University of Nevada, Reno

Investigating Community in the Work of First-Year Core Writing Students

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

by

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Abstract

For the fields of composition, linguistics, and student services, community serves as a binding concept, particularly given the work of these fields in relation to the college campus. Scholars study the way that community involvement impacts retention rates, the way that discourse communities are built through language, and the way that community awareness influences writing. However, few studies consider how these factors overlap and influence each other within a multidisciplinary framework.

This study takes a step towards filling that research gap by investigating the writing practices of students in first-year writing programs at the University of Nevada, Reno. Specifically, I will look at the writing practices of students in both a traditional classroom environment and a classroom environment that is part of a Living Learning Community in order to ascertain any differences in the way that students perceive their classroom community, differences in metadiscourse levels, and differences in student ethos and classroom interactions as noted by the instructor. I make use of Alfred Rovai's Classroom Community Scale, Ken Hyland's metadiscourse model, and Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus in order to achieve the research goals.

While I found that metadiscourse levels and perceptions of classroom community were remarkably similar between the two classes, there was a statistically significant difference in the use of transitions, evidentials, hedges, and self mentions. However, I believe the interpretation of those results can benefit from further study. Overall, the results of the study suggest that while community plays a role in the writing of students, ultimately it is the complexity of individual student experience and the development of institutional habitus that informs classroom community.

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Chapter 1: Background

1.1 Introduction

The notion of community permeates conversations across disciplinary boundaries, making its way into the theories, practices, and underlying structures of social scientific study. Communities help shape personal and group identity, structure activity and behavior, and provide a foundation from which to guide inquiry into human related phenomena. While many disciplines make use of its connective power, each defines community in a specific way, and employs the term for disciplinary specific purposes. Since the notion of community provides a common element that places human activity and grouping at the center of inquiry, this study seeks to reconcile its usage among the disciplines of student services, composition pedagogy, linguistics, and rhetorical theory.

The first step in bringing multiple disciplinary perspectives on community together is to determine a common definition, which can be a difficult task. A definition that I find promising comes from Ken Hyland, linguist and professor at the University of London. Hyland defines communities as “human institutions where actions and perceptions are influenced by the personal and interpersonal, as well as the institutional and sociocultural” (*Metadiscourse*, 140). This definition locates human activity and interaction based on external influence at the center of inquiry, making it suited for the goals of the various disciplines of this study.

The student services discipline is particularly interested in community and the way that it effects student interaction and connection to campus. More specifically, student service professionals are interested in the ways that community and connection to

a campus environment can help students succeed during their time in school. If students feel that there is a greater purpose, a reason for being on campus beyond just their course work, ideally they are more likely to stay. Given this, in the 1990's, learning communities grew tremendously across the United States and have manifested in many different forms, one of which is the Living Learning Community (LLC), where students live together and attend classes together. Many LLC's involve linked courses, one of which is frequently the first-year writing class, which is where composition pedagogy enters the study.

Composition pedagogy, like many other disciplines interested in the way that students learn, experienced changes after the social turn of the 1980's, grounded in the theory that "writing in every discipline is a form of social behavior" (Maimon xii). From this notion of writing as a form of social behavior stemmed the collaborative pedagogy movement, which scholar Ken Bruffee bought to the field of composition. Amongst the guiding principles that Bruffee sets up is that "to learn is to work collaboratively to establish and maintain knowledge among a community of knowledgeable peers" (Bruffee 646). It is here where the link between community and composition is most strongly forged, paving the way for writing instructors to find new ways to increase peer interaction towards the development of a working writing community. Beyond the classroom, this notion can also be seen in the ways that various disciplines develop writing practices in publication material.

Rhetorical study, like student services and composition pedagogy, often discusses community as a factor in determining the purpose behind communicative acts. This focus is carried over from the Classical rhetorical tradition, of which Aristotle is arguably

one of the most important influences. The rhetorical appeals, including ethos, pathos, and logos, are all predicated on the presence of an audience whom these appeals are meant to persuade. Thus, the best rhetorician must have an understanding of various communities in order to know how to best meet the needs of an audience. A major goal of rhetorical study is therefore to determine the relationship between individual and group dynamics, often using language as a bridge. The major social theorist whose work has been important for rhetorical study and will ground this study is Pierre Bourdieu, who introduces the concept of habitus as a way to bridge human activity, community influence, language, and the institution.

Finally, language and linguistic studies use the concept of community as a locus for studying the ways that humans communicate both in speech and discourse communities. Specifically, sociolinguists are interested in how language changes depending on social context, how social needs create language in the first place, and how language becomes more or less effective based on the social circumstances. In this sense, the notion of community is at the center of sociolinguistic study because without different community needs, language would not change. Also, for linguists tracking the subtleties of language in different communities, discourse analysis can lead to compelling new discoveries about our subconscious use of language. One such method of tracking language subtleties is metadiscourse analysis, which considers the markers that we use in everyday language to signal audience awareness and interaction. In this study, Ken Hyland's model of metadiscourse will serve to track community awareness in the writing of students.

The design of this study borrows from each of the four disciplines discussed above in order to investigate how overlapping notions of community interact in writing practice. The location of the study combines student services and composition pedagogy to consider differences between a Living Learning Community classroom space and a non-Living Learning Community classroom space. Alfred Rovai's Classroom Community Scale is used to track changes in student perceptions within different classroom environments. Linguistic methods are applied via discovery of metadiscursive trends in the portfolio documents submitted from students in each class. Finally, rhetorical theory, specifically the notion of habitus, is used to bring the three fields together in a discussion of the ways that community participation influences student ability to succeed in campus environments, a question that is of central importance to student services. It is the goal of this study to yield information that would be of interest to any scholar studying within any of the major disciplines involved and to contribute to studies focusing on interdisciplinary communities.

The main research question of the study is, Do writing classroom communities and Living Learning Communities have ways of strengthening community experiences for student writers when the two environments overlap? My hypothesis is that there will indeed be a heightened experience of community for students in LLC courses and that it will be reflected in their writing practices, but also that the heightened experience will not always lead to a more productive classroom environment. I have three major methodologies that I will use to address the major question from different angles. In order to analyze the perceived levels of community in each classroom, students in both classes will be asked to complete Alfred Rovai's Classroom Community Scale survey. I

anticipate that students in the LLC class will score consistently higher in questions that ask them to rate the level of community and connectedness in the classroom. Secondly, I will interview the instructor, who teaches both of the classes under investigation, about the community environments developed in each class. I anticipate that the instructor will further confirm the LLC class having an increased level of community as evidenced in the class itself, but also that those increased levels will coincide with greater management issues. Finally, I will use Ken Hyland's metadiscourse model to determine the amount of metadiscourse used by students in each class in their final portfolio writings. I hypothesize that students in the LLC class will use more metadiscourse, indicating that they have a stronger sense of community awareness as a result of their overlapping community environments.

1.2 Review of Relevant Literature

Living Learning Communities

In the last few decades, a number of historical circumstances have contributed to the rise of Living Learning Communities on college campuses. The first factor, which still permeates student service literature and goal setting in the status quo, was the rise of student-centered learning given the work of Dewey, Vygotsky, and Piaget (Kumpulainen and Wray 19-21). Placing the student at the center of learning, rather than viewing students as passive receptacles of information, prevents what Freire would call the "banking method" of education. In other words, scholars interested in the way students succeed in a learning environment now realize that the students need interaction and participation in their own learning in order to be successful.

Along with this realization came changes in campus dynamics and issues. As discussed by Smith et al. in their book *Learning Communities: Reforming Undergraduate Education*, as higher education began diversifying and becoming more accessible, the student dynamic changed in such a way that institutions found themselves needing to find more solutions to accommodate a wider variety of students. This was especially important for large public universities, where increasing class sizes and greater trends toward compulsory education needed to find a balance with individual student need (Smith et al. 5). Compounding this problem, particularly within the last two decades, has been budgetary cuts affecting educational programs across the nation. When institutions found themselves needing to do more with less, the living environment of students became a new space in which to enhance academic experience.

Living Learning Communities, according to Smith et al., focus on "restructuring the residential environment to build community and integrate academic work with out-of-class experiences" (20). LLC programs achieve this restructuring of student time and place by linking living space environments and programs with classroom environments and shared courses to strengthen academic and social goals of each. In this way, LLC's respond to all of the aforementioned needs in so far that they satisfy the need to increase interaction in a social learning framework, allow for a small community feeling for students with diverse needs on a large campus, and provide another outlet for academic goal setting where funds and resources are not available in large quantities. In theory, LLC's provide students with richer educational experiences, overlap between social and academic lifestyles, and access to resources both within and beyond the classroom.

One scholar publishing frequently on the benefits of social learning and the power

of learning communities is Vincent Tinto. In his 2000 article in *Assessment Update,* Tinto provides a concise and compelling overview of the benefits and shortcomings of LLC's, ultimately arguing that use of these communities "enhances student learning and persistence and enriches faculty professional lives" (12). Like much of the collective literature on LLC programs, Tinto remarks upon the persistence or retention of students. Retention rates are a consistent marker used throughout the literature to show that LLC students choose to stay on campus and graduate at a much higher rate than other populations (Tinto, Smith et al., Stassen). In addition to higher retention rates, other benefits of LLC's are highlighted by Martha Stassen: "positive student outcomes include improved student performance, persistence, and increased academic engagement, general satisfaction, and personal development" (583). Stassen notes that regardless of the way that an LLC program is implemented, students in even the least coordinated communities show benefits above students who do not participate in LLC's at all. Though studies like Stassen's are overwhelmingly in favor of any form of LLC creation, not all of the literature agrees.

A 2005 article by Neil Browne and Kevin Minnick represents an opposing viewpoint to Tinto, Stassen, and Smith et al., arguing instead that many LLC's are out of balance due to a far stronger social than intellectual focus. In other words, they feel that LLC's often "stop at goals of social networking and retention without moving on to the types of cognitive goals traditionally associated with the academy" (Browne and Minnick). While it is certainly true that much of the data in support of LLC's come from the perspective of student service goals of retention, the question of whether or not these indicators can be used to assess intellectual growth is complex. Luckily, recent studies

conducted by faculty working within LLC's have begun to answer these questions, and one such example comes from a 2012 study conducted by Julie Watts and Rebecca Burnett.

In their article *Pairing Courses Across the Disciplines: Effects on Writing Performance*, Watts and Burnett provide a study that links Living Learning Community research from the student services perspective (traditionally focused on goals of student retention) with research from both composition and agronomy (traditionally focused on goals of student learning of skills and concepts). Watts and Burnett ultimately conclude that dual-problem solving spaces, literally shared learning spaces, "can improve student writing performance" (231). In conducting this research, Watts and Burnett not only provide a study showing the power of linked courses to create increased cognitive awareness, but also provide research that links student service research to the classroom, putting the importance of shared space in cognitive goal setting on the research map.

Composition Pedagogy and Social Learning

As the study conducted by Watts and Burnett shows, the link between composition pedagogy and structured learning community environments represents a bridge between discipline-specific research and, in this case, more generic research about student interaction and campus learning. Because so many LLC's are specifically geared towards retaining first-year students, one of the linked courses they often offer is first-year writing, since it is a course that most first-year students take and is common across universities. So important is the first-year writing experience, in fact, that many studies in the field of composition focus solely on the first-year student relationship to writing. One such study comes from Nancy Sommers and Laura Saltz.

The goal of "The Novice as Expert: Writing the Freshman Year" was to determine what characteristics of first-year writers were the most conducive to generating long term success in student writing. One way that Sommers and Saltz studied this was to track first-year students through their college experience, noting that many first-year writers find their voice on campus by "writing their way into a small corner of academia, gradually learning to see themselves not as the one mistake of the admissions committee but as legitimate members of a college community" (131). Given this viewpoint of Sommers and Saltz, writing becomes a major way for students to develop a sense of community belonging in the academic world. Learning to engage with an academic community becomes a major take away for students and one of the key ways they learn such belonging is through the process of writing.

John Swales and Susan Peck MacDonald have studied the different forms that writing can take in the academy. Within the composition field, their work serves to describe how academic writers write, and discuss the trends in writing that we expect first-year writers to eventually be able to perform. While John Swales investigates academic writing in multiple contexts in his scholastic work, his goal in *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* is explicitly pedagogical. He writes in the introduction to that: "the aim of this book is to offer an approach to the teaching of academic and research English" (1). In order to do this, Swales defines three main concepts (discourse community, genre, and language-learning task) and makes use of student work to illustrate the importance of communicative purpose in academic writing forums. Susan Peck MacDonald aims to investigate academic writing by looking at patterns across disciplines. Interestingly, in this work, MacDonald purposefully avoids

studying student work as she feels that students do not share the same disciplinary knowledge and focus that their professors and other professionals do. This move makes her work less about classroom practice and more about disciplinary trends.

Though they are different, both of these works are important to my study since one focuses on academic writing as pedagogical practice and one looks at academic writing as disciplinary distinction. Because I am interested in both of these things, the combination of the two provides a solid basis for the composition background that the study requires. With the background for academic writing and composition pedagogy established, a larger framework to connect composition pedagogy with the larger goals of the institution is needed to solidify the link between student services and composition pedagogy in a more complete way. For that task, I turn to the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

Rhetorical Theory and the Habitus

While social learning theory as manifested in both student services and composition pedagogy provides a commonality, both tend to take the benefit of social learning for granted. Rhetorical study makes inquiries about the motives, functions, and implications of our communicative acts. The more we know about the relationships between individuals, groups, and language, the more able we are to communicate effectively towards a given audience. This motivation for using rhetoric has been more thoroughly investigated by rhetorical and social theorists such as Kenneth Burke, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu and many others, sometimes casting language as a tool that can be used in negative or socially restricting ways. One tool that Bourdieu identifies as perpetuating social stratification, for example, is the habitus.

Bourdieu describes habitus as “a system of cognitive and motivating structures…a

world of already realized ends- procedures to follow, paths to take" (53). In other words, a person's habitus is a set of structures that are repeated over and over again to form a sort of "muscle memory" that guides human action. The habitus is created as "a product of history" which "produces individual and collective practices- more history- in accordance with the schemes generated by history" (Bourdieu 54). In analyzing a habitus, key is the idea that our past and present are constantly constructed in relation to one another in ways that are to some extent inescapable. If we are used to doing something a certain way because it is how our bodies know how to create the action, the action will become subconsciously perpetuated in a framework of values that match up with its execution and purpose.

In this way, Bourdieu argues that taking advantage of structural habitus is one way that the dominant class stays dominant. By replicating behaviors and actions that create a historical impetus for more behaviors and actions perceived in a certain way, generations upon generations can be subjected to remain in a specific social location. For example, if an individual is born in a blue-collar work environment, the habits that s/he develops are likely to be consistent with those of his/her parents and surrounding environment. When those patterns are engrained enough into an individual, the likelihood of developing a new habitus to fit the needs of other class activity is very small. Given this repeated series of action and Bourdieu's linking of its presence to class behavior, the link between habitus to the institution or academy becomes clear, since education plays a large role in class production.

In her article *Student Retention in Higher Education: The Role of Institutional Habitus*, Liz Thomas draws a connection between the type of research student service

professionals conduct and the larger theory of Pierre Bourdieu. "Educational institutions," she argues, "are able to determine what values, language, and knowledge are regarded as legitimate, and therefore ascribe success and award qualifications on that basis…this process ensures that the values of the dominant class are perpetuated" (431). Every institution, in order to perpetuate its goals and values, makes use of the habitus as described by Bourdieu. In order to ensure the survival of an institution like the academy, choosing students whose habitus is in line with its goals ensures the entity's continuation, each student taking his or her place in the cycle of regeneration.

Thomas explicitly defines "institutional habitus" as something "more than the culture of the educational institution; it refers to relational issues and priorities, which are deeply embedded, and subconsciously informing practice" (431). The habitus of an institution cannot be easily identified, separated, or even differentiated from the institution that it cyclically protects. The "structuring structures" of the habitus are so far embedded that to pause and alter course is nearly impossible. Pedagogy, which people within the institution may consider the ultimate tool for reforming and altering student histories and bias, is considered a form of indoctrination under this framework, since not even instruction can separate itself from the institution that it serves. This view of institutional habitus means that students who succeed in college are repeating and promoting the behaviors that they have been subject to their entire lives, always replicating the history and producing more history. Thomas argues that this is why first generation college students are less likely to automatically succeed in college— they don't have an existing model of institutional habitus to reproduce, no repeated cycles of action to execute.

The notion of institutional habitus interacts with student service research because it adds layers of complexity to the retention question. It also makes the role of composition pedagogy all the more problematic, poising pedagogy as a tool of the dominate class that is not in control of itself, its production of knowledge, or its language. This production of language within the academy is the last crucial piece of the research background needed, since linguistics generates the mechanism for this study.

Language, Linguistics, and Metadiscourse

Language is a key part of the social learning and interactional element of student service research, of the classroom and academic writing components of composition pedagogy, and of the development of institutional habitus which relies on spoken word in part to transmit guiding structures and habits. The field of linguistics in many ways provides the structural component to the practical, pedagogical, and theoretical elements already in place. The linguistic tool that will be relied upon most heavily in this study is metadiscourse analysis. Metadiscourse markers, according to Ken Hyland, are "the linguistic expressions which refer to the evolving text and to the writer and imagined readers of that text" (ix). For example, the words "and" and "but" are metadiscourse makers because they help guide reader through the text, connecting thoughts and ideas. Words like "I" or "we" or "us" are also metadiscourse markers because they show the writer directly interacting with the reader by identifying themselves as the writer. Other words like "next" and "last" are organization based metadiscourse markers that help signal to the reader when a new point is going to be made by the writer.

Hyland, like Swales and MacDonald, views text-making as an interaction between the writer and the reader of the material. In that way, metadiscourse analysis references

both the social component of writing and the rhetorical element of persuasion by viewing writing as a conversation directed at an audience. Metadiscourse provides an ideal tool for studying community overlap and its potential effects on community awareness in writing of students because it provides "access to the ways that writers and speakers take up positions and align themselves with their readers in a particular context…and provides an important means of facilitating communication, supporting a position, increasing readability, and building a relationship with the audience" (Hyland 4-5). Investigating this relationship helps assess whether or not social learning theory is working in composition classrooms since metadiscourse provides a measureable student interaction with audience.

Many researchers following Hyland have implemented studies that incorporate his metadiscourse model for varying purposes. One such study was conducted by Abdi et al., who added to Hyland's metadiscourse model by fusing it with Grice's Cooperative Principle towards the goal of making the model more intuitive to the metadiscourse researcher. After coding for metadiscourse markers in academic research articles, Abdi et al. looked at the way that each category of markers is being used. From there, they assigned a role for each marker in a Gricean framework, which posits that there are four conversational maxims: quantity, relation, quality, and manner. These maxims are trends in the way we communicate that ensure that our utterances are meeting the needs of our fellow conversationalists. In applying this framework to metadiscourse, Abdi et al. concluded that evidentials (referencing the work of others), boosters (which add emphasis to claims), and hedges (which take away emphasis from claims), all fit the Gricean maxim of quality, since they are all involved with legitimizing thoughts and ideas (1675).

On the other hand, transitions (and, but, thus) and frame markers (last, final, next) fit the maxim of manner since they guide readers along in a text. Because engagement markers, self mentions and attitude markers are all similar but do not adhere to a Gricean principle, Abdi et al. added the category of interaction to account for these markers. Like Swales and MacDonald, Abdi et al. are interested in the way that metadiscourse is used specifically in the genre of research articles and, like MacDonald, they use this modified framework that they develop to analyze articles across disciplines.

Taking the work of Swales, MacDonald, and Abdi et al. a step further, Trine Dahl makes use of the metadiscourse model to look at research articles in three different disciplines, but also looks at each discipline in three different languages. Her goal is to determine whether or not metadiscourse patterns are informed by culture as well as discipline. Dahl looks at two different types of metadiscourse: locational, which refers to the text, and rhetorical, which refers to reader guidance through a text (1812). What Dahl finds is that metadiscourse use is highly culturally dependent and serves different roles in each of the nine research situations she investigated.

Dahl finds metadiscourse use in English and Norwegian research to be consistently higher than in French research, concluding that "English and Norwegian are representatives of the so-called reader-oriented, or from another angle, writer responsible, cultures" (1821). This finding shows the potential of metadiscourse analysis to make assertions about the type of relationship that the author has with the reader of a paper. While her methods are similar to those of Hyland and Abdi et al., Dahl's research answers a broader question and provides an example for how to tailor metadiscourse study to the groups under investigation. While Dahl extends the metadiscursive

framework to different cultures, I will be extending its use to different populations of students based on community experience.

1.3 Framework

Rovai's Classroom Community Scale

Creating a strong classroom community is important to ensure that students feel connected to a larger purpose and comfortable sharing writing with their peers. While instructors incorporate community standards into their class structures, assignments, peer group work and learning goals, most of the assessment for classroom community strength is informal and qualitative. In order to provide community researchers with a formal, quantitatively reliable method for measuring community, Alfred Rovai developed the Classroom Community Scale.

The Classroom Community Scale was initially created to assess the gap in feelings of community for online students and was first implemented for a cohort of online graduate students. However, as Rovai states, the Classroom Community Scale "can be administered to other populations, to include students taking courses in a traditional classroom setting" (208). The Classroom Community Scale was tested for multiple forms of validity and reliability and determined to be an accurate measure of how students experience community in their classroom environments. The survey is composed of twenty questions that reveal an overall score for classroom community and scores for two separate sub-scales: learning and connectedness.

The statements in the survey are designed to elicit responses concerning how students perceive the level of community present in the classroom. Each begins with "I

feel…" followed by a statement that describes classroom experiences in different contexts using various levels of ambiguity. For example, one very explicit statement is "I feel connected to others in this course." A statement that is less explicit, but gets at similar community knowledge, states "I feel that it is hard to get help when I have a question." While several of the statements are written in the positive, some are also written in negation. For example, students are asked to respond to the statement, "I do not feel a spirit of community." The instructions on the top of each survey asks that students read each statement carefully, but to not take too long thinking about the response, rather focusing on how the statement makes them feel automatically.

Students participating in the survey score each of the twenty questions on a five-interval scale from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree." Once the data are collected, there are two subscales that need to be calculated: the connectedness subscale and the learning subscale. Each subscale score is calculated by adding even and odd statement responses together. In order to get an overall classroom community score, both subscale scores are added together, yielding a number that can be compared to other numbers of the same sort in order to determine which groups of students report higher levels of community.

Instructor Interview

The instructor interview is designed to be open ended in order for the instructor to give answers that are not tainted with bias for one particular class over the other. There are five questions, the first of which simply asks the instructor to describe the different communities in the two classes that were taught. From this interview, I hoped to get a feeling for what the classes were like from a pedagogical point of view. Therefore, there

is also a question regarding classroom management to get a feel for how students interact in class with each other and with the instructor. Because I am interested in how these classroom patterns influence the writing of the students, there is also an interview question asking if there were any differences in the writing practices of the two classes. A follow up question asking the instructor to discuss any potential reasons for why differences in writing existed ascertains whether or not the writing was influenced by community practices. Finally, the instructor is asked to discuss any other differences encountered in the teaching of the two classes.

Hyland's Metadiscourse Model

The third and final portion of the formal study design involved the metadiscourse model as well as other information from Ken Hyland's book *Metadiscourse.* Particularly useful to the scope and goal of this project, Hyland's book defines metadiscourse and illustrates the history of the term, provides the model itself, and then discusses the various uses of metadiscourse to many of the key concepts relevant to the present study, including genre, community, rhetoric, and pedagogy. In this way, while the model itself is certainly an important part of the study, the framework and discussion surrounding metadiscourse offered by Hyland is just as important overall.

Metadiscoursive study arises from the same focus on social learning that is shared by many of the disciplines relevant to this study. As Hyland states, "rhetoricians, applied linguists, and composition theorists agree on using metadiscourse in a wider sense to refer to the various linguistic tokens employed to guide or direct a reader through a text so both the text and the writers stance is understood" (18). Because texts are viewed by Hyland as social products, the role of metadiscourse is key in providing the glue that

holds the writer and audience relationship together, providing a rich mechanism for study. Metadiscourse provides the proof that interaction between author and audience happens by showing where authors cross the boundary of removed authorship and step into the role of conversational participant.

Hyland isolates two dimensions of metadiscourse, the interactive and the interactional. The interactive dimension "concerns the writer's awareness of a participating audience and the ways he or she seeks to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations, and processing abilities" (Hyland 49). The interactive dimension is therefore concerned with how an author organizes written material in order to best be understood by the audience. Within the interactive dimension, Hyland identifies five categories and provides examples of each: transitions (but, thus, and), frame markers (finally, to conclude, etc), endorphic markers (as noted above, see X), evidentials (according to, stated by), and code glosses (namely, such as, in other words) (49). Each of these categories contain words and phrases which help organize content and move the audience members through the written work of the author, guiding them from point to point.

The interactional dimension of metadiscourse serves a different purpose. Interactional metadiscourse "concerns the ways writers conduct interaction by intruding and commenting on their message" (Hyland 49). In other words, interactional metadiscourse markers represent interventions by the author to make sure that their voice and presence is made known to the audience. For this reason, it is the interactional dimension where the notion of writing as conversation can be seen most clearly. Like the interactive dimension, Hyland provides five categories within the interactional

dimension: hedges (might, perhaps, possibly), boosters (in fact, definitely), attitude markers (unfortunately, surprisingly), self mentions (I, we, my, our), and engagement markers (consider, note) (49). These markers, unlike interactive markers, are directly related to the feelings, opinions, or perceptions of the author and serve to solidify audience/author relationship rather than help the audience navigate through the written work in a functional way. For this purpose, where interactive markers serve to represent the functional goals of an author, in some ways the interactional markers serve to represent the social goals of an author attempting to communicate in a meaningful and clear way with the audience.

1.4 Institutional Context

Nevada LLC Building

The Living Learning Community program at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) was established in the mid-2000's amidst institutional pressures like those described earlier by Smith et al. At the time, the university was looking for ways to increase retention, attract more students to the school, and increase student satisfaction amid a budget crisis. The first LLC floors to appear at UNR were floors that were a part of the two largest residence halls on campus and included the Honors community, the Women in Science and Engineering (W.I.S.E) community, and the Powerful Academic Community (P.A.C.) emphasizing the transition of the freshman experience. After initial success with these independent floors, the LLC coordinators in the housing department decided to begin a project to house the LLC's in their own building, which would be designed in every measure to maximize the potential of the LLC program at UNR. In the

fall of 2012, that building was finally ready for occupants, and the Nevada LLC Hall was opened.

The Nevada LLC Hall is made up of five floors. Floors Two through Five contain two wings with individual suites, or pods, that make up the residential capacity of the floor. Each suite has multiple bedrooms and a shared bathroom space, with each pod having a "living room" area to be shared with the conjoining pod. In addition to these shared spaces, each floor has a spacious lounge that both wings share with plenty of tables, chairs, and couches, along with a television, cable, and wireless Internet. In its opening year, Nevada LLC Hall had the following communities: the original W.I.S.E and Honors communities, a Business community, an Education community, an Engineering community, a Pre-Nursing community, a First-Year community for declared majors, a First-Year community for undeclared majors (formerly the P.A.C. community) and an Art interest based community. Each community was divided into residential pods, with some communities (like Pre-Nursing and Honors) requiring whole wings and some (like Art and Education) requiring only a couple of pods each. While the various communities are advertised on the UNR housing page, students self-select to be part of the community, and from there are admitted based on space available and other coordinating circumstances.

Also distinct to each community are the requirements for participation. For example, all communities feature linked courses, but some communities require students to have nearly all classes in common with their community cohort where other communities require only a couple of classes in common. Each wing is staffed with a Resident Assistant with a similar major to the rest of the community whenever possible

and each floor is staffed with an Academic Mentor, who is responsible for providing academic assistance and tutoring hours for the floor. For a building of 308 students, there is both a Resident Director and a Graduate Resident Director, making the student to staff ratio in this building almost double that of any other building on campus. Also unique to this building is the first floor. One wing of the first floor contains the laundry facilities, staff offices, kitchen, and multi-purpose room. The other wing, arguably the most unique wing of any residential building on campus, is made up entirely of faculty offices, two small group classrooms, and two large group lecture style classrooms. In these classrooms, all mutual LLC classes are taught, creating a situation in which the living space and academic space of the occupants literally shares the same building. It is in these classrooms where the LLC Core Writing classroom that I studied was conducted twice a week, with 23 students representing multiple LLC communities.

Core Writing Program and Portfolio System

The Core Writing program that guided the curriculum of the instructor whose classes and experiences were the heart of my study focuses on providing students with rhetorical awareness of audience and writing contexts, as well as tools to problem solve in a critical thinking framework. The program has a rotating faculty Director in charge of overseeing implementation of university-wide Core Writing instruction, as well as two Assistant Directors responsible for coordinating with the instructors of the Core Writing program and providing assistance with classroom level issues. Of the roughly 200 sections taught in a semester, the majority are taught by contingent faculty, with about a quarter taught by Teaching Assistants. There are also small percentages taught by tenure-track faculty and term lecturers.

The training for new Core Writing instructors takes place over the course of the summer and fall, with reading materials distributed months in advance. Teaching Assistants first go through an eight-day training program providing information regarding the history and institutional role of the Core Writing program, presentations on pedagogical practice, development and work-shopping of course materials, and guidance from both faculty and graduate level instructors. During the first semester, while they teach a section of ENG 101, the first-year writing course taken by the majority of incoming students, each Teaching Assistant is concurrently enrolled in a pedagogy course. Their teaching is evaluated during the semester by a faculty mentor. While instructors have a great deal of control over their classrooms, creating individual syllabi, lesson plans, and even making book choices after the first year of teaching, most instructors are encouraged to use, and do use, a portfolio method of evaluation for student work in ENG 101.

These portfolios typically present multiple drafts of the major papers for ENG 101. Additionally, each student typically submits a cover letter describing the changes they made between their first and second drafts, the decisions they made for the organization of their portfolio, and any commentary that they had regarding their experiences and growth in the class. The theory behind the portfolio system is that rather than have students write a final paper, it is a more effective method of assessment to show students the value of process-oriented writing by evaluating their growth in the class, encouraging multiple draft creation and reflective thinking.

Chapter 2: Study Design

2.1 Study Design Overview

When determining which classes to study, I began with the instructors who taught in the LLC, since there are a limited number. Of those instructors, only one taught a class both within the LLC and within a traditional classroom environment. Therefore, the two classes that the instructor taught became the subjects of the study, in order to control for the instruction each class was given. The instructor teaching the classes was a second year Teaching Assistant in the Master of Arts program for Writing, who had successfully taught both English 101 and 102 during the previous year. The LLC class met twice a week in Nevada LLC Hall and the non-LLC class met twice a week in the English building on campus. During the semester, both classes had four assignments: a personal narrative, a rhetorical analysis, an argument essay, and a restaurant review. Because the class was process versus product-oriented, students went through multiple drafts of each paper and participated in peer review. At the end of the semester, students turned in a final portfolio in which three of the four essays were chosen to review and resubmit, along with a cover letter discussing the student's progress in the class and revision process for each paper. The data were collected in the fall of 2012, and I worked closely with the instructor to determine best times for entering the classroom to discuss the study with the students and best times for collecting portfolio data from the instructor.

2.2 Rovai's Classroom Community Scale

Alfred Rovai's Classroom Community Scale was administered to students in both classes. The Classroom Community Scale is key to the study because it provides feedback from the students themselves about their experiences of community in their

classroom environments. From the application of this survey, any differences in the way that students perceive community can be ascertained. In this stage, the methodology and results will be of particular interest to the disciplines of both student services and pedagogy, not just relating to composition, but in general. The Classroom Community Scale survey administered to the student populations of both classes can be found in Appendix A.

In order to administer the Classroom Community Scale, I applied for and received IRB exempt status, protocol number 2013E068. I then visited each of the classrooms that I was studying, gave a brief introduction of my thesis work, and handed out surveys to all students. While each student received a survey, the students were told to simply write “opt out” at the top of the survey if they chose not to participate. This process was implemented to ensure that students were not made to feel pressured to participate in the data collection if they chose not to. The surveys were anonymous and took no longer than ten minutes in both classes for students to complete. During the time that the survey was administered, the instructor left the classroom to ensure that students, again, felt no pressure to take the survey. Of the two classes, only one student in the LLC class chose to opt out of the survey. Of the 21 students enrolled in the non-LLC class, 12 students took the survey, which represented all of the students in class the morning that it was conducted. Of the 23 students enrolled in the LLC class, 18 students took the survey out of the 19 students in class the morning it was conducted, with one student choosing to opt out.

Once the surveys were collected, each student response was input into an Excel document with the letter (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D),

and Strongly Disagree (SD)) of the response to each question. After entering the letter responses, each letter was assigned a numerical code based on the scoring device that Alfred Rovai created and sent to me after approving the use of his community tool. From there, all of the odd scores were added together for each student, yielding the "connectedness" sub-scale score and all of the even scores were added together, yielding the "learning" sub-scale score. The numbers were added together to yield the overall community score and all student scores from both classes were calculated together to determine the averages for each class. Finally, chi-square tests were conducted using the data to determine if the differences in each category were of statistical significance.

2.3 Instructor Interview and Classroom Analysis

The second stage of the study focuses on the perceptions of the instructor who taught both the LLC and non-LLC classes. An interview was conducted with the instructor to ascertain any differences in the teaching of the two classrooms based on community variation. This interview yields valuable information for analysis relating to the habitus of students, since the direct behaviors and trends of student interaction and writing are discussed by the instructor. The complete transcription of the interview with questions and responses can be found in Appendix B.

In addition to the Classroom Community Scale, it was important that the input of the mutual instructor was discussed in order to corroborate and set the context for any differences that were found in the data from both the Classroom Community Scale and from the metadiscourse analysis. At the conclusion of the semester, after the instructor had removed any identifying information from the portfolios and sent them for analysis, I conducted an interview with the instructor about the differences in the classroom

environments. The interview consisted of five questions chosen for their generality and can be seen in Appendix B. The instructor interview was conducted in an informal location away from campus and took about ten minutes, and in that time the instructor provided much information about the classroom communities relationship to writing. This information, along with other information attained by the virtue of looking at numbers and behaviors of students, helped to identify patterns of behavior relevant to the institutional habitus of the students involved.

2.4 Hyland's Metadiscourse Model

In this study, Hyland's metadiscourse model was used as the foundation of the data collection for the portfolio documents collected at the end of the fall semester 2012. During the administration of the Classroom Community Scale, students were told that as a second part of the study I would be looking through their portfolios to identify metadiscourse markers. Students were guaranteed that the portfolios would be anonymous and that they would not be collected until the end of the semester after the instructor had posted grades to ensure that the study had no effect on their final course outcome. Also, students were told that the nature of the data collection was not evaluative and that the quantification of metadiscourse markers did not have any relationship to the quality of the student writing. Finally, students were told that if they preferred to opt out of the portfolio portion of the study that they would need to email their instructor by a specific date in order to do so. In the LLC class 21 portfolios were collected, and in the non-LLC class, 19 portfolios were collected. The portfolio numbers for the two classes were slightly off due to a few students choosing to drop the non-LLC class, one student who chose to opt out, and a couple of students who chose not to turn in

any portfolio at all at the end of the semester.

Because all assignments in the classes studied were collected digitally and were given digital feedback including the final portfolios, all data collection and transfer was also conducted digitally. The process of portfolio collection and processing began with the instructor of the classes, who went through and removed any identifying information existing on the student portfolios. Each portfolio that was sent for data collection had a cover letter and three of the four papers students wrote throughout the semester. While multiple drafts existed for each paper, data were collected only from the cover letter and the final versions of each paper, presuming that the final version would be the most sophisticated version that each student had created. Each portfolio received an alphanumeric code, with the A portfolios representing the non-LLC class and the B portfolios representing the LLC class.

In the initial stages of data collection, I searched for all ten metadiscourse markers from both interactional and interactive categories on Hyland's model. I performed a control-find function for each of the words Hyland listed as examples for each category in each paper of each portfolio. For example, in looking for transitions, I searched for the words "in addition", "but", "thus", and "and." I checked each highlighted word to ensure that the particular use constituted a metadiscursive marker. There were two main disqualifying conditions: first, if the highlighted section was a portion of another word it was discounted (e.g., if the word "but" showed up as the highlighted portion of a word like "buttered" it was discounted); second, if the highlighted word was in fact the whole word, but represented a function that was not metadiscursive, it was also discounted (e.g., if the word "state" was used not as an evidential [as in "the author stated x"] but rather as

a proper noun as in the "United States," it was discounted). This judgment was particularly tricky for words like "about" since in the case of a sentence like "It was about noon when I went to the store" the word is a hedge, but in the case of a sentence like "I was thinking about penguins" the word is a preposition.

After counting the metadiscourse markers of the first ten portfolios in each class, the categories searched were narrowed down for efficiency and percent use. For example, after collecting data from the first batch of portfolios, there were no more than one and often zero uses of the phrases like "in addition", "in other words", and "it is clear that" and they were accordingly discounted from the data to streamline the metadiscourse marker searches to those appearing most in the data. After making these determinations, three of the five categories in each of the metadiscourse dimensions remained as search frameworks.

In the interactive dimension, the metadiscourse categories of transitions, specifically "but" and "and" were identified in each portfolio document. Also, the frame markers "final/last" and "next" were identified, as well as the evidentials "state" and "say." Code glosses and endorphic markers were not found often enough in the portfolio documents to continue data collection. In the interaction dimension, the hedges "might" and "about" were searched for in the data, as well as the boosters "in fact" and "definitely." Self mentions, which were undeniably the most interesting and often used of the metadisourse categories, were represented by searching for the words "I", "me", "my", "our" and "we." Also, variations of these words such as "myself" and "ourselves" were counted. Attitude markers and engagement markers were not identified with enough frequency to warrant further data collection after the first wave of portfolios.

In discussing his methodologies, Hyland recognizes that metadiscourse data gathering is meant to allow for comparisons between different genres or groups of writing, rather than to make claims about the specific number of metadiscourse instances. This notion was central to my data collection and analysis in two ways. First, rather than focusing on the sheer numbers of metadiscourse markers in each data set, I was more concerned with the percent use of each marker and differences in usage between classes. Secondly, Hyland identifies that metadiscourse analysis is useful for comparing genres. It was this assertion that led to my decision to look at metadiscourse as it occurred in each individual document of each portfolio rather than as it occurred exclusively in the portfolio as a whole. This procedure allowed me to investigate not only differences in metadiscourse trends in each set of portfolios to assess differences in each class, but also to assess differences between the five separate genres involved with the portfolio documents: cover letter, narrative, restaurant review, rhetorical analysis, and argument.

Once all data were collected, the percent use of each metadiscourse category was calculated by dividing the number of instances by the number of words in each paper, and then within each portfolio at the individual level. The same analysis was conducted for the collective portfolio data at the class level, as well as at the genre level. For the metadiscourse markers by class, a chi-square goodness-of-fit test was conducted in order to determine if each category difference was of statistical significance. In order to perform the chi-square test, portfolio numbers had to be even. Therefore, a random number generator function was used on a TI-83 calculator between the values of 0 and 21. The first two numbers generated were the portfolio numbers of the LLC data that were excluded from the results in the chi-square test. Because the chi-square test does

not account for directionality, meaning that the test does not say, for example, which students use more of one metadiscourse marker than another, but rather says merely that a difference between the two does exist. Because of this, once the test was conducted analysis of the data by category turned to the percent uses of each data set by class.

Chapter 3: Results

3.1 Classroom Community Scale

i. Community, Connectedness, and Learning Scale Results

The Classroom Community Scale results from both classes showed unexpected similarity. Though in the overall classroom community scale and in both of the subscales the LLC Core Writing class scored slightly higher percentages than the non-LLC Core Writing class, the difference was never higher than two points. The chi-square test showed no statistical difference in the data on any of the three scales measured. Using the average of the non-LLC responses as the expected value and each of the numbers generated from the LLC responses as the observed values, the sum of all numbers was generated. Given a goal p value of .05 and a degree of freedom of 17, the critical value showing a statistical difference would have needed to be 27.59. The closest value generated, as shown below, was 21.39 in the connectedness subscale. Despite this, the fact that the numbers are so close is itself an interesting finding, given the different community experiences of each group of students. Table 3.1 below shows the results of the Classroom Community Scale in the non-LLC class and then in the LLC class. The results are listed by student and then as an average for each of the three scales involved in the survey. Each chi-square value generated for each subscale is shown at the bottom of the table, along with the critical value needed.

Table 3.1: Results of Community, Connectedness, and Learning Sub-Scales

	Community Scale	Connectedness Scale	Learning Scale
Non-LLC Data			
Student 1	57	25	32
Student 2	53	23	30
Student 3	44	17	27

Student 4	50	21	29
Student 5	50	22	28
Student 6	52	23	29
Student 7	64	29	35
Student 8	43	15	28
Student 9	56	27	29
Student 10	55	24	31
Student 11	40	12	28
Student 12	59	31	29
Class Average	**51.91666667**	**22.41666667**	**29.58333333**
Stand. Deviation	7.012434843	5.583389869	2.193309386
LLC Data			
Student 1	55	21	34
Student 2	46	18	28
Student 3	53	23	30
Student 4	59	28	33
Student 5	60	27	33
Student 6	48	25	23
Student 7	52	27	25
Student 8	52	28	24
Student 9	57	32	28
Student 10	54	28	26
Student 11	57	23	34
Student 12	42	20	22
Student 13	62	22	40
Student 14	48	20	28
Student 15	63	33	30
Student 16	57	25	32
Student 17	39	13	31
Student 18	58	24	34
Class Average	**53.44444444**	**24.27777778**	**29.72222222**
Stand. Deviation	6.679399605	4.944462804	4.675411974
Chi-square value			
27.59 (critical)	15.65	21.39	11.94

ii. Statement Response Results

Individual statement responses seemed to follow the same trend as the various scores for each scale of Rovai's measurement tool. While the numbers showed some

variation, the variation was quite small. In several questions the LLC class responses seemed to yield slightly higher numbers in the data than non-LLC classes, though in individual statement responses this was not as consistently the case as it was in the overall scale data. Table 3.2 shows the class averages per question asked in the Classroom Community survey. The highest possible average would be 4.0.

Table 3.2: Results of LLC and Non-LLC Responses by Question

Question	LLC Class Average	Non-LLC Class Average
1. I feel that students in this course care about each other	2.6	2.3
2. I feel that I am encouraged to ask questions	3.28	3.08
3. I feel connected to others in this course	2.6	2.17
4. I feel that it is hard to get help when I have a question	3.38	3.5
5. I do not feel a spirit of community	2.56	2.33
6. I feel that I receive timely feedback	3	3.33
7. I feel that this course is like a family	1.78	1.83
8. I feel uneasy exposing gaps in my understanding	2.6	2.4
9. I feel isolated in this course	3.1	3.08
10. I feel reluctant to speak openly	3.1	2.92
11. I trust others in this course	2.4	2.4
12. I feel that this course results in only modest learning	2.2	2.5
13. I feel that I can rely on others in this course	2.5	2.09
14. I feel that other students do not help me learn	2.6	2.08
15. I feel that members of this course depend on me	1.6	1.4
16. I feel that I am given ample opportunities to learn	3.1	3.08
17. I feel uncertain about others in this course	2.39	2.25
18. I feel that my educational needs are not being met	3.1	3.25
19. I feel confident that others will support me	2.7	2.67
20. I feel that this course does not promote a desire to learn	3.2	3.4

*For positively worded statements, a score of 4 represents a response of "Strongly Agree" whereas for negatively worded statements, a score of 4 represents a response of "Strongly Disagree."

3.2 Instructor Interview

The instructor interview generated some of the most interesting data to consider when triangulating the differences between LLC and non-LLC classrooms. One difference that the instructor noted was the way that students constructed groups within the class. In the non-LLC class, the instructor discusses that students "tended to form groups pretty quickly even when I put them in other workshop groups on purpose to have them interact with other students in the class" (Core Writing Instructor). LLC students, as reported, seemed more comfortable working with a wider range of students in the class. This difference in student interaction might be attributable to the fact that students in the LLC are much more likely to see their peers from class outside of class, increasing level of comfort with different students.

In addition, the instructor mentioned that in large group discussion LLC students were more likely to contribute to the conversation evenly, a fact the instructor attributes to the fact that "they were more familiar with each other through their course and through the workshops themselves" (Core Writing Instructor). Overall, the instructor indicated that the major difference in classroom interaction was one of familiarity: LLC students seemed to be more comfortable and familiar with other students and non-LLC students seemed to be less familiar with classmates. While the presence of the LLC might account for these differences, the instructor did note that another factor involved in the level of interaction involved the class time. Because the non-LLC class was far earlier in the morning, students may have interacted less simply because they were more tired.

Upon being questioned about the differences in the writing patterns of the two groups, the instructor identified that LLC writers tended to have more polished second

drafts than their counterparts. In other words, while the quality of ideas did not change from class to class, writers in the LLC accounted in the second draft more often for "small scale things…like grammar, making sure things were spelled correctly and just the very sentence level things" (Core Writing Instructor). The only content difference noted during the interview was the choice of topics. Where the non-LLC writers seemed to have much more similarity and overlap in topics, LLC writers branched out to a more diverse range of topics. Interestingly, in accounting for why that difference might exist, the instructor pointed out that the topics "seemed to be much more varied and a lot of them were varied based on the other classes the students were taking" (Core Writing Instructor). This finding might indicate that students from the LLC class had an easier time translating content from one class to another in terms of writing.

A trend in the interview responses was that students in the LLC class were much more vocal about their decisions in class. In addition to talking about this in terms of students being more vocal about their topic decision-making process, the instructor also discussed the issue in terms of classroom management. Upon being asked if there were any differences in the management of the two classes, the instructor noted that the LLC students "were just more vocal, and also more vocal when they didn't like something we were doing in class" (Core Writing Instructor). Also, the instructor noted that the LLC students had to be quieted down more often in class than the non-LLC students (which might also have been motivated by the factor of early morning class time) and that they would sigh audibly more often to show disinterest in the class.

When asked if there was anything else that the instructor noticed about the classes, the issue of entitlement was brought up. "One thing I actually did notice that was

interesting with my LLC class," according to the instructor, "was a little bit more of a sense of entitlement as far as interacting with me" (Core Writing Instructor). The instructor noted that LLC students were more likely to argue about grades and dispute essay comments. The instructor was not sure why this was the case, but considered that it might have been due to being "more comfortable with the environment of shared authority in the classroom" (Core Writing Instructor). Whatever the factors were that caused this increase of entitlement, the other responses from the instructor are consistent with the trend of greater maintenance required for LLC students.

3.3 Metadiscourse Variation by Classroom Community

Similar to the results from the Classroom Community Scale, the metadiscourse use between the non-LLC class portfolios and the LLC class portfolios is incredibly consistent when looking at the percentages alone. However, the chi-square analysis showed that there is a statistically significant difference in some of the metadiscourse categories studied in each class, specifically that there is a significant difference in transitions, evidentials, hedges, and self mentions. In order to be considered a statistically significant finding, a critical value was determined for each category based on a goal p value of .05. For every category except self mentions, the critical value was 55.8, for self mentions it was 124.3. In the categories listed above, the value that was generated by the chi-square equation was above the critical value. For each equation, the average value from the non-LLC scores was used as the expected value and each LLC score was used as an observed value. The totals were then summed, yielding the chi-square value for each category. While the chi-square test did show significance in these metadiscourse patterns, because some of the data points, especially for hedges, were

under five, the tests are not entirely accurate. For categories such as transitions and self mentions, because the numbers are so high, this is less of a problem. Also, because the chi-square test is not directional, any analysis about which class uses more or less metadiscourse of a particular category is based on the percentage alone.

Overall, most metadiscourse marker percentages were quite low, with the exception of transitions in the interactive dimension and self mentions in the interactional dimension. While the higher number of metadiscourse maker percentages depended upon the category, there was more metadiscourse used overall in the portfolios of the non-LLC students than in the portfolios of the LLC students and in most of the major categories, but not always enough to be statistically significant. Table 4.1 shows the total number of words, total numbers of metadiscourse marker by word and category, and the percent use of each by class. Also, the critical value for each category and the chi-square value generated is also included in the tale.

Table 4.1: Percentages of Metadiscourse Use by Class

	Non-LLC Data	%	LLC Data	%	Critical Value	Chi-Square Value
Total Words	88861		100428			
Total "but"	412	**0.46**	439	0.44		
Total "and"	2836	3.19	3214	**3.20**		
TRANSITIONS	3248	**3.66**	3653	3.64	55.8	**338.5**
Total "final/last"	37	**0.042**	31	0.031		
Total "next"	15	**0.017**	12	0.012		
FRAME MARKERS	52	**0.059**	43	0.043	55.8	--
Total "state"	26	0.029	41	**0.041**		
Total "say"	51	**0.057**	39	0.039		
EVIDENTIALS	77	**0.087**	80	0.080	55.8	**111.6**

Total "might"	20	**0.022**	21	0.021		
Total "about"	50	**0.056**	37	0.037		
HEDGES	70	**0.079**	58	0.058	55.8	**181.5**
Total "in fact"	11	**0.012**	6	0.006		
Total "definitely"	27	0.031	40	**0.040**		
BOOSTERS	38	0.043	46	**0.046**	55.8	53.9
Total "we"	417	**0.47**	354	0.352		
Total "my"	1355	1.52	1558	**1.55**		
Total "me"	371	0.42	454	**0.452**		
Total "our"	218	**0.25**	163	0.162		
Total "I"	2425	**2.73**	2672	2.66		
SELF MENTIONS	4786	**5.39**	5201	5.18	124.3	**707.9**
Interactive	3377	**3.80**	3776	3.76		
Interactional	4894	**5.51**	5305	5.28		
Total metadiscourse	8271	**9.31**	9081	9.042		

* Percentages that represent the highest numbers for each category are highlighted in bold, as are categories are of statistical significance. A chi-square value could not be generated for frame markers due to vast inconsistencies in their use by portfolio.

i. Interactive metadiscourse by classroom community

Transitions represent the metadiscourse category used most frequently in the interactive category. In both LLC and non-LLC student writing, the transition words "but" and "and" make up nearly 4% of all words used in all portfolio documents. While non-LLC portfolios show slightly more use of "but," LLC portfolios show a slightly higher use of "and," leveling out the transition category considerably. Still, the chi-square test showed that there is a statistically significant difference in the use of LLC vs. non-LLC metadiscourse in this category. In overall frame marker use and in each specific instance of frame marker use, non-LLC portfolios had a higher percentage. Frame markers had the smallest percentage use of the three categories used in the

interactive dimension of metadiscourse, and the data were too inconsistent to yield a chi-square value.

ii. Interactional metadiscourse by classroom community

The percent difference in use of hedges more substantially shows non-LLC use as a percentage leader over LLC courses than it does in other categories. Both hedging words, "might" and "about," show a significantly higher percent use by non-LLC portfolio writers. Self mentions represent the metadiscourse category with the largest percent use of any marker discussed in the study. Of all the words used in each data set, self mentions made up over 5% of the total words used in both LLC and non-LLC classrooms. The self mentions "my" and "me" had a slightly higher percent use in LLC portfolios and the self mentions "we," "our," and "I" had a slightly higher percent used in non-LLC portfolios. Overall, more self mentions were used by non-LLC portfolio writers. One issue of interest in the self mention category of interactional metadiscourse is the controversy over whether or not students should use personal pronouns in academic writing. From the data collected from these portfolios, it seems that students are willing to use these self mentions in their writing, but this is highly dependent upon the genre of the paper, which will be discussed in the following section.

3.4 Metadiscourse Variation by Genre

While the original intent of this project was to focus on the differences in metadiscourse use between LLC and non-LLC student portfolios, a side inquiry was made into the differences of metadiscourse use by genre. Hyland defines genre as "a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations" (87). Also, he discusses the importance of metadiscourse

as a way to distinguish one genre from another by analyzing the subtle differences in the way that the writer guides the reader through the writing according to genre expectation. Swales and Hyland both believe that student writing makes use of genre characteristics. And indeed, the following data concerning the differences in metadiscursive trends in student writing confirm the view of Swales and Hyland that students are aware of differences in writing conventions based on different situations. While this is an interesting finding for a future study, the findings are listed here only to highlight a difference in genre, rather than to prove that genre changes occur due to different community patterns in student writers. In table 4.2 below we see the total overall words in each genre, which is a combined number for both classes. Also, the percentage of metadiscourse by category is listed, as well as the totals for interactive, interactional, and overall metadiscourse use by genre category.

Table 4.2: Percentages of Metadiscourse Use by Genre

	Narrative	Restaurant Review	Rhetorical Analysis	Argument	Cover Letter	Total Numbers	%
Total Instances	37	34	33	16	40	200	
Total Words	43, 938	37,323	47,671	18536	42577	190,045	
Transitions	3.73%	4.18%	3.19%	3.059%	3.57%	6,803	3.58%
Frame Markers	0.027%	0.07%	0.02%	0.016%	0.099%	92	0.05%
Evidentials	0.036%	0.027%	0.21%	0.12%	0.014%	154	0.08%
Hedges	0.098%	0.094%	0.04%	0.13%	0.014%	128	0.07%
Boosters	0.016%	0.078%	0.029%	0.043%	0.061%	84	0.04%
Self Mentions	9.12%	3.53%	0.42%	0.94%	10.07%	9,987	5.26%
Interactive	3.79%	4.27%	3.415%	3.19%	3.68%	7,049	3.71%
Interactional	9.23%	3.69%	0.49%	1.12%	10.15%	10,199	5.34%
Total Metadiscourse	13.03%	7.97%	3.91%	4.31%	13.83%	17,248	9.08%

* Numbers are based on data from both LLC and non-LLC portfolios.

Before getting into the percent differences in individual metadiscourse markers, it is worth noting the frequency with which students chose to include certain genre pieces in

their portfolios. Of the 40 portfolios studied, all but three students chose to include their personal narratives, often citing in their cover letters that they found the most personal enjoyment in writing their narrative pieces. Rhetorical analysis and restaurant review papers were the next most popular pieces for inclusion in both classes' portfolios. Argument papers were by far the least likely to be included in student portfolios, with nearly half of the number of argument papers included compared with other genres. Percentages for these decisions were consistent across classes, giving rise to the question: why might students be less proud or less focused on revising argument essays for portfolio inclusion? While this is likely due to difficulty or length of the paper, the question merits future study as it has direct implications on the ways that institutional habitus is constructed and reinforced by writing assignments of the academy.

i. Interactive metadiscourse by genre

The use of transitions was one of the most consistent metadiscourse categories across genres. While the genre containing the most transitions at 4.18% is the restaurant review, this is true of three other categories of metadiscourse as well, showing the review to be one of the most heavily metadiscursive genres studied. Interestingly, the category with the least transitions is the argument paper, using nearly 1% fewer transition words than restaurant reviews. When combining all transitions from every portfolio document from both classes, the transition words "but" and "and" make up 3.58% of all words used, a percentage that is the second highest among metadiscourse markers considered in this study.

The use of evidentials in different genres of writing provides one of the most distinct result patterns. Overwhelmingly, the genre that makes the most use of

evidentials is the rhetorical analysis, which is logical given that when rhetorically analyzing the works of others quoting and referencing material is unavoidable. Beyond that, the genre argument uses the next most evidential related metadiscourse, with a severe decline for the other genre categories. In the cover letters, restaurant reviews, and narratives, evidentials are almost never used. Of the total word count for all portfolios, evidentials made up .08% of all words used. One factor that might account for the low percentage use of evidentials is the nature of the English 101 course. As seen in the current data analysis, the role of English 101 is to introduce students to multiple genres of writing in order to prepare them for future collegiate writing scenarios. If this was a 102 class as opposed to a 101 class, it is likely that evidential use would be drastically higher, since the intent of the English 102 class is to provide students with sound research writing skills, requiring them to work more often with the texts of other authors.

ii. Interactional metadiscourse by genre

Like evidentials, hedges are a metadiscourse category that has a clear pattern of use amongst genres. While students hedge a lot less than anticipated given this study, when students do hedge it is overwhelmingly within the genre of argument. In fact, hedging is the only metadiscourse category for which the genre of argument has a percentage lead, likely due to the fact that students are less confident about persuading an audience through evidence than they are about discussing their personal experiences or opinions.

Not surprisingly, the genre with the highest percentages of self mentions was the cover letter, which explicitly asks students to describe their experiences and decision making processes regarding the class and the portfolio creation. Over 10%, 1 out of

every 10 words, in the cover letter was a self mention. Compared to the overall percent use of self mentions throughout all portfolios, those used in cover letters nearly double in percentage over the overall use (5.34%). Also somewhat intuitively, the next genre that has the highest level of self mentions is the narrative, with 9.12% of the text composed of self mentions. Because of the overwhelming amount of self mentions used in both the cover letter and the narrative genre, they both nearly tie for most metadiscourse used from the interactional dimension, with the cover letter taking a slight lead over the narrative in the end. Total metadiscourse used by genre also goes to the cover letter, which contains 13.83% metadiscourse, 4% more than the 9.08% use of metadiscourse in all portfolio documents as a whole. This finding shows that the portfolio documents are fulfilling their intended purpose, by allowing students to reflect on their experiences as a writer in English 101.

Chapter 4: Discussion

4.1 Community

This study set out to investigate any differences that existed between the writing and interactional behaviors of two distinct classroom communities: one that took place within a Living Learning Community and one which took place on the campus at large. The goal in doing this was to determine whether or not overlapping communities, in this case living space and classroom environment, influence the way that students perceive of community both explicitly and in their writing. In terms of how students perceive of classroom community, Rovai's Classroom Community Scale was administered to determine how students felt about the classroom environment. The data showed that students had very little difference in how they felt about their classroom community between the two classes. One possible factor that could be at play in these results is the small sample size. Overall, there were only thirty students who participated in the survey, twelve from the non-LLC class and 18 from the LLC class. A sample size of double the number of students for each classroom environment would likely be needed to bring differences noticed in responses to the level of significance.

One thing that is also very clear from these results is that both sets of students felt that their Core Writing classrooms fostered the type of community that made learning more enjoyable and interactive. This similarity can be attributed to a number of factors, not the least of which could include the level of success that the instructor had in creating both environments. While the students in these classes came from different living spaces, different backgrounds, and different campus orientations, one thing that they undeniably had in common was the instructor guiding their experiences in class. In fact, the

responses of the LLC and non-LLC students on the matter of community in the classroom were so close, that it is highly likely that the quality of instruction was a factor that completely outweighed any influence that the LLC and non-LLC environments had on the students in class (Ellett and Schmidt). This reality introduces a factor that is not as often discussed in the literature as it perhaps should be: the influence of strong role models on the academic performance, writing quality, and community perception of students.

No matter what a student does outside of class, no matter how they interact with their peers in both environments, the presence of a strong faculty member may trump these factors, since it is ultimately the instructor who creates the circumstances in which students live out those influences on a daily basis. If this study were to be reformulated, one way that this might be accounted for would be to introduce a number of different faculty members into the study, rather than focusing on just one. By expanding the study to multiple instructors and increasing the number of students in the study, the data yielded might paint a more accurate picture of the classroom differences attributable to LLC-participation, if they exist.

Overall, the instructor interview showed that the LLC students in this study seem to be more comfortable interacting with the instructor and with other classmates. However, these interactions might not always result in the most positive of circumstances. Of the three questions where LLC students ranked measurably higher than their non-LLC counterparts, all involved showing a degree of increased satisfaction with peer interaction and influence over individual learning. The class instructor noted that students in the LLC class were more "comfortable interacting with people outside of

the students they were sitting near" and "much more willing to work with everyone" (Core Writing Instructor). As discussed earlier, while some of this is attributable to the overlapping communities students experience beyond the classroom environment, the instructor was also careful to point out multiple times that interaction likely also suffered in the non-LLC class given that the class was early in the morning, a time when students have a hard time getting motivated to interact.

In describing classroom management issues, the instructor also pointed out that the increased level of peer interaction that the LLC students had was also at times a double edged sword: "there was more of a sense of camaraderie and so I had a lot of students who would talk over each other sometimes and I would have to kind of reign them in" (Core Writing Instructor). In this respect, the classroom community of LLC students experienced more mixed results perhaps than the non-LLC course-- while there was greater student interaction and participation, sometimes that greater level of comfort led to management issues. While this might have led to increased classroom interruption, the instructor did comment in the interview that students were easy to bring back on track once they realized that they were being disruptive.

From all of the above data and analysis, one thing is clear: in the instances studied, LLC classroom environments differ from traditional non-LLC classrooms in that they can generate a thicker social fabric, which influences classroom community development in a number of ways, some for better and some not. Overlapping the social and learning communities of students has been long considered a plausible way to increase student success and satisfaction on campus. However, what Tinto observed in his 2000 article in *Assessment Update* is still true today:

> Learning Communities do not represent a "magic bullet" for student learning. As with any other type of pedagogy, there are unavoidable limits on their effectiveness…What is needed now is not merely more such programs, but the establishment of institutional assessment strategies that will provide the sorts of data institutions need to improve and institutionalize these efforts over time (12).

It is my hope that this study has added to the type of literature Tinto was looking for when he set this goal for Living Learning Community research, and that institutions will be able to consider the data described here from multiple angles, in multiple disciplinary contexts in order to consider how their programs might benefit and grow.

4.2 Language and Writing

This study showed that changes in classroom behavior and the social dimension of learning manifest themselves in different classroom environments and that this blurring of distinct community lines might have an impact on the way that students write. While shifts in metadiscourse were present and some categories generated statistically significant results, the lack of directionality and inconsistencies in data points made it difficult to tell how accurate the chi-square test results were and what tangible differences in writing practices emerged from the data. While there were differences in metadiscourse markers across genre, a larger sample size would be needed to determine true significance, perhaps in a follow-up study focused on genre alone.

The categories of metadiscourse use between classes that were statistically different were transitions, hedges, evidentials, and self mentions. During the data processing, what was found in the percentages was that, overall, more metadiscourse was used by non-LLC students. Thus, my hypothesis that students in LLC classes use more metadiscourse was proven to be incorrect. In thinking about why this might be the case, I returned to the work of Hyland to generate a new theory that might explain why non-LLC

students might use more metadiscourse.

In his book, Hyland discusses metadiscourse as a tool for writers to interact with and guide readers throughout a piece of written work. While one might argue that control of metadiscourse might signal greater awareness of community presence in writing, the results of this study argue that this might not always be for the best, at least in the context of new student writing. The central argument behind this shift involves the motivation for why students would need to or want to use metadisocurse in the first place. Metadiscourse is important in the creation of an interactive text. The writer is dependent upon the reader to understand and follow the arguments, assertions, story line, etc. being made. Metadiscourse, then, is important for making an appeal to the reader, a linguistic appeal which invites the reader to follow along on the journey of the text. However, if one considers the role that metadiscourse plays for student writers who lack authority and are in the midst of redesigning their role as writers (as discussed by Sommers and Saltz), it can be posited that students might increase their use of metadiscourse as a way to compensate for the lack of an established community to and in which they feel comfortable writing.

While this argument places the uncertainties of student writing at the center of community appeals in writing, professional writers are not exempt from this and, in some ways, may be under more pressure to conform to metadiscursive trends. Consider the world of professional publishing that MacDonald, for instance, discusses. Professional disciplines have consistent ways of writing that signal community membership. The need for professionals to publish and, in doing so, enter a community is therefore founded on a premise of unequal power dynamics. In order to be considered part of the

community, the author must subscribe to a set of expectations and make that knowledge explicit through their writing. Some scholars have referred to this trend as academic gate-keeping, and remark that in some contexts it can be detrimental in the world of professional academic writing.

If we apply these ideas to the two groups of students being studied, the argument could be made that students from the non-LLC class use metadiscourse in greater measure because they are compensating for the lack of community comfort in their writing that LLC students enjoy as a result of their overlapping social and academic contexts (and as a result of their institutional habitus). In other words, it is possible that the students in the non-LLC class are less confident that their writing will be understood by a community or audience, so they increase levels of metadiscourse in order to ensure that they are getting their point across in a framework that can be understood.

Where the non-LLC students have a higher percent use of hedging in their work, reducing the stated strength of their words, LLC students have a higher percent use of boosters, which do the exact opposite by strengthening claims. While the data yielded from this study cannot be used alone to back this claim, it does raise some interesting questions regarding the ways that confidence and comfort with writing style and experience might offer another dimension to metadiscourse studies of the future. As stated before, this study has in many ways generated more questions than it began with about metadiscourse and why students might use it towards different ends; these questions would need to be followed up with more extensive study to answer. What the data yielded here do show is that the effects of community membership on metadiscourse use is more complex than initially thought. Moreover, the regenerated theory of

metadiscourse use as being indicative of a distinction between students who already belong versus those trying to belong, is theoretically consistent with the notion of habitus, the overarching lens through which all of the my data and results will be considered.

4.3 Implications of Institutional Habitus

The results of the study so far have shown that community perception and metadiscourse trends in data from LLC and non-LLC students have been relatively consistent. However, it is clear from the instructor interview that differences between the two classroom communities exist that relate to institutional habitus. The institutional habitus is most definitely at work in the creation of Living Learning Communities across campuses in the United States. One of the central concepts behind LLC's is that if students become connected to the campus culture, they are more likely to graduate and move on to other activities that perpetuate the habits of the institution of which they were a part. Key to this argument is the fact that when students enter into Living Learning Communities, they do so for the most part as self-selected candidates. In other words, the types of students who enroll in LLC's have a scholarly habitus that is already consistent with the environment of an LLC. The fact that most LLC's are based on selection of a major before entrance into the community furthers this notion. In this study, of the eight LLC communities that exist, only one is offered for students who have not declared a major and committed to one field to guide the patterns of their intellectual pursuit.

If future studies were designed to get at the same questions that this research project tried to answer, habitus might be a subject that is explicitly discussed with the instructor. Also helpful to this discussion would be more inclusion of data about the students themselves. If I could reformulate the study, I would be interested in the grades

that the students received on their papers, in the class, in other classes, and in past classes. Other data in terms of where students went to school, the education level of their parents, and their extracurricular experiences could go a long way in determining what students came in with in terms of an already established habitus. Ideally, students could also be followed throughout their college career to see how an evolving habitus was developed based on the writing done by students.

4.4 Conclusion

Though the goal of this study is not to claim that LLC's are redundant or that they do not serve a valuable purpose, I would advocate that current program implementation should keep this notion of habitus in mind when creating programs designed to help retain students. Data that show increased retention rates for students enrolled in LLC programs would likely have existed regardless of LLC creation, because the type of student that self selects to be a part of an LLC would likely have been retained due to pre-existing institutional habitus in the first place. In this way, program developers should consider whether creating new levels of structure via LLC development creates student success, or merely correlates with student success as a part of a larger institutional habitus that students had been generating long before setting foot on campus. Having said that, embracing the power of LLC programs to create and strengthen already existing educational structures and providing an environment that is comfortable for students is a legitimate goal, so long as it is recognized as such. However, the potential for LLC reformation or design change to focus more effort on helping students develop an institutional habitus who did not already have one in order to help students negotiate the college experience may lead to even more meaningful community building for our

students who are at risk. One way that this goal could be achieved would be to focus LLC recruitment efforts towards first-generation, low income, or other at risk student populations, rather than maintaining focus on students who have already declared a major.

In terms of composition pedagogy and linguistics, more studies which consider both the positive and negative effects of developing community participation and acceptance through language are needed. While many have begun to consider these notions, bringing in methodologies from various disciplines can go a long way towards making these studies count in more than just one conversation. Looking at metadiscourse, for example, is a great way to put a structural framework around such theoretical inquiries associated with gate keeping and the role of academic writing. Equal attention to the benefits and the drawbacks of community is a first step in showing how students can use community participation to help them succeed, rather than to isolate them further. Considered in the framework of institutional habitus, composition pedagogies may be designed to highlight in a more pronounced manner the ways in which writing habits and patterns are part of a larger, structured framework, prompting students to consider their role within this framework before they put their pen to the page. Discussions about the ways that linguistic tools like metadiscourse can show subconscious patterns in writing may offer a way to start these conversations.

In the words of Liz Thomas, "the habitus involves a set of complex and diverse predispositions, and although it is a dynamic concept, in which the past and the present, and the individual and the collective interact, change is slow" (440). Institutional habitus provides us with a framework for considering, in the larger picture, the ways that various

communities overlap to create a student's college experience. While Thomas argues that making changes to this framework is difficult given its multiple layers of complexity, the fact remains that change *is* possible. Reconsidering the role of habitus can both strengthen the experiences of our students who have a strong collegiate background guiding their experiences already (even experiences as small as the way they interact in a writing classroom) and offer mechanisms by which students who might otherwise not be given the opportunity to develop the skills they need to be successful in the environment of their choice can do so.

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Appendix A: Classroom Community Scale

SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: Below you will see a series of statements concerning a specific course or program you are presently taking or recently completed. Read each statement carefully and place an X in the parentheses to the right of the statement that comes closest to indicate how you feel about the course or program. You may use a pencil or pen. There are no correct or incorrect responses. If you neither agree nor disagree with a statement or are uncertain, place an X in the neutral (N) area. Do not spend too much time on any one statement, but give the response that seems to describe how you feel. ***Please respond to all items***

1. I feel that students in this course care about each other.......................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

2. I feel that I am encouraged to ask questions.......................................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

3. I feel connected to others in this course..(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

4. I feel that it is hard to get help when I have a question......................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

5. I do not feel a spirit of community..(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

6. I feel that I receive timely feedback..(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

7. I feel that this course is like a family..(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

8. I feel uneasy exposing gaps in my understanding..............................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

9. I feel isolated in this course..(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

10. I feel reluctant to speak openly...(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

11. I trust others in this course..(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

12. I feel that this course results in only modest learning.......................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

13. I feel that I can rely on others in this course....................................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

14. I feel that other students do not help me learn..................................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

15. I feel that members of this course depend on me..............................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

16. I feel that I am given ample opportunities to learn............................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

17. I feel uncertain about others in this course.......................................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

18. I feel that my educational needs are not being met............................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

19. I feel confident that others will support me.......................................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

20. I feel that this course does not promote a desire to learn...................(SA) (A) (N) (D) (SD)

Appendix B: Instructor Interview

Interviewer: This is an interview regarding the LLC and non-LLC classrooms of the Fall 2012 semester. So, do I have your permission to use this interview?

Instructor: Yes.

Question 1:

Interviewer: Can you begin by describing both of the classroom communities that you had?

Instructor: Well, one of my classes, that was the non-LLC course was at 8 am. The community in that class was a little less pronounced I feel. Part of it I do believe was because it was so early in the morning, students just didn't want to interact as much and I don't blame them, since it was very early in the morning. Students in that class tended to form groups pretty quickly even when I put them in other workshop groups on purpose to have them interact with other students in the class. You could tell they felt a little less comfortable interacting with people they weren't familiar with, which again could have just been attributed to the time and not wanting to talk to unfamiliar people. But it felt like they definitely formed their own little groups in that class and they were comfortable with. Whereas my 11 am class they were much more willing to work with everyone in the class. They were much more familiar with everyone because they were living in close proximity, so many of them knew each other from outside of classes- from orientation, from living in the same pod or the same floor so they were much more comfortable in working with people outside of the students that they were sitting near and much more comfortable interacting with them during workshop. And I also felt like

during large group discussion that class was a little more evenly distributed as far as students who were willing to contribute to the large group discussion versus the think-pair-share and small group discussion. I think a lot of that had to do with the fact that they were more comfortable speaking around the students in that class because they were more familiar with each other through their course and through the workshops themselves.

Question 2:

Interviewer: Thank you. Did you notice any differences in their writing at all?

Instructor: I think that the main difference that I think I noticed was that students in my LLC class were much more likely to have a goal of creating a much more polished middle draft for me, the first draft that I saw and commented on. They were much more careful about going through and doing small scale things that I don't necessarily grade them harshly for, like grammar, making sure things are spelled correctly and just the very sentence level things that it was much more polished as far as that was. As far as content I think the only other thing I noticed was mainly topic wise, the students in my LLC class wrote a much more varied group of argument essays, and looked at much more varied texts for their rhetorical analysis than my 8 am class, my 8 am class had much more overlap as far as subject matter, which I thought was interesting.

Question 3:

Interviewer: Do you think there's any particular reason for that?

Instructor: I honestly don't know. I didn't give them a list, I gave them things they couldn't write about, especially with the argument essay, and a list of things they weren't allowed to touch. But it was very interesting and I don't know if its just that some people

in the 8 am class kind of talked to each other and liked other peoples ideas but the 11 am class seemed to be much more varied and a lot of them were varied based on the other classes the students were taking, like a few students wrote about historical moments they had learned about in their history class, but they were also much more vocal about telling me that's where the connection was whereas my 8 am students I didn't often know kind of why they were writing about which subject they selected. There were a few students that were pretty open, like one girl works for planned parenthood and wanted to write an argument essay about how she thought that contraception should be covered, because she had worked for planned parenthood. Other than that, with the 8 am class it was a lot more overlap and more generic sort of arguments about global warming (I should have put that on my list!)- global warming or Obamacare, that was another big one. So I don't really know why, but the LLC class was much more varied in their topics ranging from German unity in World War II to why personal investment is the best way, I had a student who wrote about personal investment. So, I don't know- maybe they felt like the could draw more on their own majors and their own interests than my 8 am class, mainly they just picked something that was easy to talk about or picked something that they were familiar with that they had talked to another student in class about, so there was much more overlap there, much more kind of stock arguments in seemed like in that one. But I'm not quite sure why that happened.

Question 4:

Interviewer: Did you notice any difference in classroom management? Did they have different personalities behaviorally?

Instructor: They did. My 8 am class, and I contribute this also to earliness, was much quieter. I had my quarter of the students who spoke up a lot, so I did small group discussion and then the group would share because many students weren't comfortable speaking in the large group. So they were mainly quieter, which meant that classroom management was getting people to talk instead of stopping people from talking. And attendance was an issue, but I don't know if that's necessarily, it was an 8 am class so I had a lot of students gone quite a lot. A number of students ended up withdrawing because I told them that they could not pass the course with as many classes as they had missed and they actually did drop. My 11 am class was kind of the opposite. There was more of a sense of comraderie and so I had a lot of students who would talk over each other sometimes and I would have to kind of reign them in like "let's take turns". Or students who would just talk during class to the people sitting next to them and I have to tell them to stop and wait for them to stop talking. But once they knew they were on the spot they stopped pretty quickly. I mean, and its typical, like its usually the students who were in the back of the class who thought I wouldn't notice more often than not, but they were good about stopping once they knew that, hey, you're disrupting the classroom discussion, so they were good about that. On the whole, they were just more vocal, and also more vocal when they didn't like something we were doing in class- a few sighers, who did not like in class writing activities which, it's a writing class, we're going to write, but when we do free writes and stuff you'd hear a few *sighs audibly* So they were more comfortable doing things like that in class whereas the 8 am class, if they had a problem with that kind of activity they didn't show it. They were more comfortable showing disinterest in that class.

Question 5:

Interviewer: Any thing else you noticed about them?

Instructor: One thing I actually did notice that was interesting with my LLC class was a little bit more of a sense of entitlement as far as interacting with me. They often felt a little bit more entitled to argue with me about grades, more entitled to fight back against comments that I gave to the essays, which I don't know if they were more, just more comfortable with the environment of shared authority in the classroom, that they were more able to do that, but I noticed it much more that they felt comfortable doing that sort of thing with me, much more so that the students in my 8 am class.