cf. Flick)

1	Choice of material
2	Analysis of situation of the origin of material
3	Formal characteristics of material
4	Direction of analysis
5	Theoretical differentiation of research question
6	Definition of techniques for analysis and decision on specific model of analysis
7	Definition of analysis units
8	Paraphrasing text parts that contain important content
9	Definition of aspired level of abstraction, generalization of paraphrases under this level
0	First reduction: selection. Elimination of paraphrases with the same meaning
1	Second reduction: grouping. Integration of paraphrases according to aspired level of abstraction
2	Compilation of new statements as a system of categories
3	Revisal of the summarizing system of categories with regard to original material
4	Interpretation of results according to research question
5	Performance of quality criteria concerning content analysis

In order to make our research both transparent and comprehensible, we will shortly summarize the individual steps we took when performing Mayring's qualitative content analysis.

The project was assessed by Gerd Bräuer, the external evaluator who

supported us in terms of choosing training methods for students, collaborating with teachers, and communicating with the Bosch foundation. One particular piece of advice he gave us was to write field notes in order to capture our work and to reflect on it on a continual basis. Accordingly, an extensive amount of protocols accumulated over the three years of the project. Additionally, one member of our team interviewed teachers who were involved in the project shortly after it ended.

In order to answer the main question of this article concerning the expectations of the different participants in the project, we decided to focus on the following material for the perspective target group:

Table 2: Material chosen for qualitative content analysis

Expectations of university team	Field notes from various team members
Expectations of teachers	Interview transcripts

Only members of the university team wrote field notes. Each member took notes individually whenever it seemed necessary or helpful. The following questions structured these notes:

- Documentation of events: What happened? What were the results?
- Analysis of events: Which circumstances led to a positive or negative outcome?
- Evaluation: What surprised you?
- What are the consequences for your future actions?

We circulated our notes with each other at regular intervals, which ensured an exchange of perceptions. As the content of the field notes indicate, this material is oftentimes very personal and subjective. We selected parts of every member's field notes in order to display the perception of the whole team. Protocols that only described the ongoing work, but didn't fit the research question, were not considered for analysis.

The teacher interviews used in this analysis were part of a master thesis that studied teachers' perceptions about the project. Each of the teachers interviewed played a crucial role within the project. It was expected that their responses contained personal evaluations of the project, because each of them answered the questions from memory. The interview questions allowed the teachers to narrate their perceptions, which some did more extensively than others. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed. To ensure an equal presentation of each school and a variety of expectations, we chose one teacher interview per school.

When reaching the last step of Mayring's inductive categorization, we start-

ed to compile the statements into a category system. It became evident quickly that we had to let go of the separation of the university teams' statements and the teachers' statements. We originally thought that we would look at the two groups separately and compare the categories of both groups. The material, however, suggested that we look at the statements of the project team in general, because not only did expectations differ between the university team and the teachers, but also within those groups. We found that there was no homogenous group that opposed the other. Rather, the entire project team (consisting of teachers and us) was very heterogeneous and expectations diverged between all participants.

COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND CONDITIONS

Having analyzed the data material as described above, a category system was developed that revealed the expectations of the participating parties in the project. The following categories with the corresponding subcategories were formed:

Table 3: Results

Category	Subcategory
1. Communication	1.1 Style
	1.2 Content
2. Engagement	2.1 Responsibility
	2.2 Pro-activeness
	2.3 Continuity
	2.4 Cooperativeness
3. Conditions	3.1 Time
	3.2 Space
	3.3 Finance
	3.4 Structure
	3.5 Administration/staff
	3.6 Legal

It became evident that within the project, the participating parties had different expectations concerning engagement, communication, and the conditions in which the project operated. With this, we mean that participating parties had different expectations concerning how and in what circumstances to work together, and how to communicate with each other. These expectations had an

impact on the development of the project and are subsumed accordingly under the categories Communication, Engagement, and Conditions.

First, we want to briefly describe the categories, and then elaborate and illustrate them by providing examples.

Communication

This category summarized university tutors' and teachers' expectations towards their style of communication with each other, as well as the content that was expected to be communicated. We therefore divided this category into the following subcategories: *Style (1.1)*, with the subdivisions *Mutual* and *Respectful*, and *Content (1.2)*, with the subdivisions *Tasks*, *Needs*, and *Assumptions*.

As *Style*, we understood the manner in which communication would take place. *Mutual* highlighted the university team's expectations that all communication would happen in a bilateral understanding. *Respectful* showed that it was expected that all participants would communicate in a manner of respect with each other.

As *Content*, we understood the communication about assignments, tasks, and needs that the project would address and work towards.

According to the collected material, these expectations were mostly addressed by the university team in reference to communication with teachers and high school students. In most cases, members of the university team were surprised about the manner in which communication happened. Those moments of surprise depicted underlying expectations very well, especially about the two subcategories of *Mutual* and *Respectful*. There were, for example, occasions where teachers thought we were high school students and addressed us as such, when we had already worked regularly at the schools. In these situations, two things struck us most: on the one hand, according to our field notes, communication towards students seemed to be rather harsh, impatient and sometimes even disrespectful. On the other hand, it was quite disturbing for us to have to explain our position and authority repeatedly. The atmosphere between teachers and our team could best be described as distant, stressed, and charged, especially due to the style of communication.

The interviews with the teachers also showed that expectations concerning the content of communication differed a lot. There were incidents when teachers felt belittled or not taken seriously when it came to being experts in their fields, especially when it came to student support in the classroom. Our team saw itself as experienced in peer tutoring, setting up writing centers, and WAC, and thus aimed to support and enable teachers to effectively support their high school students both inside and outside the classroom. Meanwhile, teachers expected to effectively distribute tasks and finish meetings sooner rather than later.

Engagement

This category entailed modes of engagement that were anticipated by the participants of the project and was divided into: *Responsibility (2.1)*, *Pro-activeness (2.2)*, *Continuity (2.3)*, and *Cooperativeness (2.4).*

The subcategory *Responsibility* indicated that it was expected that all participants would feel responsible for the project. The subcategory *Pro-activeness* highlighted expectations about taking active roles in the project. The subcategory *Continuity* subsumed project members' expectations towards the continuity of tasks and the constant engagement with these. It also related to the stability of the project and continuous efforts to establish peer tutoring and a writing center. *Cooperative* engagement described what level of cooperation participants expected from each other.

The different expectations about engagement can best be displayed with our attempt to set up a steering group. This task turned out to be extremely frustrating for all participants. Our team felt alone with this task, and repeatedly got the impression that the teachers' commitment to engage in the project was very poor. Teachers felt continually pressured by us to engage more, and therefore emphasized multiple times how limited their time and resources were, and how difficult it is to change certain aspects in the school structure. Engagement was clearly but very differently defined by all members of the project, and those different assumptions constantly led to misunderstandings, frustrations, and poor results in the ongoing project work.

Conditions

This category related to the fact that all participants, especially our team, had several expectations about the conditions they would be working in and with. This category showed how everyone's expectations relied on outside factors. The classification was developed with the following subcategories: *Time (3.1), Space (3.2), Finance (3.3), Structure (3.4), Administration/Staff (3.5)* and *Legal (3.6).*

The subcategory *Time* comprised participants' expectations towards handling the limitation of time. From the beginning of the project, all participants were under time constraints. Teachers had little spare time due to limited capacities and full curricula, and our team was continuously at capacity due to unforeseen obstacles that challenged us in ways we did not anticipate.

One of these unforeseen obstacles for our team was how difficult the team-building process and the establishment of basic rules of social behavior amongst the high school students was. We expected the high school students to be at a much higher level concerning communication and team-working skills. The time we originally planned for tutoring the students had to be doubled and still was not enough.

The classification *Space* consisted of our expectations towards the existence of space that we could use for tutoring peers and establishing a writing center. Most schools had very limited space resources, which we did not anticipate. When it came to the challenge of space, it became obvious that the categories of communication and engagement were interlinked. During the process of finding proper space for tutoring and setting up a writing center, communication turned out to be very difficult between teachers and our team. Teachers often felt pressured to deliver a space for the project that in their opinion, was not available. Our team continuously felt urged to emphasize the importance of space for the high school students, because no space became available. Also, the expectations about the engagement to eventually secure this space were very different. Teachers expected our team to be understanding and patient. We, however, expected teachers to be more proactive and creative in making space for the writing center.

The subcategory *Finance* dealt with expectations towards the project's financial situation, entailing mostly our assumptions about financial compensation and financial stability for our work. The expectations were that we would not have to worry about getting paid. Also, the time invested in the project did not represent the salary our team received. Because we needed more time to support the students than we anticipated, we expected our salary to increase proportionally. This, however, did not take place, because funding did not increase. Our financial situation became difficult for the entirety of the project, and repeatedly caused frustration and disappointment.

The subcategory *Structure* comprised expectations towards the structural integration of the project into the school syllabus, and also towards the inner structural conditions of the project itself. After having conducted the first training of high school student peer tutors, and after confronting and dealing with obstacles at the prospective schools, we soon realized that it was necessary for the project to become an integrated component of the school syllabus. At this point, it became very clear that in order to establish peer tutoring in writing, we needed teachers to collaborate. We suggested specific writing assignments that allowed students to work in a process-oriented fashion, and consult with their peer tutors to benefit from the assignments in multiple ways. In doing that, we faced a lot of resistance directly when teachers explained why they could not do what we suggested and justified it with their experience, and indirectly when teachers simply did not give the assignments. It became obvious that we tried to introduce peer tutoring in writing, and at the same time, we tried to establish WAC at the schools. We soon found out that introducing WAC to the schools was an expectation that only university tutors shared. In contrast, the participating schools expected our project to be rather integrated in the structure of our university writing center, and regarded the initiatives as external impulses with

no need of integration into school structures.

Finally, the subcategory *Administration/Staff* consisted of expectations towards the availability of teachers and staff at the school, and our team at the university. The sub-group *Legal* encompassed our team's expectations towards legal issues with the project.

Discussion: Service-Oriented vs. Collaborative-Oriented Approach

Looking at the categories that derived from the text analysis, it became evident that diverse expectations among teachers and our team concerning engagement, communication, and various external conditions existed. In fact, we found that expectations concerning the way of how project parties engaged in setting up a student-run writing center, as well as the way parties expected to communicate with each other, can be arranged on a continuum between what we call a service-oriented approach and a collaborative-oriented approach towards the project. These two terms describe very well what kind of expectations project participants had, especially about how to engage in the development of the project, and about how to communicate with other project participants. Before discussing how far the occurrence of both approaches has influenced the development of the project and, indeed, caused several problems, we will look at each approach separately to better understand the underlying concepts.

As a *service-oriented* approach, we understand the expectation of giving or receiving a service. Within the mindset of a service-oriented approach, an individual expects to be on the receiving end of a cooperation. Also, there can be a service-oriented producer who is willing to deliver a service to other cooperating participants. Thus, a service-oriented perspective goes hand-in-hand with a certain expectation on how different parties engage in a project, as well as the way parties communicate with each other. From a service-oriented perspective, engagement is merely thought of as delivering or receiving a service, and communication is thought of as a tool for giving or receiving information. There is no need for in depth exchange, because it is not the goal to create something from the basis of shared knowledge. Rather, it is the goal that each party gives whatever it is they have to offer, and thus a goal can be reached effectively and time efficiently.

In contrast to a service-oriented approach, a *collaborative-oriented* approach entails that a project is steered, developed and pushed forward collaboratively. This means that all participants expect to be in continuous exchange with each other and share responsibilities for the success of the project. From a collaborative-oriented perspective, engagement is seen as an active and responsible participation, and communication is expected to be an exchange and a discussion of

ideas from which a consensus is reached. This approach seems to be much more time consuming, because an in depth exchange of knowledge and ideas is essential. Parties who take this approach do not merely want to reach goals in a cooperative manner, but learn from one another and thus, create more knowledge.

The data revealed that among teachers and our team, both approaches and a corresponding set of expectations was found. However, the texts of the analysis suggested the tendency that teachers from the cooperating high schools were more service-oriented, and our team was more collaborative-oriented. On the one hand, this might be explained with writing centers' philosophy that is strongly focused on collaboration and jointly created knowledge. On the other hand, the participating high schools never really owned the idea of setting up a writing center, establishing peer tutoring in writing, and introducing WAC into the school syllabus. Accordingly, there was no room for the participating teachers to interact collaboratively with a project team that would consist of teachers, university tutors, high school students and parents, especially within their normal workload.

The material showed that expectations on both sides ranged from assumptions that all participants take shared responsibility and actively push the project forward, to expecting that the project is a service to the institutions, meaning that some participants expected to have everything handed to them instead of having to work together. The same was noticed when it came to terms of communication. Here, expectations ranged from having a mutual exchange of information, to dictating information without any kind of negotiation.

It is obvious that this mixture of partly conflicting expectations led to frustrations and caused several problems and misunderstandings due to lack of communication and transparency. The following example highlights such a situation: Teachers asked our team to give a workshop for ninth graders who were supposed to submit a short research paper, and the papers had to be submitted on the same day the workshop was held. Due to lack of time from the teachers' side, no collaborative efforts were made concerning the content and structure of the workshop. Hence, all responsibilities (preparation, conduction and reflection of the workshop) stayed with our team and the high school peer tutors.

This example shows that the school outsourced the completion of a task to us without being able to discuss and think through possible workshop designs. In this situation, we took the positions of substitute teachers, which was not a job we had agreed upon or were familiar with. The service expected by the teachers did not match the philosophy of the project. Where our team wanted to focus on process-oriented writing, the teachers expected a "do-it" service within a very short amount of time. As this example shows that teachers tended to take the service-oriented approach, we can use the same example to show that the uni-

versity team took this approach as well. Instead of communicating to the teacher that this kind of task is against peer tutoring philosophies, we took it on and fulfilled it as best as possible. This occurred many times when teachers asked for workshops. Not once did our team insist on teacher participation when designing workshops. Instead, we hoped that when we delivered the service, the teachers would recognize value and finally engage in the project in general.

Ambivalent expectations also became visible in the following example: A participating school in the project had stated their interest in establishing peer tutoring in writing, because they saw a need in supporting students with their "Facharbeit," which is a short research paper. However, at the same time, the school emphasized that teachers already offer enough guidance within their classes to support students.

In another case, our team had very clear expectations about what was needed in order to establish a student-run writing center, and they expressed and demanded these needs to teachers and deans. Here, we tried to establish a steering group that was supposed to serve the purpose of collaboratively developing and nurturing the project. Yet, such a team never formed, because school administrations and teachers did not see the need for it. Instead of sitting together and discussing possible actions that would be in the interest of all parties, participants were frustrated because their expectations were not met.

Expectations, in fact, often cannot easily be met, because only rarely are they stated explicitly or made transparent. Even more so, expectations influence our actions unconsciously. In order to make expectations visible, we have to actively monitor and reflect our actions. Field notes, protocols, reports, and team meetings are excellent means to reveal underlying dynamics, and can uncover misunderstandings to help minimize frustrations. We also argue that the tasks of monitoring, reflecting, and adjusting actions as well as expectations throughout the course of a project are part of overall project management. Unfortunately, we had no one to fill this position. Instead, the project was poorly staffed, and only a few people had to manage everything.

Apart from that, time was a crucial factor that was missing, because participants rarely sat together and openly spoke about their expectations concerning the project itself. Even though the project team tried to communicate expectations along the way, that very crucial moment of setting the agenda for the project together with school board, teachers and students at the very beginning of the project was not given enough time. This can be explained by the four-month delay with which our team started the project.[7] Because time played a major role from the beginning of the project we constantly worked under a lot of pressure and under the impression that things needed to develop very quickly. This was true for all participants, including the high school students. It was

most likely because of these circumstances that all participants started working on practical aspects of the project before aligning a theoretical framework and plan together. Conditions, such as allowing our team to form and learn how to express and negotiate individual expectations in a constructive manner, simply had to be omitted. Thus, the importance of negotiating expectations at the very beginning of the project was clearly underestimated, which we again ascribe to the lack of proper project management.

The qualitative content analysis clearly confirmed our hypothesis that expectations needed to be made visible through transparent communication and sound project management. The analyzed material showed that most of the challenges that occurred throughout the project can be traced to diverging expectations amongst the overall project team. Had these expectations been identified, made transparent, acknowledged and properly negotiated, frustration amongst participants would have decreased profoundly, and the project might have been able to achieve its goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

When we started the project, not much had been published on high school and writing center collaboration in Germany, because only few projects existed. However, considering the current development of writing center work and WAC initiatives, we are optimistic that more projects will be initiated and shared. This will undoubtedly increase our learning opportunities, as we will have more possibilities to gain insight into other projects, learn about best practice examples, and share our experiences.

The following recommendations derive from the experiences we made and might help to negotiate expectations in future projects:

- Make sure all potential participants want to be involved. Often, the school administration is excited about a project, but are the teachers on board?
- Make sure all participants understand the concept of the project and are willing to a) accept and fully support it, or b) negotiate and appropriate it to the different schools.
- Establish rules of communication. This sounds much like teaching school children to respect each other, but when different educational worlds meet, it is absolutely essential that everyone knows what (content), when (in what time span), and how (in what manner) to communicate.
- Take time to sit down and ask teachers, high school students, and the

school administration what their goals and expectations are for the duration of the project, as well as after the project concludes. This seems like an "of-course" fact, but the key is to make time for meetings before you start the project, and to keep these meetings happening during the course of the project.

- Clearly define and negotiate on a regular basis participants' roles in the project (especially if new members are anticipated).
- Document, share, and sign all agreements with all participants to ensure everyone knows and commits to the established rules, etc.
- Establish a steering group that is willing to support your endeavor before any practical steps are taken.
- Decide on tools for documenting and reflecting upon what is happening throughout the project, e.g., through the use of field notes, minutes, and reflections. The purpose of documenting should be made clear to all participants so that everybody understands the importance of those notes. Furthermore, consider how these documents are evaluated throughout the project—they can be very valuable when they are discussed within the project team and decisions are made based on them.

We are aware that the recommendations we give from reflecting on our project are not universally applicable, because every team and every project is different. However, some aspects, especially concerning communication and engagement, are issues that should be addressed whenever trying to establish WAC or a writing center at an external institution.

NOTES

1. At this point it is worth mentioning that schools in general show no collaborative approach to learning when it comes to writing, because there is no exchange of ideas, feedback, etc. between students. Students receive feedback from teachers, which is only given with the final grade.

2. "The Robert Bosch Stiftung is one of the major German foundations associated with a private company and has managed the philanthropic bequest of company founder Robert Bosch for more than forty years. Indeed, it was his entrepreneurial vision, political farsightedness, moral fortitude and charitable initiatives that set the standards for the work of the Robert Bosch Stiftung." (Robert Bosch Stiftung)

3. A more detailed description of the three-day training and the entire project can be found in: "Paving the Way for Writing Across the Curriculum: Establishing Writing Centers and Peer Tutoring at High Schools in Germany" (http://wac.

colostate.edu/atd/second_educ/herkneretal.cfm).

4. As Girgensohn explains insufficient writing competence can often be a reason for failing or even beginning a tertiary education (2).

5. The qualitative content analysis originally emerged from communication studies. It was first developed in the US in the twentieth century as a quantitative research method (Gläser; Mayring). In Germany the Mayring model, developed in the 1980s, is most central when qualitative content analysis is performed (Flick; Gläser).

6. Mayring is a German psychologist, sociologist, and pedagogue, as well as founding member of the qualitative content analysis.

7. The proposal for the project funding suggested a start of the project in the month of June, but funding was only granted in September.

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