

Language and Relationship Building: Analyzing Discursive Spaces of Interdisciplinary Collaboration^[1]

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Abstract: Interdisciplinary collaboration is a cornerstone of WAC/WID efforts and integral to productive relationships between writing specialists and disciplinary content experts. Such collaboration, however, suffers from well-documented challenges. In this article, I use textual discourse analysis to build a deeper understanding of the discursive spaces through which interdisciplinary collaboration takes place. Drawing on Norman Fairclough's (2001) framework for interactional analysis, I examine the linguistic features of a handout I composed to facilitate a WID meeting with biology faculty. Applying Fairclough's elements of social practices—representing, relating, identifying, and valuing—I trace connections between language use and themes in WAC/WID scholarship in order to investigate the complex process by which writing specialists operationalize disciplinary values in local contexts. My analysis shows how linguistic and rhetorical properties of communication can enable interdisciplinary relationships in WAC/WID contexts by strategically bridging disciplinary differences, as well as constrain relationships by confounding participant roles and responsibilities. Mapping links between discourse, language, and social interaction, I argue, allows writing specialists to critically examine our communicative strategies and their impact on the professional relationships we broker, empowering us to more creatively navigate the challenge of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Trends toward globalization and internationalization in higher education and the professional world (Gustafsson et al., 2011) reinforce the need for college graduates to be able to communicate across disciplinary lines. To nurture this capacity in students, faculty also must develop what Myra Strober (2010) calls interdisciplinary "habits of thought." Embracing this dual mission, cross-curricular literacy (CCL)^[2] efforts engage both faculty and students in interdisciplinary practices. With strong ties to the National Writing Project, CCL initiatives have traditionally put faculty across disciplines in conversation about writing and teaching writing (Bazerman et al., 2005; Russell, 2002). Condon and Rutz (2012) emphasize the ongoing importance of interdisciplinary communication among faculty, emphasizing "recruiting," "partnering," "consensus building," "reaching out," sustaining "two way conversations," and cultivating "symbiotic relationships" as central activities for WAC programs in various states of progression (p. 366-76).

While collaboration among writing specialists and disciplinary content experts is widely valued, it remains difficult to do. Participants in CCL projects often struggle to "productively share their

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expertise" (Soliday, 2011, p. 22), "negotia[te] . . . contested beliefs and practices" (McConlogue, Mitchell, & Peake, 2012, p. 205), recognize and build on "congruencies between fields" (Lillis & Rai, 2011), and sustain "mutual respect and ongoing dialogue" (Paretti & Powell, 2009, p. 3). To cultivate meaningful relationships with disciplinary colleagues in the face of such challenges, writing specialists need strategies for communicating across disciplinary differences. Existing research focuses on establishing theoretical frameworks (Paretti, McNair, Belanger, & George, 2009), developing methods and models for CCL work (Jablonski, 2006), and understanding factors influencing collaborative partnerships (Jacobs, 2007). Yet, we see fewer examples in the literature of *how* writing specialists and disciplinary content experts "create discursive spaces for collaboration" (Jacobs, 2007, p. 59) at the level of face-to-face interaction. Just as scholarship embraces the "local" nature of WAC at the programmatic level by showing how broad principles and practices are operationalized according to specific institutional contexts (Fulwiler & Young, 1990; McLeod, 1988; McLeod & Soven, 1992; Pennington & Boyer, 2003), we need examples of how WAC leaders undertake this process through interpersonal communication with disciplinary colleagues.

Taking my cue from discourse-based research in the context of student learning, this article seeks to improve interdisciplinary practices by exploring the role of "language [in] mediat[ing] collaborative relationships" among faculty (McNair, Paretti, & Davitt 2010, p. 233; Nowacek, 2005; Nowacek, 2007; Nowawec, 2011). In the spirit of what Charles Bazerman and Paul Prior (2004) call "analysis of textual practice," I examine a handout I created as a writing consultant to facilitate a meeting among biology faculty near the end of my two-year collaboration with the department. Working to understand "where the words, ideas, and organization of [the] text come from," I investigate the discourses and experiences that shaped the handout (Bazerman & Prior, 2004, p. 4).^[3] I make visible the process by which I operationalized WAC/WID principles in my unique situation in order to model more systematic reflection on the (un)conscious mental practices of WAC leaders communicating with faculty in other disciplines. Attending to these practices is an important step toward cultivating the interdisciplinary habits of mind students and faculty need to thrive in our changing educational and global landscape.

Background

The summer before my second year as a Composition and Rhetoric graduate student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Professor Chase,^[4] the chair of the School of Biological Science, approached the chair of the English department and asked for someone to develop and teach a writing component in his first-year honors seminar for non-majors. I accepted the position and co-taught the seminar that fall. According to Professor Chase the course explored "concepts in biology that [would] prove useful to [students] as citizens of the world." It was meant to help students transition from high school to college by teaching them to work at a "higher level, [with] higher expectations, [while] being more autonomous." Professor Chase added the writing component because student writing tended to "not [be] strong enough to support the things they need[ed] to be able to do" in college and beyond.

Professor Chase had been involved with Writing Across the Curriculum initiatives at other institutions without much success. He hoped that co-teaching with someone who knew "about how to teach writing" would help him learn strategies for supporting student writers and provide a model for integrating writing instruction into other courses in the department. At the end of the semester, he deemed our "pilot" project relatively successful and invited me to work with a new, untenured professor and graduate teaching assistants to implement writing workshops in the lab sections of BIOS 207: Ecology and Evolution, a 200-level course required for biology majors.

Students wrote four lab reports in BIOS 207, each corresponding to a major experiment. According to the faculty instructor, Professor Blake, students traditionally received little support in learning the lab report genre. With that in mind, I designed four writing workshops to help students identify rhetorical conventions in science articles as well as revise their drafts for content, global issues and "scientific style." During the spring and following fall, I rotated through the lab sections working with TAs to implement the workshops. Professor Blake helped shape the writing workshops to meet the needs of science writers and met regularly with me and the TAs to troubleshoot, explore strategies for responding to drafts, and develop assessment rubrics. He invited me to talk about writing essay exams during his lecture hour; designed a wiki where students could collaboratively compose and respond to study questions as a way to process course material; and implemented grading rotations in lab sections so students could experience different forms of feedback. I continued to support new TAs during the spring semester as they learned to conduct the workshops we'd fine-tuned.

In addition to my experiences with Professors Chase and Blake, two pivotal events shaped my assumptions and expectations about how to convince faculty to develop science writing curriculum and pedagogy in my absence: 1) biology faculty's decision not to participate in a university sponsored CCL initiative, and 2) their development of a grant proposal to fund departmental writing curriculum assessment and redesign. The events highlight faculty interest in improving student writing as well as forces that constrained our collaboration, including institutional criteria for tenure and promotion that de-emphasizes teaching and disciplinary practices that encourage specialization rather than integrated expertise.

Pivotal Moments

One year after I began working in the department, biology faculty were invited to participate in The Faculty Leadership Writing Initiative (FLWI), a formal WID program locally funded by a Program of Excellence Grant. Coordinated by a tenured faculty member in composition and rhetoric, FLWI aimed to enhance student learning by helping disciplinary faculty integrate writing into their courses. Since biology faculty had been developing writing components with me, they were invited to form a WIG.

During their initial meeting with FLWI coordinators, faculty talked at length about how writing could enrich students' understanding of complex scientific concepts, but seemed skeptical as FLWI coordinators outlined WIG procedures: seven meetings in two months, written artifacts documenting each meeting, a poster presentation for the spring summit and documents to post to the FLWI website. Rather than embrace the exploratory nature of the WIG, faculty decided to pursue a grant that would fund graduate students from the composition program or writing center to support writing in their department.

Professor Blake applied for the Initiative for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE) grant to finance a study of how student writers transitioned to his course from BIOS 205: Genetics. Findings, he proposed, would lead to "re-tooling" the sequence so it could "serve as the central set of courses in which all biology majors would be guaranteed to receive instruction in science writing skills." The budget included money to hire a graduate student writing coordinator to conduct the assessment and develop and implement a coherent curriculum. Unfortunately, the project was not funded, but the proposal demonstrated Professor Blake's dedication to teaching writing and appreciation of my work in the department. At the same time, the desire to hire a graduate student writing coordinator to spearhead the project revealed assumptions about who should do the work of "assess[ing] and coordinat[ing] writing in the biology core-curriculum."

Faculty's decision not to form a WIG and their pursuit of the ITLE grant made me wonder if my presence in the department relieved them of the responsibility to teach writing in their discipline. How did tenure and promotion criteria shape their ability to dedicate time and energy to teaching and curricular reform? How did the siloed nature of academic disciplines and departments impact their vision of the project? What disciplinary models of collaboration shaped their perceptions of writing expertise in relation to science? How did they understand their own areas of expertise in terms of teaching writing? These questions were on my mind when Professor Chase invited me to facilitate a meeting to help faculty develop a plan to continue to focus on writing as I transitioned out of the department. Toward that end, I designed a handout (Figure 1) to sponsor conversation and decision-making during the meeting .

Faculty did not respond to the handout as I'd planned. At first, they focused on the fourth section, "A possible model," which outlines how the School of Natural Resources (SNR) developed a website to support student writers and teachers of writing in their department. I'd hoped biology faculty would interpret this section as evidence that it was possible to develop disciplinary specific writing curriculum in science-based fields. Instead they focused on the website as a product and potential resource for students and teachers in their department. Slowly they realized the diversity of subfields in biology made it unlikely students would benefit from resources designed for another department. However, rather than explore other options (such as developing a writing intensive sequence that could build on the courses I'd been working on with biology instructors and TAs, for example) faculty remained attracted to the possibility of a concrete resource. At the same time, they claimed no one had the time or the expertise to design a website to support writing in biology.

Convinced that creating a writing resource library was their best option, the group elected me to develop it. Despite my efforts to include others in the planning and construction of the library, they insisted I was "overestimating" their familiarity with writing materials and that they wouldn't have much to contribute. I left the meeting feeling frustrated and disheartened. The resource library didn't seem to be an ambitious plan, and at the time I was disappointed in the group's decision to assign the task to me. In what follows, I re-interpret the meeting and its discouraging outcome by examining the intersecting experiential and discourse-based forces that shaped the handout and by identifying the rhetorical, relational effects of the text on my interactions with biology faculty.

Method of Analysis

I use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to make sense of overlapping discourses and experiences shaping the handout. As Huckin, Andrus, and Clary-Lemon (2012) point out, CDA has become a "powerful new methodology" for "examining the impact that contexts, power dynamics, and social interaction have on written texts and process" (p. 110; p. 111). The approach is particularly apt for my purposes because it allows me to "coordinate" larger "macro" forces (tropes in WAC/WID, institutional, disciplinary, and departmental discourses, etc.) with "micro" details of language (p. 111) in order to better understand the negotiation of interdisciplinary relationships. In that vein, I adopt Norman Fairclough's (2001) approach to CDA in order to reveal how "D/discourses" (Gee, 2011) shaped communicative practices and social relations in my particular context.

I chose Fairclough's (2001) framework, designed to deconstruct hegemonic forces of power, ideology, and domination in the name of large-scale social change, because it compels me to consider how those forces operate on discourse-based problems in my local CCL context. Working conceptually through Fairclough's five-stage critical analytical framework allowed me to recognize the social nature of the challenge of interdisciplinary collaboration (Stage 1), the role of discourse in

maintaining obstacles to successful collaboration (Stages 2 and 3), and the potential of discourse analysis to unearth the "gaps and contradictions" that can lead to significant changes in how we perceive and practice interdisciplinary collaboration in WAC/WID situations (Stage 4). Moreover, Fairclough's fifth stage, which obliges researchers to reflect on our social positioning, resonates with my desire to keep critical reflection at the heart of this project by analyzing my own textual practice (p. 236). Finally, Fairclough's interactional analysis featured in Stage 2 of the framework systematically interrogates textual dimensions (representing, valuing, identifying, relating) that are particularly revealing in WAC/WID contexts, given the unique intersection of disciplinary difference, ideologies, epistemologies, value-based principles, and objectives (among other forces) shaping interactions there. In short, Fairclough's framework allows me to model how WAC/WID leaders might reflect more critically on our communicative practices to work more productively within and against forces constraining interdisciplinary collaboration.

*Figure 1. Handout Designed to Facilitate Meeting Among Biology Faculty
Resource Library Meeting*

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What we have done so far:

Developed five writing workshops to be incorporated into the Ecology and Evolution lab schedule designed to help students write better lab reports and develop long-term writing habits that will benefit them as writers in the sciences.

1. What is good scientific writing? (reading a science article)
2. Glossing (reading published and peer writing *as* writers)
3. Peer Review (revision: getting and giving useful feedback)
4. "The Science of Scientific Writing" (responding to readers' needs)
5. Sentence level revision (reading/revising for grammar, mechanics and style)

What we have found:

Making writing an integral part of a course (and of curriculum for a major) requires even more than creating a set of workshops to pass along from semester to semester. It means thinking differently about teaching and teaching writing in science. It means committing to a sustained, collaborative effort to support students and instructors by developing resources for writing and teaching writing in the discipline.

Where we can go from here (long term):

Much like designing a research project, we might begin by defining the question or problem you want to take up (*What do you notice about student writing? What hypotheses can you propose to explain the central question/problem?*) and laying out your objectives (*What are your individual goals for teaching writing in your courses? What are your goals as a department for teaching writing across courses?*) We might then begin to identify several actions we can take to reach those objectives (*What are 2 or 3 things we can do right now? How will we evaluate the outcome of our actions in relation to the problem and objectives?*).

A possible model:

Faculty in the School of Natural Resources worked collaboratively to develop a website that serves as a resource for students writing and instructors incorporating writing in Natural Resources courses. In order to create the site faculty had conversations about:

1. how they define "good" writing in and across courses;
2. how they assess and respond to student writing with the qualities of "good" writing in mind;
3. how they frame writing in the discipline for themselves and for students (storytelling);

4. how writing impacts students as majors and as members of the field once they've graduated;
5. useful ways of incorporating writing into courses with different subject matter and learning goals (low stakes and high stakes writing);

What we can do today:

One way to spend our time today might be to determine what we want to accomplish over the next two months. We might decide to commit to two more brainstorming meetings in order to articulate your goals and establish a plan of action in response to those goals. We might choose texts we want to read together (published texts or student texts) as a way to open discussion about writing in science. Another possibility is to continue to explore additional models of ways faculty in other departments have gone about studying writing in their disciplines by looking at examples or inviting faculty to share their experiences.

Language Conventions and Elements of Social Practices: A Dialectic

In this article, I focus on the interactional analysis featured in Stage 2 of Fairclough's (2001) framework, as a means to better understand discourse-based obstacles to interdisciplinary collaboration. The interactional analysis consists of four levels of language analysis^[5]: *whole-text language*, the way a dialogue (textual or face-to-face) is structured; *clauses combination*, ways of linking sentences or clauses together; *clauses*, the grammar and semantics of simple clauses; and *words*, choice of vocabulary and semantic relations between words (p. 241-2). I apply these levels of language analysis to the text in Figure1 in order to examine the following facets of what Fairclough calls "the texturing work of texts":

- *Representing*, how a text represents ideas, processes, products, etc.;
- *Valuing*, how a text constructs or assumes shared values;
- *Identifying*, how a text identifies readers, writers, purpose(s) or process(es); and
- *Relating*, how a text establishes relations between readers and writers (p. 240-1).

I examine these dimensions in my handout in order to develop a deeper understanding of how language mediates CCL interactions. I propose that writing specialists internalize philosophies from WAC/WID scholarship and manifest them textually in ways that can both enable and constrain interdisciplinary collaboration. As I show, linguistic devices can support healthy relationships by mediating disciplinary difference, navigating conflicting values, and communicating meaningful objectives; they can also negatively impact relationships by causing unintended effects, confusing or complicating participants' roles and responsibilities, or limiting project possibilities. Reflecting on the implications of our decisions for particular interactions and relationships, can help writing specialists make more informed choices and ultimately improve interdisciplinary collaboration.

Representing. The first element, *representing*, involves representations of processes, products, or ideas. For example, the product description on the back of a pack of cigars might represent the process of cigar production in a sanitized, idyllic way, emphasizing the artistry of blending tobacco leaves rather than the actual work and working conditions that characterize the tobacco industry

(See Fairclough's (2001) extended example p. 242-45). Particular representations can be illuminated through several levels of language analysis. In the cigar pack example, the version of cigar production is communicated through whole text organization (temporal narrative), clause combination (simple sentences linked through vocabulary), semantics (declarative statements making categorical assertions) and word choice ("finest," "artistry," "cool," "smooth" denote superior quality and desirability) (p. 243-4).

In the case of the meeting handout, my language use represents the process of integrating writing instruction into biology curriculum in two ways--as systematic and underway, and as long term and doable. Whole text analysis reveals how section headings create the arc of this representation. First, reference to past action in the first section heading, "What we have done so far," emphasizes the systematic nature of the process already underway. It reminds faculty new to the project they aren't starting from scratch because their colleagues have been involved in the initiative. The second heading, labeled "What we have found," frames insights from previous work as research findings in order to persuade science faculty to accept the claims. The third heading, "Where we can go from here," transitions from past to present, emphasizing the project's scope with the words "long term" in parenthesis. The fourth section, under the heading "A possible model," assures meeting attendants integrating writing into their discipline is doable and has in fact been accomplished by faculty in a similar field. Finally, returning to the research project trajectory, the fifth heading narrows from long term planning to immediate action, urging faculty to consider "What we can do to today," comforting them with the knowledge that large-scale objectives can be broken into manageable procedures.

Loosely adapting the arc of an ongoing research project presented biology faculty with a process they likely embrace in their own research.⁶¹ This whole language strategy of representation was supported through clause combination as well. For example, the adverb clause, "Much like designing a research project," which modifies the verb "begin," in the third section of the meeting handout, explicitly reinforces the representation of the integration process as systematic research by indicating biology faculty can begin both activities the same way—"by defining the question or problem." The section (Figure 2) continues the metaphor by encouraging faculty to form hypotheses and plan future action based on current findings, as they would for scientific experiments. Semantic features of the handout also represent the integration of writing and biology curriculum as a continuous process. More specifically, the present participle "making," in the gerund phrase "making writing an integral part of a course," in the second section of the meeting handout (Figure 3), indicates ongoing action. Writing cannot be integrated once and for all, the phrase implies, rather integration must constantly be underway .

Similarly, word choice represents the integration of writing as a matter of problem posing and solving to appeal to the systematic minds of scientists. Words such as "question," "hypothesis" "problem," "goals," "objectives," and "plan of action" suggest purposeful action and efficiency to appeal to busy faculty-scholars. At the same time, repetition of "science" and "resources" indicates the initiative was not generic but designed in consultation with science faculty to meet their particular needs.

Figure 2. Third Section of Meeting Handout, Clause Combination Strategy of Representation

Where we can go from here (long term):

Much like designing a research project, we might **begin** by **defining the question or problem** you want to take up (*What do you notice about student writing? What hypotheses can you propose to explain the central question/problem?*) and laying out

your objectives (*What are your individual goals for teaching writing in your courses? What are your goals as a department for teaching writing across courses?*) We might then begin to identify several actions we can take to reach those objectives (*What are 2 or 3 things we can do right now? How will we evaluate the outcome of our actions in relation to the problem and objectives?*).

Figure 3. Second Section of Meeting Handout, Semantic Features as Strategy of Representation

What we have found:

Making writing an integral part of a course (and of curriculum for a major) requires even more than creating a set of workshops to pass along from semester to semester. It means thinking differently about teaching and teaching writing in science. It means committing to a sustained, collaborative effort to support students and instructors by developing resources for writing and teaching writing in the discipline.

Representing the integration of writing in biology as an ongoing, long-term project was an effort to support sustained faculty commitment, a cornerstone of successful WAC initiatives. For example, in her contribution to McLeod and Soven's (1992) collection, Barbara Walvoord warns against the "training," "conversion," or "problem-solution" models that depend on a single faculty workshop to get results. Instead, she offers ways to sustain ongoing dialogue among faculty and administrators across campus. Similarly, McLeod (1989) urges programs entering the second stage of the WAC movement, which she distinguishes from the "first workshop" stage, to support ongoing faculty development as a means to curricular and administrative change (p. 338, 339-42). My history in the department made me especially attuned to this prominent trope. I worried that faculty declined to form a WIG because they assumed they could achieve concrete action more efficiently by using grant money to hire me or another graduate student to study and revise their curriculum. In this meeting I wanted them to see my role differently—as someone who could help them initiate a project they could sustain over time. Lived experience in my local context allowed me to determine whether (and how) to pursue a common WAC principle in response to our particular circumstances.

My decision to represent integration as a systematic process akin to scientific inquiry can also be traced to WAC/WID discourse, which urges writing specialists to gather disciplinary knowledge and make rhetorical choices about how to persuade faculty to embrace WAC. For example, Mark Waldo (1996) argues that in order to "shift the locus of expertise, and the responsibility for writing, from us [writing specialists] to them [faculty in other disciplines]," writing specialists must "create an atmosphere for faculty to develop and refine their own ideas about writing" and encourage faculty ownership of WAC initiatives (p. 11). Jeff Jablonski (2006) similarly urges writing specialists to "develo[p] methods and models for translating our disciplinary knowledge to others" (p. 190). When considering how to persuade this particular group of faculty to undertake self-motivated inquiry, I recalled our meeting with FLWI leaders in which faculty seemed reluctant to dedicate the time or claim the expertise needed to study writing in their department. Framing the process in scientific terms, I reasoned, might offer them a familiar inquiry process that would make the work seem possible and intellectually stimulating.

As this example shows, I was strategic in my creation of the handout. I synthesized my understanding of the department and sense of faculty needs with my commitment to certain WAC/WID values to accomplish my intended objectives. At the time, however, I was not consciously aware of the way linguistic moves at the textual level would impact discursive interactions during the meeting and ultimately shape relationships among meeting participants. For example, when meeting participants heard that integrating writing in the biology department was a systematic process I'd already begun with faculty members, rather than feel inspired to continue efforts on their own, they became more confident in my ability to build a useful resource library based on my knowledge of their courses and curriculum. Fairclough's (2001) analytical framework illuminates such unexpected rhetorical effects by deconstructing the communicative process, empowering me to more purposefully imagine the various ways my linguistic choices might function during face-to-face interactions.

Valuing. Analyzing the handout according to the second social element in Fairclough's (2001) framework shows how communicative practices can prevent open negotiation of difference by concealing underlying values. According to Fairclough, "valuing" refers to the linguistic construction of values as qualified or universal. In his cigar box example, the text writers frame "mild, cool," and "smooth-smoking" as inherently positive characteristics without qualifying the terms or mentioning exceptions. In this way, the text writers both assume and construct readers who share those values (p. 244). In a similar vein, analysis of whole language and clause combinations in the handout (Figure 1) reveals consistent alternation between short-term accomplishments/practices and long-term foundational change, illustrating my attempt to negotiate those values in potentially problematic ways.

The first section of the handout describes writing workshops already developed for lab sections, while clause combinations in the second section juxtapose the short term goal of creating a set of workshops with the long term processes of "thinking differently" and "committing." The third section lays out a long-term research plan that involves posing questions, articulating objectives, taking action, and conducting assessment. The fifth section then zooms back in to the meeting itself and encourages concrete decision-making about the next step. The juxtaposition of these goals demonstrates my effort to promote foundational WAC values while responding to needs of a particular group of faculty. While I believed in the importance of sustained commitment and self-motivation, I knew from the FLWI meeting that faculty wanted immediate action and tangible outcomes. I tried to build into the handout a sense of immediate accomplishment, while also urging faculty to embrace a long-term vision by striving for a series of benchmark achievements. A closer look at my efforts to achieve both objectives at once suggests my language choices likely obscured my values and prevented opportunities for interactive negotiations necessary for interdisciplinary collaboration.

Clause level analysis further reveals implicit communication of WAC/WID values. In the second section of the handout (Figure 4), for example, my use of present tense verbs "means" and "requires" without qualifiers presents declarative statements as accepted truths. The handout defines without exception or negotiation what is required to integrate writing in biology. "Creating a set of workshops to pass along from semester to semester" does not count as integration, this construction implies, rather integration entails "thinking differently," "committing to a sustained, collaborative effort" and "developing resources for writing and teaching." Including these declarative statements under the section heading "What we have found" reaffirms their uncontested truth by framing them as research findings, which presumably carry a certain persuasive weight for scientists, rather than as the writing

specialists' personal values. While these strategies were meant to establish shared values, they thwart the important process of negotiation needed to reach such an agreement.

Figure 4. Second Section of Meeting Handout, Communicating WAC Values at the Clause Level

What we have found:

Making writing an integral part of a course (and of curriculum for a major) **requires** even more than creating a set of workshops to pass along from semester to semester. It **means** thinking differently about teaching and teaching writing in science. It means **committing to a sustained, collaborative effort** to support students and instructors by **developing resources for writing and teaching** writing in the discipline.

Semantic analysis further demonstrates how I unintentionally communicated values through the text. Figure 5 provides a visual representation of word frequency in the handout. Not surprisingly, the word "writing" appears most often. A stem count reveals variations of the root word "write" appear 26 times in the one-page handout. The word "writer/s" appears several times, pointing to a core value in WAC work—attention to the development of writers rather than focusing only on writing. The word "writing" often appears next to two other commonly used words "students" and "teaching," emphasizing the importance of students and student writing—subjects sometimes treated by faculty as problems to be solved. Repetition of the word "science," for which a stem variation appears 7 times, along with the problem-solving words "goals" and "objectives" acknowledge what I perceived to be biology faculty values. Lastly, words like "collaborate," "long-term," "discussion," and "might" along with frequent use of collective pronouns (we, our) to refer to group activities, signal the importance of sustained effort, dialogue, collaboration, and inquiry/experimentation. I believe these values are significant and worth communicating. However, applying this analytical lens, I see how forwarding them implicitly as shared values may have obscured important tensions in the two major WAC objectives I was pursuing—large-scale change and addressing faculty needs.

Figure 5. Visual Representation of Word Frequency in Handout



Created with wordle.net.

These dual objectives are rooted in WAC literature and discourse. Toby Fulwiler's "The Quiet and Insistent Revolution" (1991) epitomizes the desire for large-scale transformations—in disciplinary

pedagogy, curriculum, and faculty members' ways of thinking about writing, teaching and learning—shared by many WAC advocates. The WAC movement is ultimately a political endeavor, Fulwiler argues, because it calls for change in the nature of the academy itself (p. 179). Indeed scholarship has traditionally embraced the political thrust of WAC (Mahala, 1991; Walvoord, 1996; McLeod, 1995). In their introduction to *WAC for the New Millennium*, McLeod and Miraglia (2001) continue to describe WAC as an "educational reform movement. . . aimed at transforming pedagogy at the college level" (p. 5) and in her plenary address at the 9th annual IWAC conference, McLeod (2008) remained "optimistic about [WAC] as a force for educational change."

Along with the revolutionary mission, however, WAC discourse also emphasizes the need to embrace what Condon and Rutz (2012) call an " 'integrative attitude' of reaching out to serve other agendas" (p. 372). David Russell (2002) explains that reform efforts "must be structurally linked to the values, goals, and activities of disciplines" (p. 302). Likewise, Martha Townsend (2008) foregrounds strong faculty ownership as a cornerstone of successful WAC programs. The Writing Enriched Curriculum (WEC) Program at the University of Minnesota is a prominent example of efforts to operationalize this maxim. Program leaders believe: "The incorporation of writing into content instruction can be most meaningfully achieved when those who teach are provided multiple opportunities to articulate, interrogate, and communicate their assumptions and expectations" (<http://wec.umn.edu/>).

As the handout makes clear, my struggle to enact both the integrative attitude and revolutionary mission of WAC negatively impacted my ability to communicate with biology faculty. I knew from the grant proposal Professor Blake submitted that he was interested in significant curricular change. I also knew, based on their decision to hire a graduate student to implement change, that as a group faculty were more interested in the result of change than the process. Rather than invite dialogue as a way to unpack possible approaches to change, I structured the handout to suggest the pursuit of large-scale change was the only option. I presented the value as non-negotiable, creating confusion about participants' roles and the parameters of our project. In other words, I left no option for faculty who felt they lacked the time and expertise to pursue sweeping change. As a result, rather than interpret the website created by the School of Natural Resources as evidence of faculty collaboration over time as I'd hoped, faculty saw it as a final, reproducible product. Thus the resource library became the only tangible form of change they could imagine.

Identifying. Identification refers to the construction of readers, writers, products and processes referenced in a text. Fairclough's (2001) analysis of the Hamlet cigar box illuminates linguistic as well as design strategies used to construct the company as "high-class." Gold lettering and sophisticated font contribute to the identification of Hamlet as a superior and 'upmarket' company (p. 244-5). Readers are constructed implicitly rather than explicitly. That is, the choice to mention qualities of the cigar identifies readers as cigar consumers who value those qualities. Readers' appreciation of superior quality puts them in the same high class as the cigar company (p. 245).

Turning to my handout (Figure 6), the explicit move to name necessary steps for integrating writing into biology identifies faculty as readers who need that level of specificity. I position myself as "the knower" who will inform or correct biology faculty, who don't "know." Further, at the clause level, the phrase "requires even more than" identifies faculty as readers who may have misconceptions about what the integration of writing will entail. In terms of clause combination, the section goes on to juxtapose the phrase "creating a set of workshops to pass along from semester to semester," presumably an action faculty believe could constitute integration, with the actual requirements for integration-- "thinking differently" and "committing." Based on presumptions about faculty, grounded in my experience in the department as well as my reading of WAC/WID literature, I

identified faculty as an audience likely to misunderstand and resist my ideas prior to any such indication so that I could preemptively address those issues.

Though I use linguistic devices (such as present tense verbs without qualifiers and declarative sentences) to forward universal truths, I don't explicitly name myself as a knower transferring knowledge to those who don't know. By including the declarative descriptions of the process of integration under the heading "What we found," I identify myself as an experimenter who worked as co-investigator with biology faculty for years. Findings, I imply, are not my own beliefs, but truths worthy of acceptance because I came to them *with* biology faculty. While I specify requirements for integration ("thinking differently," "committing," and "developing"), by using present participles without subjects, I avoid directly referring to the faculty I want to perform the required acts. In this way, the text tells faculty what needs to be done without appearing to forward unfounded beliefs or blatantly command action. I acted on common identifications—disciplinary faculty as resistant or unknowing and writing specialists as co-inquirers who suggest rather than demand change—without interrogating the tropes or considering their relevance to my situation.

Figure 6. Second Section of Meeting Handout, Constructing Reader Identity

What we have found:

Making writing an integral part of a course (and of curriculum for a major) **requires even more than creating a set of workshops to pass along** from semester to semester. It means **thinking differently** about teaching and teaching writing in science. It means **committing** to a sustained, collaborative effort to support students and instructors by **developing** resources for writing and teaching writing in the discipline.

The move is not surprising given that stories of faculty reluctance are prevalent in WAC literature, along with suggestions about how to address skeptics or better embrace the complexities of resistance (Fulwiler, 1981; Swilky, 1992; Swanson-Owens, 1986; Anson, 2002). Indeed, Townsend (2008) references faculty resistance to WAC as "legion" (p. 46) and Jablonski (2006) dedicates an entire chapter to the "problem of faculty resistance," which he aptly describes as "a common situation for CCL specialists" (p. 131). More recent scholarship reasserts faculty resistance as one of the "most challenging obstacles WAC administrators face" (Rodrigue, 2012; Ronesi, 2011). My anticipation of faculty resistance also grew from my experience in the biology department. The focus on only two courses as sites for writing curriculum development combined with Professor Chase's failed attempt to recruit volunteers for the Writing Inquiry Group led me to expect reluctance from the others. My language on the handout, shaped by that expectation, made it difficult to recognize faculty at the meeting who'd had a longstanding interest and investment in WID and build on their energy and expertise. In fact one faculty member contacted me after the meeting to share writing assignments he'd been using in his classes for years. We should have highlighted, celebrated, and learned from his work during the meeting. Instead, I identified faculty as resisters and myself as the persuader, thus limiting opportunities to explore my colleagues' expertise as well as their resistance to the extent it existed.

Even as I positioned faculty as disinclined skeptics, I urged them to become active, self-motivated collaborators, inspired by a substantial body of literature encouraging writing specialists to respond to resistance by putting our knowledge in conversation with disciplinary faculty (McLeod, 1995;

Waldo, 1996). Prominent WAC scholars have argued for collaborative efforts (Mullin, 2012), "dialogic interaction" (Jones & Comprone, 1993, p. 64) and the negotiation of expertise (Mahala & Swilky, 1994, p. 50) as important strategies for cross-curricular literacy work. Indeed I tried to position myself as "question aske[r], collaborato[r], and listene[r]" (Waldo, 1996, p. 10) in the handout by tempering my knowledge, beliefs, and values and inviting faculty to explore their own questions about student writing through dialogue and discussion (See third and fourth sections). However, while the language of the handout may have suggested (at times) a collaborative relationship between me and biology faculty, my rhetoric did not enact or facilitate collaboration. I decided in advance what questions we would explore, what kinds of collaboration were possible and when I was (and wasn't) willing to listen. It is not surprising in the midst of such inconsistency that faculty assigned me a role they could understand, resource gatherer, in order to capitalize on what they saw as my unique expertise before I left the department.

As I've shown, linguistic devices contribute to the textual work of representing, valuing, and identifying. These elements interanimate one another and carry implications for the kinds of relationships writing specialists and disciplinary content experts can foster. An examination of Fairclough's (2001) final element, relating, brings these connections and implications to light.

Relating. *Relating* involves distinguishing between and among writers and readers of texts. Fairclough (2001) refers to "social relations as knowledge relations" in his interactional analysis of the cigar box (p. 244). The writers, who know about quality cigars, tell readers, who may not know, what to think and value. It is important to note that the telling is done implicitly. As Fairclough points out, writers don't say "Buy Hamlet Cigars!" but use linguistic devices to ascribe universally superior qualities to Hamlet, inviting readers to adopt the same taste and therefore believe in Hamlet's superiority. For Fairclough, restraint is a way of relating because it distinguishes Hamlet from other brands that explicitly admonish consumers to buy (p. 244). Thus while distinctions often work in nuanced ways they are important for the relations they establish among readers and writers of texts.

In the handout, relating is most visible through language analysis at the semantic level. Inconsistent pronoun use throughout the text complicates my relationship with disciplinary faculty. For example, in the first and sectioned section headings, I use "we" to position myself in relation to faculty as someone who has been part of their community. As a fellow curriculum developer and experimenter, I show how I've generated "findings" with my biologist colleagues. In the third and fifth sections, however, "we" doesn't refer to the group that had been developing writing curriculum in the department but to the group gathered around the meeting table, some I'd worked with and some I hadn't. The invisible shift might too quickly assume the "we" at the table accepts the findings of the "we" already involved in departmental writing initiatives and ignore meeting participants' different levels of understanding and openness.

The mix of "we" and "you" in the third section further confuses the roles of participants (Figure 7). I shift from a participant to a facilitator, guiding biology faculty through an inquiry I impose ("we might begin by defining the question or problem *you* want to take up"). Pronoun use suggests that I will help define questions, but faculty must answer the questions on their own terms ("what do *you* notice?" "what hypotheses can *you* propose?"). Faculty should come up with their own objectives ("what are *your* individual goals?" "what are *your* goals as a department?"), but I will step in as facilitator to help them identify actions ("we might then begin to identify actions"). Pronoun use suggests that I will take certain actions with faculty ("actions *we* can take to reach those objectives" "what are 2 or 3 things *we* can do right now?") and will participate in assessing the outcome of those actions ("how will *we* evaluate the outcome?"). By using "we" in the fifth section, I continue to include

myself in decision-making ("we might decide to commit") and future collective action ("texts we want to read together").

Figure 7. Third and Fifth Sections of the Meeting Handout, Confusing Relationships

Where we can go from here (long term):

Much like designing a research project, we might begin by defining the question or problem you want to take up (*What do you notice about student writing? What hypotheses can you propose to explain the central question/problem?*) and laying out your objectives (*What are your individual goals for teaching writing in your courses? What are your goals as a department for teaching writing across courses?*) We might then begin to identify several actions we can take to reach those objectives (*What are 2 or 3 things we can do right now? How will we evaluate the outcome of our actions in relation to the problem and objectives?*).

What we can do today:

One way to spend our time today might be to determine what we want to accomplish over the next two months. We might decide to commit to two more "brainstorming" meetings in order to articulate your goals and establish a plan of action in response to those goals. We might choose texts we want to read together (published texts or student texts) as a way to open discussion about writing in science. Another possibility is to continue to explore additional models of ways faculty in other departments have gone about studying writing in their disciplines by looking at examples or inviting faculty to share their experiences.

My language choices derived in part from my struggle to navigate debates in the field about types of relationships writing specialists should establish with disciplinary content experts. The need to avoid missionary relationships intent on converting disciplinary faculty to composition pedagogy is well documented in WAC/WID scholarship (McLeod, 1995; Waldo, 1996; Farris, 1992). At the same time, scholars such Mahala and Swilky (1994) warn that denying our expertise in order to avoid heavy handed conversion tactics might substantiate service relationships that position writing specialists as trade workers hired to fix the problem of poor student writing (p. 49). It is not surprising that I wrestled with the material reality of this paradox. Though Jablonski (2006) urges writing specialists to explode prescriptive categories by using our training as rhetoricians to decide which roles to embrace in a given situation, my analysis of the handout suggests rhetorical performance is easier said than done.

I attempted to mitigate a missionary approach by couching my understanding of WAC values in terms of research "findings" and unqualified statements of truth. I urged faculty to engage in the inquiry I valued, while simultaneously compelling them to articulate goals and take action on their own. The handout illustrates my desire to maintain the active role I'd enjoyed while working with Professor Blake and Professor Chase even as I recognized the need to shift responsibility for teaching writing to faculty. While my objectives are not mutually exclusive, by oscillating between them I enacted a

complicated debate in WAC discourse about what form CCL relationships should take. As a result, I was unable to convince faculty to embrace inquiry or claim autonomy over the project.

Building Interdisciplinary Relationships in CCL Contexts

Through the process of critical textual analysis, I've constructed a more nuanced picture of my meeting with biology faculty and a richer understanding of how the handout I created mediated our interactions. More specifically, I've shown how my language choices 1) mispositioned my values and commitments, 2) inconsistently identified participants in relation to one another, and 3) thwarted discussion of faculty concerns. As a result we were unable to interrogate the forces shaping our interaction, such as discipline-based assumptions about writing, subject matter, and collaboration; the siloed nature of academic disciplines; restrictions caused by departmental tenure and promotion procedures; or even the realities of our lives outside the university. As these factors impact all CCL interactions, it is important that our rhetorical and discursive practices acknowledge and address them. As I've demonstrated, mapping links between discourse, language, and social interaction reframes everyday meetings between writing specialists and faculty in other disciplines with a clearer sense of the communicative strategies writing specialists use and their impact on the professional relationships we broker. Further, the critical, reflective process modeled here empowers faculty to more creatively navigate the challenge of interdisciplinary collaboration and cultivate the habits of mind we (and our students) need to thrive in our shifting global landscape.

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Notes

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[2] Taking my cue from Jeff Jablonski, who draws on David Russell, I use cross-curricular literacy (CCL) as an umbrella term to refer to writing initiatives that take place outside of English departments and composition programs. The term encompasses both Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines projects.

[3] I see my work contributing to Bazerman and Prior's (2004) broad project of "examining communicative practice so as to uncover signs of social identities, institutions, and norms as well as the means by which these social formations are established, negotiated, enacted, and changed through communicative practice" (p. 3). However, I adopt Fairclough's sociolinguistic approach to discourse analysis (rather than employing specific strategies outlined in Bazerman and Prior's collection) because I am less interested in "how to teach and

understand the work of [WAC leaders as] *writers*" (my emphasis, p. 5) than I am in using textual analysis to identify and address "discourse-related problem[s]" that impact interdisciplinary collaboration in CCL contexts (Fairclough, 2001, p. 236).

[4] Names have been changed to protect privacy.

[5] Fairclough (2001) is interested in "semiotic work," of which he considers language to be one part. I acknowledge the importance of additional textual elements (paper quality, visual style, process of delivery, etc.) that certainly shaped readers' perceptions and expectations before they began reading the handout. For the sake of focus and analytical depth, I've chosen to concentrate on language analysis here, but it would be equally appropriate and revealing to extend the analysis to include additional elements as well.

[6] Strategies used in the handout were based on my perception of biology faculty's needs, expectations, and frameworks. My understanding of how faculty approach research does not necessarily coincide with their actual approach, which likely varied even among faculty at the meeting.

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