Alignment of Literacy Tasks in College and University Transitional Classes

BY

MOLLY McCLENNEN
B.A., West Virginia Wesleyan College, 1993
M.A., Marshall University, 1997
ED.S., Marshall University, 2004

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Curriculum and Instruction: Literacy, Language, and Culture
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Chicago, 2016

Chicago, Illinois

Defense Committee:
        Timothy Shanahan, Chair and Advisor
        Cynthia Shanahan
        Aria Razfar
        P. Zitlali Morales
        Sonya Armstrong, Texas State University

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Judith Birt, who has believed in me and loved me unconditionally and consistently through all my life's adventures, including this one. And to my friend and mentor, Winston A. Baker, who many years ago saw a potential doctoral student in a 21-year-old woman from Milton, WV, and did not stop encouraging her until she got it done.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Timothy Shanahan, without whom I would not have had the opportunity to attend UIC. As busy as he is, he did not have to take on a new Research Assistant. He certainly did not have to continue to be my advisor and chair after his retirement from UIC, but I am deeply thankful that he did. He gave me the freedom to study what I wanted, while always letting me draw from his wealth of knowledge and wisdom. His advice on all matters has been unfailingly good. In working with him, I observed and learned from his habits of thinking, his high ethical standards, and his commitment to what research has shown to be true, even if holding to that truth is an unpopular stance. I consider it a great compliment that someone of his stature wanted to work with and help me.

I would like to thank my thesis committee. Every one of them has influenced how I think about language and education through their research and teaching. I am humbled and honored to be able to say I worked with them.

The participants in my study were gracious in giving me their time without ever making me feel like I was imposing on them. Observing their classes and talking with them was valuable to me both as a researcher and as a professional. In addition, I simply enjoyed my time with them. They made conducting this study a pleasure.

Doctoral work is lonely business, and it becomes even more so when you do it 500 miles from home in a city where you know no one. Without the friendship and support of a small but wonderful group of friends in Chicago, the past five years would have been far harder than they were. Kathryn Duke, Truman Der, Betsy Sawyer,

SUMMARY

This qualitative case study was designed to provide insights into how the reading and writing done in transitional classes aligned with the reading and writing done in gateway classes at a university and a community college. Rather than only examining text characteristics, the focus of the study was how reading and writing were used in the classes. In addition, the instructors and administrators were interviewed about how they made sense of alignment, specifically, what skills they believed their students needed to do well in college and how they arrived at those beliefs. The instructors' language ideologies related to the use of non-standard Englishes in academia were also explored. Finally, the study used a literacy alignment framework for categorizing the literacy tasks in a class. This instrument was evaluated for its usefulness to instructors and administrators who wish to evaluate the kinds of reading and writing students do in their classes.

The reading and writing tasks in three of the four classes were well-aligned. Students in those classes were expected to make connections with and between texts and to employ critical thinking skills through evaluating sources. The kinds of reading and writing done in the fourth class were less well-aligned, often focusing on summarization of ideas and recall of information. Instructors of both gateway and transitional classes believed their role was to prepare students for college-level work. All instructors believed their students needed critical thinking skills and affective skills, like time management, goal-setting and confidence, if they were to succeed in college. Formal opportunities for curricular collaboration between gateway and transitional instructors were limited at both

SUMMARY (continued)

institutions. The literacy alignment framework was useful in understanding the kinds of

reading and writing done in the four classes, but only after it was revised to better reflect

the objectives for the programs and how reading and writing were being used in the

classes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Alignment of Literacy Tasks in College and University Transitional Classes

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In their calls to increase the number of people in the U.S. who hold a post-secondary degree or certificate, politicians and educators cite statistics like these from a 2013 report by the Lumina Foundation:

- By the year 2020, 65% of jobs in the United States will require some form of postsecondary education.

- Although the number of people who hold degrees in the U.S. has been increasing slowly, it has not been keeping pace with market demand for skilled labor.

- During the Great Recession of 2008-2009, jobs requiring a high school diploma or less declined significantly while the growth in jobs that required a bachelor's degree slowed, but never declined.

Beyond the economic reasons for increasing the number of people who go to college, proponents of expanding postsecondary educational access say that college helps people develop the skills in abstract reasoning, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and teamwork that are needed to be a productive member of society (Lumina Foundation, 2013). In response to this increased emphasis on postsecondary education, more Americans than ever, representing a more diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic segment of American society, are enrolling in college.

Yet, despite these increases in enrollment, the number of students graduating from college has stayed constant (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005; Shapiro, et al., 2013). According to the Lumina Foundation (2013), 22.1% of Americans have completed some

college without obtaining a degree. Some of this attrition between matriculation and graduation is due to the number of students entering college without the academic skills needed to succeed at college-level work. A 2013 study by ACT found that having adequate levels of college readiness reduces the gaps in persistence and degree completion among students of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. If all students were ready for first-year, credit-bearing college classes just in one more subject, 92,000 more high school graduates would enroll in college the fall immediately after graduating from high school and 124,000 more students would complete a college degree in six years (ACT, 2013). Yet, statistics documenting the prevalence of students who arrive at college under-prepared for college classes are plentiful. Forty-nine percent of high school graduates do not have the reading skills needed to succeed in college (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006). The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges (2003) said that more than fifty percent of freshmen are unable to produce papers that are free of basic language errors, analyze an argument, or synthesize information. Twenty percent of students entering four-year colleges and universities require some sort of remediation of their basic skills in reading, writing, or mathematics to be ready to do college-level work (Complete College America, 2012).

Developmental support services designed to help students who struggle with college-level academics have been in place throughout the history of higher education (Boylan, 2003). Non-credit classes designed to remediate students' basic skills in reading, writing, math, or study skills are among the most common, and currently, the most controversial, forms of support. Although it is difficult to arrive at an accurate figure of the cost of providing developmental education (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000), some estimate

that colleges and universities spend $3 billion a year on providing developmental classes and services to 1.7 million under-prepared students (Complete College America, 2012). Despite the prevalence of these classes, there is conflicting evidence regarding their effectiveness (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000) and few studies have looked at what works in developmental education (Grubb, 2001). Boylan and Bonham (2014) said that when the term *developmental education* came into use as a replacement for the term *remedial classe*s, it was intended to describe a comprehensive and integrated program of academic support services—not just a sequence of one or two preparatory classes; however, the term has not been used this way, so studies of the effectiveness of *developmental education* are often not studies of true developmental programs, but rather of programs where instruction and services are "provided in a random manner and are seldom fully coordinated or integrated in a systematic way with one another" (p. 60). Therefore, in a sense, we do not know what outcomes of a truly *developmental* program would be.

Although there are studies indicating that participation in developmental classes improves a students' chance of graduating (Bahr, 2010), some assessments of the outcomes of developmental classes offer a discouraging picture of their effectiveness. Would-be reformers of traditional developmental classes cite statistics that indicate only one-third of students who take developmental classes will graduate with a bachelor's degree in six years (Kuh, et al., 2006). Students who arrive at college underprepared for college level reading, as opposed to being underprepared for college-level writing or math, have especially poor retention and graduation rates (Adelman, 1996). Statistics such as these coupled with concerns about how to best allocate increasingly scarce college resources have prompted widespread criticism of the value of non-credit

developmental classes. Some states have moved all developmental classes out of the university to community colleges or dropped developmental support programs altogether (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000).

Debates about the value of post-secondary developmental education are rooted in questions about educational equity and access (Grubb, 2001). Grubb (2001) said the question at the core of the debates about developmental classes is if it is possible to educate students who come to college from a wide range of backgrounds and with very different levels of preparation. It is for this reason that supporters of developmental education say comparing educational outcomes for students who enroll in developmental classes to those of students who do not is unfair; not only do the students in developmental classes confront greater academic barriers in route to completing college, they are also the students most likely to confront social, cultural, and economic barriers to higher education as well (Goudas & Boylan, 2012). Minority students, first-generation students, and students from working class or low-income backgrounds are disproportionately underprepared for college-level reading and writing, and, consequently, are more likely to enroll in developmental classes. Studies indicate that only 21% of African American high school graduates, 33% of Hispanic high school graduates, and 33% of high school graduates from families with an annual income below $30,000 have college level reading skills (Kuh et al., 2006).

Yet, the populations who have been historically excluded from higher education may represent the best opportunity for expanding the numbers of Americans who complete a post-secondary credential. In 2008, 55% of high school graduates from the lowest income quartile enrolled in post-secondary education directly after high school

compared to 80% of those in the top quartile. Although the rate of degree attainment for younger white students is higher than for older students, indicating a trend toward increased degree attainment among white people, the opposite is true for African American students: older African Americans have a higher rate of degree attainment than younger African Americans (Lumina Foundation, 2013). Students of color or students from lower socioeconomic classes are more likely to enroll in institutions with low graduation rates, so these institutions may present an unexpectedly promising opportunity to expand educational access. In the early part of the 21st century, graduation rates rose the most in colleges or universities that had the most open admissions policies. States could see increases in graduation rates if they directed resources to improving educational outcomes at non-selective institutions (Doyle, 2010).

Although currently controversial, developmental programs are unlikely to go away given the economic and social forces that encourage more students to attend college and encourage colleges to admit a wider range of students. Colleges and universities should weigh the money and resources spent on developmental education against the benefits these programs provide to the institution: increased enrollment--and the resultant increased tuition revenue--as a result of developmental programs' potential to increase the number of students who are able to stay in college and graduate (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000). Merisotis and Phipps (2000) said, "The evidence is compelling that remediation in colleges and universities is not an appendage with little connection to the mission of the institution, but rather represents a core function of the higher education community that it has performed for hundreds of years" (p. 75). In light of this, scholars, educators and

policy-makers need to figure out how to best help students who arrive at college under-prepared (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000).

Until recently, the most common model for college developmental literacy (reading and writing) classes required students to enroll in them without earning academic credit. Students who had been identified as being in need of remediation, by their high school grades, ACT or SAT scores, or a placement test administered by the college, were required to complete the sequence of developmental classes prior to enrolling in most credit-bearing classes. Scholars believe there are two problems that potentially undermine the effectiveness of this model: students being incorrectly assigned (or not assigned) to developmental classes and no standard definition of college readiness (Hodara, Jaggars, & Karp, 2012). Student performance on standard placement exams is weakly correlated with the ability to succeed in college-level classes because standardized placement tests may not measure traits like motivation that are as important to success as academic knowledge. If tests are used as sole basis for placement, students are often put into classes for which they are either under-prepared or over-prepared. In addition, the standards of college readiness are often inconsistent, both between high schools and colleges and among different colleges. A student may graduate from high school fully prepared for college work by the high school's standards, but those standards may not align with a specific college's expectations for entering students (Hodara, Jaggars, & Karp, 2012).

Other reformers believe it is the costs of paying for non-credit developmental classes, and the resultant time lost while completing a developmental sequence, rather than the students' academic deficiencies themselves, that are the reason why so many

underprepared students do not graduate (Complete College America, 2012). One of the leading voices calling for reform of developmental education, Complete College America, recommended that the current model of developmental education be replaced with a co-requisite model, which would embed developmental support in the for-credit, gateway classes all entering college students must take. Much of the research into which program delivery model is most effective is inconclusive, but there is evidence that students can succeed in credit-bearing classes taken concurrently with developmental classes (Razfar & Simon, 2011; Weissman, Silk, & Bulakowski, 1997). There is also evidence that embedding developmental supports in the authentic content found in for-credit classes facilitates transfer of strategies to other credit-bearing classes (Perin, 2011).

Other critics of developmental education point to the low standard of professional training required of developmental instructors as a possible cause of poor outcomes. Most schools require minimal or no graduate-level coursework in literacy, teaching experience, or knowledge of the field of developmental education to be qualified to teach developmental reading or writing classes. This creates a mismatch between the need students have for high-quality literacy instruction and the ability of their instructors to meet that need (Paulson & Armstrong, 2011). Research has shown that contingent faculty, like those who often teach developmental classes, are less likely to use learner-centered strategies in their classes or offer class assignments that promote higher-level thinking, like essay exams, research projects, revisions of written work, oral presentations, and group work. This may deprive the students in developmental classes of the types of instruction are most likely to promote preparedness for college-level work (Baldwin, & Wawrzynski, 2011). McCusker (1999) said that developmental programs

need to employ specialists in remediation qualified to assist faculty with incorporating basic skills instruction in the curriculum for credit-bearing classes and to use regular course curriculum in basic skills classes, much like the collaborative role of a special education teacher in K-12 schools. In their 2012 review of literature on effective developmental education, Zachry-Rutschow and Schneider (2012) said that developmental education instructors receive little training in how to teach basic skills. They concluded that the lack of quality instruction may negatively influence developmental-level students' academic performance.

The curriculum that is commonly taught in developmental classes also has its critics. According to many scholars, the most common approach to developmental education is *skill and drill,* or rote learning, an approach known to be less effective than constructivist approaches, especially for students who struggle with reading and writing (Grubb, 2001). Grubb (2001) said that skill and drill instruction

> tends to focus on arithmetic procedures, punctuation and vocabulary, math
> problems of the most contrived sort, and passages from texts that have been
> simplified for low reading levels . . . . These conventional skills and drills
> approaches violate all the maxims for good teaching in adult education. (p. 5)

Grubb (2001) went on to say:

> The tactic is simply "more of the same." They take students who didn't learn
> using traditional, didactic instruction and subject them to 15 more weeks of it….
> It is foolish to think that students who have never learned to read for meaning, or
> who have no real understanding of numerals, can suddenly learn quickly from
> another round of skills and drills. (p. 11)

Rote forms of instruction, like skill and drill, are also unlikely to help students develop the kinds of higher level thinking skills they will need to succeed in college. Providing students a curriculum that allows opportunities for them to develop critical thinking skills may reduce the time students spend in developmental classes (Boylan, 1999).

Although teachers of developmental classes may state they employ teaching methodologies based in sociocultural or critical theories of education, they may default to taking a deficit view of their students, instructing as if literacy is only a set of technical skills their students need to master before they can engage in more complex academic tasks. But students in transitional classes are also capable of engaging in critical thinking, and benefit from having opportunities to do so (Sanchez & Paulson,2013). Sanchez and Paulson (2013) said, "A more progressive and democratic pedagogical approach to teaching academic literacy would be one in which students learn not only how to read and write academic texts, but also how to examine critically the discourse that makes up their world" (p. 115). Students in developmental classes may especially benefit from opportunities to critically reflect on texts and topics that have immediate relevance to their lives.

The skill and drill instruction offered in many developmental classes also lacks authentic contextual connections to the kinds of reading and writing done in credit-bearing, disciplinary college classes. The curriculum in developmental classes often presents skills in reading, writing, and math separately from the disciplines in which they are to be applied. Basic skills taught in a developmental class do not seem to transfer to the other classes students take (Perin, 2011). Because knowledge is situational and dependent on the domain in which it is used, researchers do not believe that general

learning strategies taught in a basic skills class will automatically transfer to a new situation; rather, instruction should help students to independently use strategies based on their individual learning needs (Holschuh & Aultman, 2008).

In addition, decontextualized instruction may diminish students' motivation. The students who enroll in developmental classes may experience low levels of motivation compared to their better-prepared peers. If students are to develop the self-efficacy needed to succeed in college, they need to have opportunities to engage in meaningful tasks that teach them to navigate academia (Alvarez & Risko, 2008). Students often consider the decontextualized skills learned in developmental classes to be irrelevant to their personal goals. A growing body of research indicates that better connecting basic skills and content area learning, i.e., the teaching of basic skills in the context of disciplinary literacy, may increase motivation and increase the likelihood of skills transferring to disciplinary classes (Perin, 2011).

Instructional practices have their roots in theoretical assumptions. Literacy instruction that focuses on helping students develop only basic reading and writing skills is rooted in a reductive definition of literacy: a set of decoding and encoding skills that are stable and useful in any given situation. But reading and writing are never done in general; rather, they are always done within a cultural and historical context that calls for the specific *literacy* that works in that context. There are, in fact, countless literacies, each a unique way of reading or writing that conforms to the social practices of the context. Being literate is situational; for example, someone may be highly literate in reading and writing legal texts, but have a low level of literacy when confronted with scientific texts. Literacy is best defined as having an understanding of those social

practices in which a given literacy is embedded (Gee, 2003). When literacy is defined as a social practice, rather than a set of skills that can be used for any given reading or writing task, it is no longer limited to reading and writing, but also includes speaking, listening, and interacting. Oral and written language are deeply intertwined within a given social practice (Gee, 2001). According to Gee (2003), any text can be associated with practices that use multiple modalities in the process of making meaning, including "oral or written language, images, equations, symbols, sounds, gestures, graphs, artefacts" (p. 31). Being literate requires being able to read and make meaning from all these practices according to ways of knowing and being that are consonant with the sociocultural context.

Students need to learn to speak the language of the university disciplines (Bartholomae, 1985). To do so effectively, they must assume the position of either equality or superiority with their audience, established on the grounds of already being a member of that discourse community. Establishing that position is impossible to do in the contrived writing assignments done in many writing basic classes. When we ask students to write for their teacher or for an audience of their peers, we are asking them to pretend they have the authority to write as a member of a discourse community when they do not, in fact, have that authority. This leads them to imitate the discourse, often unsuccessfully, rather than generate original ideas. According to this view of the composition process, the distinguishing characteristic of a basic writer is not making sentence level mistakes in grammar, but their imperfect command of the discourse. By extension, the problem with programs that teach writing using skill and drill instruction is that their goal is simply to

make sentence-level mistakes ago away, not to introduce students into the discourse community (Bartholomae, 1985).

According to Bartholomae (1985):

What our beginning students need to learn is to extend themselves into the commonplaces, set phrases, rituals, gestures, habits of mind, tricks of persuasion, obligatory conclusions, and necessary connections that determine the "what might be said" and constitute knowledge within the various branches of our academic community. The course of instruction that would make this possible would be based on a sequence of illustrated assignments and would allow for successive approximations of academic or "disciplinary" discourse. . . . Our colleges and universities, by and large, have failed to involve basic writing students in scholarly projects, projects that would allow them to act as though they were colleagues in an academic enterprise. Much of the written work students do is test-taking, report or summary, work that places them outside the working discourse of the academic community, where they are expected to admire and report on what we do, rather than inside that discourse, where they can do its work and participate in a common enterprise. This is a failure of teachers and curriculum designers who, even if they speak of writing as a mode of learning, all too often represent writing as a "tool" to be used by an (hopefully) educated mind. (p. 516)

Disciplines differ from one another in the language and practices they employ. Experts in a discipline, often without being aware of it, approach reading and writing according to the norms of that discipline. The differences between disciplines reflect

differences in how knowledge is created, evaluated, discussed, and used. A disciplinary literacy approach to teaching reading and writing makes those differences explicit for students (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Having a deep understanding of how literacy is used in a discipline is necessary for students to be able to not only gain access to that knowledge, but to engage in the kinds of extension and critique of existing knowledge that should be part of college-level learning (Moje, 2008). Yet, this aspect of literacy is often absent from the skills-based reading interventions students in developmental programs receive. This failure to provide students in developmental classes with opportunities to learn and use disciplinary literacies is rooted in the mistaken belief that students must learn basic reading and writing before they can interact meaningfully with disciplinary texts (Lee & Spratley, 2010).

Because the literacy demands of college are situated within the disciplines, a contextualized approach to developmental reading and writing instruction would, by definition, take a disciplinary approach to teaching reading and writing. But there is little research examining how well the demands of the reading and writing done in college developmental classes align with the demands of the reading and writing students will be expected to do in the classes the developmental classes are preparing them for. Some scholars believe there is a gap between the skills taught in developmental classes and those required in college level classes, even classes which teach the same subject - Rutschow & Schneider, 2012). Research in K-12 settings has shown that aligning curriculum with standards and assessments has the potential to produce improvements in student achievement as quickly as the first year of implementation (Squires, 2009).

There is research about aligning curriculum in K-12 education, but there is a lack of research on how the curriculum in freshmen level classes aligns with the curriculum in developmental classes (Armstrong, Stahl, & Kantner, 2015).

Determining alignment within an educational system requires the consideration of a number of levels of alignment. First, the textbooks, curriculum, and teacher lesson plans that set the objectives for a given class must align with the actual instruction that occurs in that class (Squires, 2009). There must also be vertical alignment, between the classes students take in a sequence. In addition to aligning the content taught in the two classes, there must be alignment between the cognitive demands of the two classes (Porter & Smithson, 2001; Anderson, 2002) and the materials used in the classes (Anderson, 2002). Probably because of the current emphasis on educational accountability, the term *alignment* is most often used to refer to the connection between objectives and assessment (Martone & Sireci, 2009). More broadly, alignment refers to how curricular expectations, instruction, and assessments work together to facilitate a desired educational outcome. An aligned educational system will provide and coherent, consistent message about standards, outcomes, and expectations that will guide teachers as they make instructional decisions and will ultimately produce students who learn what they are expected to learn (Martone & Sireci, 2009).

Alignment is a complex concept, and is therefore difficult to assess and understand, but the process of trying to understand alignment in an educational system has the potential to help educators move beyond assuming their students are learning what they need to know to taking steps to ensuring that students *are* learning what they need to know (Roach, Niebling, & Kurz, 2008) Studies of alignment have the potential to

help educators create curriculum, instruction, and assessment that best support student learning. The results of an alignment study should provide useful insights into an educational system, but the process of studying alignment is itself also a useful exercise to help educators understand how classroom activities relate to educational outcomes (Martone & Sireci, 2009). A deliberative process of mapping out curriculum provides educators the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching and learning, which in turn can inform curricular revisions (Lam & Tsui, 2016).

Anderson (2002) said a poorly aligned curriculum will make it appear instruction is less effective than it may actually be: teachers may be providing the best instruction they can, but if what they are teaching is not aligned with how their learning will be tested, "their teaching is in vain" (p. 258). The instructors of developmental classes may not be adequately aware of what kinds of reading and writing assignments their students will do in their for-credit classes (Perin, 2011). Instructors may rely on their assumptions or on the content in commercially prepared study skills texts to help them understand what students need to know and be able to do in their college classes (Burrell, Tao, Simpson, & Mendez-Berruda, 1997). But the importance of aligning what is taught in developmental classes to credit-bearing classes is too great for it to be left to assumptions and guesswork. Efforts to improve the outcomes for developmental classes must begin with a thorough understanding of how what happens in those classes and what happens in non-developmental college classes.

The study reported in this paper examined how the reading and writing done in classes in two postsecondary transitional programs at two colleges aligned with the reading and writing done in gateway classes at the schools. The first program examined is

a bridge or pathways program for English-as-a-Second-Language students who wish to attend a U.S. university, but whose TOEFL and IELTS scores fall slightly below the score needed for full admission. The second program is a developmental education program, which provides developmental reading and writing classes to students at a community college who test below the level required to take college-level classes.[1] Both programs use what is becoming the preferred model in transitional education: students developed their reading and writing skills while enrolled in credit-bearing classes. In both programs, the transitional classes were credit-bearing, and students were able to take other classes toward their degrees while enrolled in the transitional program. In addition to seeking to understand how well the transitional and gateway classes aligned in the reading and writing they require of students, the study also addressed how instructors and administrators in transitional programs try to align their curriculum and instruction with that of the gateway classes offered at their institution. The author also piloted a simple framework for understanding the literacy demands of a class.

The instructors in transitional classes may be teaching effectively, and their students may be making tremendous progress in learning, but if what is being taught is not aligned with what the students need to know and do to succeed in college, that success will make no difference. What is happening in developmental classes must first be observed and described if better alternatives are to be developed (Grubb, 2001).

---

[1] Though both programs serve students who have been identified as lacking the proficiency needed for college reading and writing, the Pathways program is not considered a developmental program by the university. To avoid confusion regarding terminology, I refer to both programs in this study as "transitional." The classes students take as freshmen that are not transitional classes are referred to as "gateway" classes.

Research Questions

Research Question One: How well do the literacy demands in the postsecondary transitional classes align with the literacy demands of gateway classes?

Research Question Two: How do the faculty and administrators in transitional programs align the literacy demands of their classes with those of the gateway classes their students take?

*Research Question Three***:** How effective is the proposed framework for understanding the literacy tasks in a class?

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Postsecondary Literacy

Spurred by the discussions of college and career readiness as it relates to the Common Core State Standards, much of the research on postsecondary literacy focuses on how it differs from the literacy demands of high school work. Despite this attention to college readiness among K-12 educators, evidence shows there is still a large gap between the literacy expectations of high school and college. The majority of high school teachers in a 2012 study said their students are either *well prepared* or *very well prepared* for college-level work in the content areas they taught. In contrast, only one-fourth of college instructors report that their students are *well prepared* or *very well prepared* for credit-bearing classes in their content area at the beginning of the school year. One-fourth or more of high school teachers and college instructors reported that fewer than half of their students read at a level that enables them to comprehend class assignments (ACT, 2012).

Deficient reading skills represent a significant barrier to the attainment of a postsecondary degree because, as Pawan and Honeyford (2008) said, reading and writing are "gate-keeping structures that govern students' access into tertiary education" (p. 27). The importance of reading and writing increases in postsecondary settings, where as much as 85% of learning is based on written text (Holschuh & Aultman, 2011). Williamson (2008) found there is a large gap between the literacy demands of high school and college textbooks: Students reading at the level of a typical high school text might be able to comfortably read only 5% of postsecondary texts. A graduating high

school senior who is reading 11th and 12th grade texts at 75% comprehension read the texts used in colleges with less than 50% comprehension.

It is important for instructors to know what, how, and why students read (Joliffe & Harl, 2008). A 2013 study by the National Center on Education and the Economy that examined the English and math skills students need to succeed in community college found that the reading complexity of the texts used in first-year courses in community colleges is typically between 11th and 12th grade levels, but many first-year community college students may still be unprepared for reading at that level. The study found that for students to succeed in reading the texts for their first-year classes, they need to be able to read complex texts without support, to process and synthesize large amounts of new information, read in a range of content areas, and read supplemental documents like maps, tables, graphs, and charts. Many students emerge from high school without these competencies. Perhaps in response to their students' under-preparation, this study found that professors teaching first-year classes at community colleges make limited use of the textbooks and other reading assignments for the classes, relying instead on aids, like Power Points and outlines, to help students understand the course content. The reading tasks students were asked to do for the classes typically required only that the student be able to retrieve information from the texts they read, rather than asking them to reflect on or evaluate it. Most introductory classes required little writing, and writing was graded with low expectations for grammar or content (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2013).

The importance of understanding disciplinary literacies may increase in post-secondary settings. Compared to high school, there is tremendous diversity in the literacy

demands that college students face, demands which vary not only by discipline, but also by professor and task within a given discipline (Harklau, 2001). The shift to literacy activities grounded in reader-response, constructivist approaches to learning, like those found in college classes, may confuse students, who are often novices to academic dialogue. In addition, college demands more integration of different texts and the ability to adjust for different purposes in reading (Bohr, 2003). Chase, Gibson, and Carson (1993) did a three-year investigation of the literacy demands in university and high school classes. The authors concluded that high school class activities and requirements were tied directly to the course textbook, in effect making the textbook the content to be learned in the class. Students were rarely expected to read text independently, without guidance from the teacher. Comprehension was aided by the teacher through worksheets and class discussion. High school classes were participatory, with a lot of exchange between student and instructor and class activities reinforced the text. In contrast, college reading and writing demands varied across disciplines and required higher-level thinking than high school classes. The authors said the cognitive demands of university classes were based in the reading and writing requirements of those classes. Chase, Gibson, and Carson (1993) concluded that

> Even when course content was analogous across the two academic levels . . . the process of delivering this content and the learning activities required of students were different. Ultimately, university courses required students to exercise higher levels of cognitive skill in analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating content and required students to function more independently as learners. (p. 10)

College textbooks present one example of the literacy challenges a new college student faces. There is evidence that college textbooks are written at a higher level than the reading ability of the students who use them (Cline, 1972). College texts assume the reader has more prior knowledge than is assumed by high schools texts (Bohr, 2003). Introductory textbooks present knowledge in accordance with the discourses of that discipline, which might be unfamiliar to incoming students. College texts are also characterized by their density of concepts and do not generally invite the readers to co-construct information or integrate the material with the students' prior knowledge. This presents a barrier to many college students, especially students from diverse ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic backgrounds, who might not be as familiar with the white, middle class culture in which academic discourse is rooted (Pawan & Honeyford, 2008).

The encounters students have with text in high school may leave them ill-prepared to learn from college texts. Orlando, Caverly, Swetnam, and Flippo (2003) found that text seems to play a relatively minor role in the lives of secondary students. Secondary teachers may assign reading, but rarely expect their students to acquire deep understandings of the text; rather, they rely on lecture or discussion to communicate concepts. In college, print is a major source of information. This lack of prior experience with print-intensive learning may result in students' being unaware of how important text is in college or how to use texts in their classes. The students in Orlando, et al.'s study (2003) were able to perceive the overt demands of text-based assignments but not more implicit demands, like the purpose for reading. There were important differences between the expectations of students and professors regarding how text was used in the classes. For example, the students focused on the recall of facts from the text, while the

professors focused on higher cognitive objectives, like interpretation and application of the text. Students thought the reading was assigned only to introduce or review concepts covered in the class, whereas professors saw reading as an extension of what was taught in class, covering new concepts not covered in class.

It is an oversimplification to think of the differences between high school and postsecondary literacy as existing on a continuum from easy to hard. In a 2001 longitudinal study of how four ELL students made the transition from high school to post-secondary literacy practices, Harklau found the literacy practices in the two contexts are different because they are based on the different assumptions that underlie the two contexts. Secondary school literacy is not a watered down version of college literacy, nor is it simply preparation for the literacy practices of college. Rather, Harklau concluded that high school and college literacy practices form their own ecosystems, with their own expectations and discourses. The changes in literacies required to transition from high school to college are a function of the different cultural systems between the two contexts and of the literacy practices common to the two contexts. The conclusion of Harklau's study questions the idea that there is one standard by which the construct of *college preparedness* can be measured. College learning is better understood as a "flexible and ever-evolving repertoire of skills and strategies utilized by students as they met new academic tasks" (p. 36), a process that will continue well beyond the one or two semesters spent in developmental literacy classes.

Despite the fluidity and diversity that characterize postsecondary literacy, many researchers and educators believe there are literacy skills and practices common to successful college students that should be identified and taught to struggling college

readers and writers. Research indicates that skilled readers can perceive the pattern of organization in what they read, rather than viewing knowledge as a series of isolated facts. They are able to understand meanings and relationships between ideas and perform higher level processing of what they read, including paraphrasing, making inferences, and anticipating how the knowledge might need to be recalled for a test. Less competent readers tend to be passive in their approach to reading, relying on strategies that require little thought, like underlining the text, rather than interacting with the text in a way that helps them make meaning (Gourgey, 2003). In a 2003 case study of skilled college readers, Henrichs (2003) characterized the participants as sharing a love of learning. They knew at an early age that good reading and writing were not goals in themselves; rather, language provided a means for them to learn and think about the world. They did not give up when faced with difficult texts and felt in control of their learning. Their literacy skills developed both inside and outside the classroom. They could describe in detail the relationships between their reading and thought processes. They had developed individualized comprehension strategies and the ability to adapt their strategies as needed. They were able to recall and employ the strategy needed to meet the demands of the text they needed to read. Their memorization strategies often used some form of writing. They were aware of their strengths and weaknesses as learners and used a variety of means to comprehend dull or difficult material.

The idea that successful readers employ a variety of strategies and use metacognitive awareness to facilitate their success is one of the most prevalent themes throughout research in postsecondary literacy. This idea is also the basis of the strategy instruction curriculum common in developmental classes. Effective reading requires the

use of strategies and metacognition, but college students may not use the full range of strategies needed to fully comprehend a text. Baker's study of metacognitive standards (1985) explored how students used eight standards to monitor the effectiveness of their comprehension at the lexical, syntactic, and semantic levels. She found that college students over-relied on lexical standards, or understanding of the meanings of the words in the passage. Lexical comprehension is important to overall comprehension, but insufficient unless used in combination with higher-level standards, like questioning or validating the author's claims. Overreliance on lexical standards was particularly common in less-skilled readers. Of the 58 participants, including both skilled and unskilled readers, two-thirds never used a standard to evaluate the text for external consistency, indicating they took information at face value. This suggests these students had a low level of text comprehension and an absence of the critical reading skills needed for college-level work.

Cognitive strategies are not sufficient for promoting success with postsecondary literacy tasks; the student's cultural background is the foundation for a successful transition to postsecondary literacy. As students attending college in the U.S. become increasingly diverse, it is more important than ever that postsecondary educators consider the diversity of the prior experiences students bring with them to college and how those experiences might differ from the dominant discourses of higher education. Pawan and Honeyford (2008) say,

> Students enter academia with literacies situated in their backgrounds and
> experiences. It is from there that learners will gauge their familiarity and
> readiness to engage in literacy expectations at the college level, as well as to

critically evaluate those expectations. Students have to be prepared to undertake

the process deliberately; otherwise they will find that the college experience will

be one that turns them away rather than one that draws them in. (p. 37)

The effect of this background knowledge on literacy was evident in Kamhi-

Stein's 2003 case study of the literacy practices of ELL college readers. Even the highest

performing reader was hindered by a lack of English vocabulary and a lack of prior

knowledge on the text topics. Without the foundation of prior knowledge, it was difficult

for students to interact meaningfully with the text. Kamhi-Stein characterized the poorest

reader in her study as disengaged and focused on simply completing the reading task

without concern for comprehension, but even the more successful readers failed to

identify a purpose for reading and were not strategic in how they approached the reading

task. Hogue-Smith (2010) suggested that one overlooked explanation for the poor writing

produced by some college students is that they lack the cultural and academic knowledge

they need to correctly interpret the text and the writing tasks based on the text.

The connection between reading and writing might be stronger in postsecondary

education than it is in high school because most college writing assignments are based on

reading and because writing is the primary way college students make visible what they

know. Perin (2013) found three major differences between high school and college

writing tasks: college writing is longer, is more often grounded in responses to the ideas

of others as opposed to the author's personal experience, and differs more from discipline

to discipline. According to Carroll (2002), even students who were successful writers in

high school may encounter difficulty with college-level writing because college students

must learn to write differently, "to produce new, more complicated texts, addressing more challenging topics with greater depth and complexity" (Carroll, 2002, p. xii).

Discipline-specific standards by which good writing is judged are more evident in college than in high school, transforming college into what Haswell (2008) called a minefield of genres, expectations, and standards students must navigate as they take classes in different disciplines. This disciplinary diversity is difficult to handle for the instructors of the first-year writing classes charged with transforming students into college writers because the writing tasks of college are almost always situated in a discipline, but a writing teacher must teach writing in the ungrounded setting of a writing class (Haswell, 2008).

Eves-Bowden's 2001 study of the writing processes of basic writers found that the students needed to discover what they think about a subject before they were able write about it. She also found that basic writers do not think in fundamentally different ways than advanced writers do, nor do they lack the skills needed to write; however, they lack experience in successful composition. Basic writers do have a writing process, but one that is not complex or structured, and they rarely use the resources they have to help them write. Few students in Eves-Bowden's study mentioned doing any revision, proofreading, or editing, and those who did said they rarely used those practices because of time constraints. Despite their professed insecurities as writers, the students overestimated their abilities as writers. This overconfidence was also noted in a study of ELL students (Bacha, 2012), which found differences in students' perceptions of their writing ability compared to those of their teachers. For example, some students believed their writing problems were limited to one or two isolated skills, while teachers reported more

generalized concerns about the students' writing ability. The teachers perceived little to no improvement in their students' writing during the semester while students perceived great improvement.

The quality of instruction a student is exposed to in college may be the most important factor in promoting the literacy development of students. Bray, Pascarella, and Pierson (2004) conducted a longitudinal study of literacy development and attitudes toward literacy among 1000 students enrolled at 18 post-secondary institutions. Students who entered college as below-average readers and who were exposed in college to teaching they perceived to be effective experienced positive and statistically significant gains in their reading comprehension skills. For students with below-average attitudes toward reading when they started college, the number of books read and the number of arts and humanities classes taken were positively and significantly correlated with gains in positive attitude toward reading.

Simply keeping students enrolled in college classes long enough for their literacy skills to improve may be a key to graduating students who read and write at the college level. Students' literacy skills improved with the number of courses taken and students' level of involvement with those courses (Bohr, 1994). In Bohr's study, students with both low and high levels of reading ability achieved growth in reading at the end of the freshman year commensurate with their original ability, indicating that both groups developed as readers during college (Bohr, 1994). Literacy gains are related to time spent in concentrated literacy activities. Most studies of postsecondary literacy consider only literacy activities that occur in the classroom. But literacy development requires more than 15-18 hours a week of time devoted to reading and writing and is facilitated by out-

of-class experiences as well as formal classroom learning. This means that it is important to include the entire college community, including student affairs professionals and administrators who work with students outside the classroom, to help students develop as readers and writers in college (Tinto, 2012). Professors may be able to encourage the literacy development of students by encouraging accountability for the completion of reading assignments. College students who received a grade for reading assignments completed their assignments twice as often as those who did not and felt more positively about the reading for the class (Hilton, Wilcox, Morrison, & Wiley, 2010).

Postsecondary literacy is often viewed by educators as being a "relatively uniform entity possessed in varying degrees by individuals" (Harklau, 2001, p. 35), a view that locates literacy within the individual, and underlies the assumption that there is a single definable path through stages of cognitive development leading to a state of *literacy*, a milestone students either have or have not reached. Faculty may believe that students must master certain, generic writing skills before they will be able to write in the academic disciplines (Zhu, 2004). These assumptions, however faulty, underlie many of the practices in colleges, including assigning students to developmental classes based on placement test scores and a developmental curriculum that takes a hierarchical view of reading and writing skills (Harklau, 2001). But postsecondary literacy is better understood as a process than as an entity, a process that continues throughout a students' time in college, and which varies from discipline to discipline, from professor to professor, and from task to task. Given the complex, dynamic nature of postsecondary literacy, it should be no surprise that models of developmental education that require students to improve their literacy deficiencies in one or two semesters before

participating in college-level classes cannot "fix" students' problems with college reading and writing.

Linguistically diverse students in post-secondary education. There is little research about linguistically diverse students in post-secondary settings, but understanding how students' language background affects their experience in higher education is crucial because language is "the medium through which concepts and skills are learned and assessed, social relationships and identities are formed, and increasingly deeper and more complex disciplinary understandings are constructed over time" (DiCerbo, Antstrom, Baker & Rivera, 2014, p. 446, as cited by de Kleine & Lawton, 2015). Linguistically diverse students in post-secondary institutions include English Language Learners, international and immigrant students, Generation 1.5 students, students who speak world Englishes, and students who speak non-standard Englishes, including Appalachian English and African American English. Each group of students faces different challenges in college, but all benefit from policies and classroom practices that facilitate linguistic awareness within the college or university and that optimize the chances for linguistically diverse students to succeed. It is important that educators recognize the legitimacy of non-standard Englishes and provide professional development that equips faculty to provide culturally responsive instruction that helps students develop academic literacy while affirming their primary discourse (de Kleine & Lawton, 2015).

Kapp and Bangeni (2011) said that because language is so closely linked to identity, the acquisition of academic literacy is best understood as a shift in identity. Students from language minority groups may feel ambivalent about this identity shift, as

they find themselves negotiating the multiple and sometimes conflicting identities used in their home and academic discourse communities. The acquisition of academic discourse is often more problematic for students whose first language is not the dominant language or who come from a lower-socioeconomic class because "improving language and academic writing skills becomes inextricably tied to becoming proficient in the dominant discourse, students often have to deal with challenging tensions around identity" (p. 196). Students from diverse linguistic backgrounds may get the message that to be successful in a postsecondary institution, they need to subsume their identity to the academic discourse community. Faced with this choice, linguistically diverse students may fall silent, depriving the academic community of their voice and perspective (Kapp & Bangeni, 2011).

Educators are guided by the ideologies they hold about language as they teach and interact with students. These tacit ideologies are rooted in culturally embedded ideas about identity and power, and are usually so taken for granted that we are unaware of them. Academic discourse usually reflects the norms and standards of society's dominant discourses, making it less accessible to students who have not had extended opportunities to acquire dominant discourses (Razfar & Rumenapp, 2012). Language ideologies rooted in the idea that there is one, correct form of English that is appropriate for use in academic contexts may result in instruction that marginalizes students who do not conform to that standard or that attempts to force students to assimilate into the academic discourse community by abandoning their cultural identity. Linguistic awareness among educators is essential if post-secondary institutions are to validate, rather than

marginalize, the experiences of their linguistically diverse students (de Kleine & Lawton, 2015).

Like other linguistically diverse students, Appalachian students may encounter difficulties in acquiring academic literacy (Purcell-Gates, 1995). Appalachian English provides social and regional identity to its speakers, despite it being a low-status English. Because the language is so closely tied to identity, speakers of Appalachian English are reluctant to assimilate to the standard English discourses, even after having left the region (Jones, 1997) or when pressured to do so to achieve academic or professional success (House, 2013). A quote from a 4th grade student regarding his use of Appalachian English in school illustrates the tension that exists between home and school discourses for speakers of Appalachian English:

> You know what I don't like about school? I don't like it that they don't like who I
> am! I can talk all that proper talk and I can write a story like she [teacher] tells us
> to do. But my granny don't use that [school talk] and that ain't me neither.
> (Powers, 2002, p. 86).

This tension is amplified because Appalachian language is associated with being from a lower-social class. Educators who are not linguistically aware may unintentionally respond to Appalachian students in ways that devalue their culture (Powers, 2002). This may happen even in educational institutions that pride themselves on being progressive. House (2013), in reflecting on his experience as a student and as an academic who speaks Appalachian English, says:

> Dialect is political, for the way people react to it is class-based. In my experience,
> the more educated and self-proclaimed liberal people are, the more apt they are to

freely make fun of the way people talk. Because, although racism and homophobia and misogyny are frowned upon in modern academia and in "polite society," being classist is perfectly acceptable. (p. 199)

Even educators who consciously try to value their students' cultural identity may invalidate the use of Appalachian language in academic settings. A survey of teachers in Appalachian Virginia found that 50% of the respondents identified sentences that used Appalachian English as "incorrect, improper, wrong, or bad" (Clark, 2013, p. 115). Clark (2013) said that even though she brought "all things Appalachian" into the curriculum of the college writing classes she taught:

> . . . the part of me responsible for teaching writing did not know how to respond to sentences like "My brother and me drives the same truck" even though I knew (based on my own experiences and research) how important these dialectical patterns were in my students' peer groups, homes, and communities . . . . Every time I told them their dialect features were incorrect or erroneous, I was sending the same message about their homes, their schools, their communities, their values—but I was not the first. I was just widening a gap between home and school that existed before they ever came to college, and that delicate bridge between the two had already been eroded by years of correctionist teaching. (p. 112)

Clark's example illustrates how instructors who work with speakers of Appalachian English face decisions about how they will handle the use of their students' home language in their classes. The ability to make instructional decisions that will facilitate success for speakers of Appalachian English, or for any linguistically diverse student,

depends on the teacher's ability to identify and examine their personal language ideologies.

Developmental Education

The students who enroll in developmental classes are a diverse group. About half the students enrolled in developmental classes are non-traditional students. Students who are from low income backgrounds are more likely to enroll in developmental classes: only about 8% of students in developmental classes come from families with an annual income of $50,000 or higher (Boylan, 2003). The percentage of minorities in developmental education is three times higher than the percentage of minorities in American higher education; however, the majority of students in developmental education are white (Boylan, 2003). Students who did not enroll in college preparatory classes in high school, students with diagnosed or undiagnosed learning disabilities, students who were average students in high school but did not develop the study skills needed for college, and students whose first language is not English often take developmental classes (Boylan, 2003).

Many of the students enrolled in developmental classes not only face academic and social barriers, but also barriers erected by lack of motivation or poor self-concept surrounding academic tasks. The students in developmental classes often fail to see themselves as college learners (Mealey, 2003). This belief may manifest itself in behaviors like avoiding reading (Chamblee, 2003) or resistance to participating in academic tasks (Gibson, 2012). Students enrolled in developmental classes may take a more passive approach to learning, seeing themselves as recipients of knowledge rather than constructors of it (Paulson & Armstrong, 2011). Because many students enrolled in

developmental classes are the first in their immediate family to go to college, they may lack access to the cultural capital needed to succeed in college, or may be unaware of how to successfully navigate their new role as a college student. It can be difficult to disentangle academic ability from a student's ability to navigate this role because student who has the necessary academic proficiency, but does not demonstrate it according to the professors' expectations, likely will be judged academically deficient (Collier & Morgan, 2008; Karp & Bork, 2012).

Questions of how a developmental program should be configured to promote student success have been raised for decades. Boylan, Bliss, and Bonham's 1997 large-scale study built upon twenty years of research into what components a successful developmental program should have. Some of those variables were found to predict student success, especially centralized program delivery, tutoring services provided by trained tutors, and systematic program evaluation. The program delivery models for developmental education are as varied as the colleges in which they are located, but it is non-credit developmental classes that draw the most criticism. Students usually do not earn credit for successfully completing developmental classes, and are often required to successfully pass these courses prior to enrolling in credit-bearing ones. Critics of this approach say that it is costly and slows down progress toward a degree (Complete College America, 2012). Programs are increasingly being pressured by policymakers to provide accelerated models that focus on increasing completion rates (Boylan & Bonham, 2014). Accelerated programs seek to provide developmental content and services in a manner that minimizes its likelihood of slowing down the time to degree completion.

Accelerated models include compressed courses, paired courses, and mainstreaming students into classes with supplemental support (Edgecombe, 2011).

There have been several studies of how developmental education writ large or individual developmental programs affect educational outcomes for the students who participate in them. These studies attempt to answer various forms of the question, *Do developmental classes work?,* but have provided inconclusive or conflicting answers. Attewell, Lavin, Domina, and Levey (2006) used data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS:88) to develop a picture of how participation in developmental classes affects educational outcomes. Contrary to concerns that large numbers of students are bogged down with taking numerous developmental classes, Attewell et al., found that students who took more than three remedial classes constituted at most 5% of students enrolled at nonselective four-year colleges. There was a statistically significant delay in graduating with a bachelor's degree for students who took remedial classes, though the duration of the delay was short: an additional two to three months. The authors' models suggested that taking some developmental classes lowers the chances that a student in a four-year college will graduate by 6-7% after controlling for academic preparation, high school skills, and family background. Students taking more than three remedial classes at a four-year college had graduation rates at 12-15% lower than their peers with comparable skills and backgrounds. Students taking remedial reading classes are also less likely to graduate than students enrolled in developmental writing or math classes. Fifty-two percent of students taking remedial classes at four-year colleges will graduate, compared to 78% of students who do not take remedial classes.

According to Bahr (2010), studies of the outcomes of developmental education leave an important area unaddressed: the relationship between the depth and breadth of under-preparation and effectiveness of remediation. Bahr defined depth of under-preparation as the degree of deficiency and breadth as the number of basic skills needing remediation. A related unanswered question is the extent to which the presence of multiple academic deficiencies affects degree attainment. Bahr's study focused on remediation of reading and math in community colleges. He found that less than one-fifth of students who entered college with two skill deficiencies attained college-level skills in both math and English. Students who faced the severest deficiencies in reading exhibited increased likelihood of leaving college without a degree; however, students who entered college with deficiencies in both math and English but remediated both deficiencies graduated and transferred at rates that were equal to or slightly better than those of students who attained college-level competency in math and English without remediating their skills. Bahr concluded that remediation is highly effective in ameliorating moderate to severe skills deficiencies for students who had one or two areas of skills deficiencies when students successfully completed developmental classes. According to Bahr (2010),

> Even students who are sorely underprepared for college coursework, even in multiple skills areas, may succeed and achieve well beyond what one would predict based on their initial course placements. This finding speaks strongly to the importance of remedial programs for preserving the accessibility of postsecondary education, maintaining equity of opportunity, and upholding the promise of social mobility in the United States. (p. 200)

Attempts to validate the effectiveness of individual developmental programs, even reportedly successful programs, were sometimes inconclusive or yielded little empirical evidence of success. Caverly, Paulson, and Reardon's 2011 study used a regression discontinuity design to assess the outcomes of a *positive deviant*, a developmental literacy program that was known for producing better-than-expected outcomes. Yet, the study found little positive effect over the short-term for students at the institution who took the developmental classes. The authors did conclude that there may be long-term benefits for students who take developmental classes: students with a low SAT verbal score who took a developmental literacy class were able to persist into their 7th and 8th semesters at a similar rate as students who started college with adequate SAT verbal scores.

The lack of gold standard, experimental research in support of developmental education's effectiveness is often cited as one reason for its vulnerability to criticism; however, other researchers believe the body of research on the topic would be enhanced by more qualitative studies. Bohr (1994) said that "it may be that the true strength of the remedial courses is that they offer something crucial to college success which is not being measured by translative, standardized reading comprehension tests" (p. 158). Studies of college reading often assume any gains in reading ability are related to the reading intervention, when participating in that intervention only constitutes a few hours of a student's entire semester. She called for research grounded in theories of college student development, a field that focuses heavily on what happens outside of the classroom and on incoming characteristics of students, like age, gender, ethnicity, educational and

socioeconomic status of the family, and high school behaviors, and how those factors affect a student's experience in college (Bohr, 1994).

One example of how qualitative methods allow for examining the wider context of developmental education is a study of how a community college and research university provided access to cultural capital for students enrolled in developmental classes (Callahan & Chumney, 2009). The authors believed differences in how the two institutions provided remedial writing instruction, course content, and access to tutoring might reproduce inherent structural inequalities at the two schools. According to the authors, a student in a remedial program would likely have a low amount of academic capital relative to students enrolled in credit-bearing classes. This deficit would need to be ameliorated just as the students' literacy deficits would. The students' positions within the institution are either reinforced or changed by institutional structures, which the researchers believed provided students at the research university better access to the cultural capital they needed to succeed in college, including the academic services they needed. The authors concluded that it was the level of resources provided to the student, rather than the content of the remediation itself, that most influenced their experiences with remediation.

A common concern with developmental courses is that there are no standard criteria to determine placement in such courses and no established standards by which to measure college-preparedness (Lesley, 2003). Some research indicates that many students are placed in developmental classes when they could succeed in for-credit classes or that students can succeed in taking college-level classes while remediating. Zachry-Rutschow and Schneider (2012) reviewed 40 years of research on efforts to

reform the structure, curriculum, or delivery of developmental education. Despite having found few examples of rigorous research demonstrating the effects of reforms on students' achievement, they said that

> programs that show the greatest benefits with relatively rigorous documentation
> either mainstream developmental students into college-level courses with
> additional supports, provide modularized or compressed courses to allow remedial
> students to more quickly complete their developmental work, or offer
> contextualized remedial education within occupational and vocational programs.
> (p. iii)

Weissman, Silk, and Bulakowski (1997) compared students who took both college-level and remedial classes, students who took only college-level classes, and students who took only remedial classes during their first semester at a community college. They found that students who took both college-level and remedial classes during their first semester earned a higher number of credits than students who took only remedial or only college-level classes; however, students who concurrently enrolled in both college-level and remedial classes had a lower attempted/earned ratio and a lower GPA than the other two groups. Students who took only remedial classes their first semester had the highest attempted/earned ratio and the highest GPA of the three groups. The researchers recommended that students who are deficient in the skills needed for college level classes be allowed to enroll in college level classes as long as they are simultaneously remediating their academic skills, but they should not be allowed to take college-level classes prior to remediating. Razfar and Simon (2011) examined how two different enrollment patterns for ESL classes, enrollment in ESL classes concurrently

with for-credit classes and completion of an ESL sequence before enrollment in for-credit classes, affected the achievement of educational goals for Latino students in a community college district. The authors concluded that it is not necessary to complete an ESL sequence prior to enrolling and succeeding in credit-bearing college classes.

If students needing remediation of their reading and writing skills enter directly into credit-bearing classes, involving the faculty who teach for-credit classes in the process of remediating literacy deficiencies will be the key to better educational outcomes for underprepared students. Student learning is tied to faculty teaching (Braxton, 2006), so the academic success of students in developmental classes will be affected, either positively or negatively, by the quality of instruction they receive. Pascarella, Salisbury, and Blaich's 2011 study of the effects of good instruction on student retention found that increased exposure to instruction the students perceived as "organized and clear" led to a 2.2% increase in the likelihood of a student's reenrollment. The effect was comparable for students who had different levels of academic preparation, leading the authors to conclude that "investing resources in improving faculty classroom instructional skills may return significant dividends in terms of increased student persistence at a range of institutional types" (p. 17).

For all the discussion of how to improve developmental education, there are few studies of what program models work and do not work. The studies that have been done often provide ambiguous or conflicting conclusions. There is, however, ample evidence of the effect good teaching has on literacy development. There is also evidence that underprepared students can succeed in for-credit classes before completing an entire developmental sequence.

Curriculum in Developmental Education

The field of developmental education does not have a strong history of evaluating

its outcomes with empirical evidence. Without this evaluation, it is impossible to tell

which program components are working and which need to be changed. For years,

educators have been calling for decisions about the effectiveness of both individual

programs and the field as a whole to be grounded in research (Weissman, Bulakowski, &

Jumisko, 1997), yet, no studies that meet the standard of being rigorous have examined

how instruction affects learning outcomes, and the field has no current standardized

techniques for assessing effectiveness of teaching (Zachry-Rutschow & Schneider, 2012).

Some of the most obvious questions regarding why so few developmental students

succeed in college have rarely been asked: What kinds of instruction are being used in

developmental classes and how effective is this instruction in preparing students for

college?

Although it is hypothesized that an active, constructivist instructional approach

would be more effective than rote learning, developmental reading programs have

historically operated under a transmission model of learning, with reading being treated

as a passive process. This often results in the implementation of skill/drill instruction,

designed to *fix* students' literacy deficits. It also reinforces the passive views of learning

that students bring with them to college and teaches students to look at texts uncritically,

encouraging students only to read at a literal level and memorize facts. This approach is

insufficient for preparing what students to do college level reading in the disciplines

(Armstrong & Newman, 2011). Most often, the skills taught in developmental classes are

presented in isolation rather than directly related to the academic tasks students encounter

in college (Mealey, 2003). Research suggests that students are unlikely to see this instruction in discrete skills as relevant to their academic needs. A skills-based approach to literacy may send the inadvertent message that reading and writing are ways to merely get through their classes rather than having any intrinsic value (Paulson, 2006). Given the curriculum often found in developmental classes, it is not surprising that Paulson and Armstrong (2011) found that students in developmental reading and writing classes saw themselves as passive recipients of knowledge rather than constructors of it.

This lack of engagement with or purpose for literacy tasks may leave students underprepared for the reading and writing they will do in college, even after they have successfully completed remediation. The leap students must make as they transition from developmental English classes to for-credit freshmen English classes offers one example of this disconnect. Instruction in developmental English classes often uses repetitive, skills-based instruction, but the reading taught in college level-literature classes is intellectually lofty and emphasizes theory and literary interpretation. The instruction offered in typical developmental classes offers little scaffolding between the two (Eckert, 2008).

Hock's 2011 synthesis of research into effective instruction for adults with learning disabilities provided strong support for explicit instruction that can scaffold that transition. Hock found that students' learning of skills, strategies, and content is improved when students receive clear explanations, view modeling of cognitive and meta-cognitive behaviors, co-construct strategies that make learning more efficient and effective, engage in extensive practice that includes both guided and independent activities, and receive support for generalization of their learning. For strategy instruction

to be effective, students must learn to use the strategies independently in novel contexts. This may be difficult for students struggling with course content because students must have a good understanding of the information they need to learn before they can use these strategies effectively (Holschuh & Aultman, 2008). Although teaching comprehension strategies can result in students' becoming more proficient in applying learned strategies independently in new contexts, generalization of strategies may not happen quickly. Struggling readers may need multiple opportunities to apply strategies to new text (Edmonds, Vaughn, Wexler, Reutebuch, et al., 2009).

One common criticism of developmental classes is that the instruction they offer is too far removed from the real-life situations in which students need to use them. This disconnect may not allow for the transfer of strategies and skills to other classes. A study of how strategies learned in a developmental class transferred to other classes provided insight into how students use cognitive and metacognitive reading and study skills taught in isolation, apart from for-credit disciplinary class content (Frazier, 1993). Frazier said that of six learning strategies commonly taught in developmental classes, annotating text has been found to correlate most highly with test performance. In addition, it has been found to be popular with students. Frazier reasoned that these two factors make it likely that students will transfer annotation skills learned in a developmental reading class to their content classes, if, in fact, any of the skills taught in developmental reading classes are transferred at all. Yet, analysis of the findings revealed that the students "exhibited strong resistance" to annotation (p. 24). The students had difficulty discerning which information was important, and erred in either making too many or too few annotations. Although all the students showed some, albeit limited, improvement in their ability to

annotate over the course of the semester, none showed improvement in their ability to paraphrase, a key to effective annotation. Students stated that annotating the text was too difficult or expressed doubts regarding the value of annotation.

Engagement in learning tasks that are perceived as meaningful creates much-needed motivation to sustain students through the process of transitioning to college literacy. High levels of engagement, gained from students' investment of time and effort on class assignments, are associated with sustained motivation and effort over the duration of college (Alvarez & Risko, 2008). Offering more contextualized instruction in developmental classes is one approach that might both improve engagement and the likelihood of skills transferring. Perin (2011) reviewed research relevant to contextualized instruction for students in developmental classes and concluded that there is little strong research on the topic, but what research there is indicates that contextualization shows promise as an instructional strategy. There is growing support for the idea that integrating basic skills and content area instruction may improve outcomes for developmental education. Contextualized instruction represents a departure from the model that long-dominated in developmental programs—teaching the technical aspects of literacy apart from course content (i.e., using a series of unrelated passages in a study skills books to analyze text structure or find a main idea.) Contextualization links foundational skills and academic content by focusing on applications of the skills in a context of interest to the student and by creating explicit connections between literacy skills and disciplinary content. Linking basic skills with authentic applications based in the disciplines (for example, by using authentic texts from disciplinary classes in

developmental classes) may increase the likelihood of transfer of skill to that particular setting.

Evidence in support of teaching students how to read, write, and study using authentic content is found in Hattie, Biggs, and Purdie's 1996 meta-analysis of 51 studies published between 1982 and 1992, which attempted to identify features of study skills interventions linked to student success. The authors found that "direct teaching of general, all-purpose study skills is not effective" (p 101). The authors concluded that training tasks and test tasks must be closely related for there to be any transfer of skills. The authors also concluded that interventions that directly teach one specific skill, which is then tested in a task that closely resembles the intervention task, are more effective than interventions that involved multiple-components, like those often delivered though developmental programs. Interventions that attempted to change meta-cognitive behaviors in context were effective if the transfer of the behaviors occurred in situations closely resembling the intervention task.

Perin, Bork, Peverly, Mason, and Vaselewski (2011) studied a contextualized intervention to help students in a community college learn to summarize texts. The instruction on how to summarize was embedded in disciplinary content and relevant to the students' academic goals, but it was not tied to a for-credit class the students were taking. Perin, et al. (2011) concluded that the use of contextualized instruction led to greater gains in the students' inclusion of main ideas and accuracy of scientific concepts when summarizing science content. The students were better able to identify the important concepts in what they read; however, they were still unable to communicate those ideas using their own words. Even though gains were seen in performance on the

written summarization task, the students' summaries still lacked many important ideas and were judged by the researchers to be far below the level expected for students in college-level classes. In addition, no gains were shown on post-test Nelson Denny Reading Test scores, indicating limited transfer to general reading skills. The researchers concluded that underprepared students need large amounts of practice with reading the dense, complex texts they will encounter in college classes but that these students can make improvements in their literacy skills in preparation for college-level classes.

It is possible that a more highly contextualized approach to developmental skills remediation, one that ties instruction to the assignments and content in a specific class, would be more effective in than the approach examined in the Perin et al study (2011). Cox, Friesner, and Khayum, (2003) compared the academic outcomes of students who were enrolled in one of three types of developmental reading classes: a class that carried academic credit, a traditional, non-credit developmental reading class, and a combined reading/economics course, co-designed and co-taught by a reading specialist and an economics professor. The students in the combined class met for one of their weekly instructional hours with a reading specialist who taught them reading skills they were to use with the economics content. Although the findings of the study were somewhat inconclusive regarding the relative effectiveness of the different class models, the authors concluded that students who entered college underprepared in reading and who worked hard to succeed in a reading class that was designed to support their learning in a credit-bearing class had improved chances of long-term success in college.

Caverly, Nicolson, and Radcliffe (2004) conducted two studies examining the long and short term effects of strategic reading instruction on college freshmen

categorized as weak developmental students who were enrolled in a semester-long, stand-alone strategic reading course to determine whether the strategies would translate into improved reading comprehension. For the first experiment, students were instructed using authentic materials: chapters excerpted from college textbooks. After learning the strategies using the excerpts, the students did independent practice with the strategies using textbooks for their own classes. Post-tests for the students in the first study indicated growth in reading comprehension as a result of the intervention, but students still scored below the level needed to pass a college-level class. In study two, the academic performance of students who enrolled in a developmental class was compared to that of students who did not. The developmental reading class students scored higher on two measures. The difference in performance between the two groups was judged to be small, but significant. The authors called for stronger or sustained interventions to support more robust transfer effects to reading-intensive college classes. This finding provided support for the idea that students should receive intensive instruction for an extended period of time to develop the skills they need to succeed in college classes.

Simpson and Rush (2003) conducted a study of adjunct study strategy courses (ASSC), elective classes offered in conjunction with a for-credit class. These classes differ from traditional developmental classes because, rather than teaching generic study skills, information from a task analysis is then used to identify and teach the specific cognitive, metacognitive, and self-regulatory processes students need to succeed in that particular class. Seventy-two percent of the students reported that they were applying the strategies they learned in the ASSC in other classes. Less than 7% of the participating students received a grade lower than a C in the class. The authors said the role of

developmental classes is to help students become strategic learners, and to transfer the strategies they learn in developmental classes to content area classes, but this transfer is hard to promote when strategies taught in developmental classes are learned in isolation from the disciplines in which they were designed to be applied. When students encounter learning challenges in their content classes, they may not see how the strategies they learned can be applied to the problem; instead, they resort to the ineffective strategies they have always relied on. Simpson argued that instructors teaching developmental classes must be familiar with the reading, writing, and thinking tasks required to succeed in the content area classes, then use this information to provide relevant strategies that are immediately applicable for the students.

Another study explored how instructors in developmental classes could learn more about the demands of the for-credit classes their students would be taking (Burrell, Tao, Simpson, & Mendez-Berrueta, 1997). This study looked at the academic literacy tasks by collecting data from the faculty who were teaching freshmen level core classes. The authors used a questionnaire distributed to help them define the "reading, writing, listening, and problem solving processes that the faculty perceived as essential for success in their subject matter courses" (p. 56). The questionnaire included 35 open-ended and closed-ended items on topics including:

- The most serious problems students face the class
- How students could better prepare for the class
- The predominant class format
- The types of required texts and tests/quizzes for the class
- The level of thinking required in the course

- The type and frequency of writing tasks in the class

- The professors' methods for evaluating students' writing

- Common student writing difficulties

- The types and quantity of reading tasks

- The professors' expectations for students' independent learning

- The types of required library projects for the class

- The types of problem-solving tasks in the class

The authors concluded that when professors talk about the need for students to be prepared for college-level classes, they mean they want the students to think about the subject the way a professor would. Freshmen usually lack the schemata for that kind of disciplinary thinking, and there is a difference between how even the best-prepared college student thinks about course content and how a professor does.

Armstrong, Stahl, and Kantner (2015) conducted a curriculum audit to examine alignment of skills and the expectations of faculty and students in developmental and gateway classes at a community college. The two-year audit used class observations, surveys, and analysis of course texts to determine what constituted text-readiness at the disciplinary level. They found a general definition for text-readiness did not exist and there were differences in text expectations between the transitional and gateway classes. The developmental classes used more workbook-style practice texts and more novels. More expository texts are used in other classes, as well as some primary and secondary sources. In developmental classes, text was used for checking students' comprehension and for the teaching of discrete skills, like identifying main ideas, learning vocabulary, or practicing reading strategies. In gateway classes, text was most often used to support

course content. The authors concluded that the literacy audit was useful because it could account for disciplinary differences that a simple measure of readability would not pick up.

Given the importance of the issue and its prevalence in discussions of education policy, it is surprising that so little is known about what works and what does not work in developmental education, or the underlying reasons why so few students who enroll in developmental classes succeed in college. We do know that literacy in college places different demands on students than literacy in high school, and that understanding how reading and writing are used differently in different disciplines is one of those demands. We know that students may be capable of succeeding in college-level classes as they remediate their reading and writing. We know that many developmental classes rely on rote learning of skills using instruction that is decontextualized from disciplinary content, a method the minimizes the chance of skills learned in developmental classes transferring to credit-bearing classes. And, we know that providing developmental instruction that is highly contextualized, offering opportunities for students to learn using reading and writing tasks that are closely related to those in the credit-bearing classes they take, shows promise as a means of improving developmental education.

The study described in the following chapters was designed to answer questions about *what works* in the instruction offered in classes that prepare students for college-level classes. Specifically, it examines how the reading and writing done in transitional classes align with the reading and writing done in gateway classes. Understanding this alignment is necessary to developing curriculum that provides the contextualized, discipline-specific instruction that holds promise for helping under-prepared students

succeed in college. If college reading and writing are situated in the disciplines, and if students need contextualized instruction to increase their likelihood of transferring the skills practiced in transitional classes to their gateway classes, then it follows that the literacy tasks in transitional classes should mirror those in gateway classes as closely as possible. Determining this alignment is an important first step to developing successful curriculum for transitional classes.

In addition, the study looks at how instructors and program administrators determine what their students need to learn if they are to succeed in college. Few studies have looked at how instructors in transitional programs arrive at their understandings of student needs; yet, his topic is also important to developing a successful curriculum for transitional classes. Instructor understandings of student needs will heavily influence the instruction they provide in their classes. Instructors may be providing effective instruction relative to their class objectives, but if their instruction, or the class objectives, are based on flawed understandings of what their students need, it is unlikely to produce students equipped to be successful in their gateway classes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to determine how well the literacy demands in two transitional programs designed to support students' transition to college align with the literacy demands in two gateway classes at two different post-secondary institutions. In addition, the study examined how instructors make sense of the kinds of reading, writing, and other skills their students need to succeed in college. *Literacy demands* is defined as the kinds of reading and writing done in college classes. This includes the amount of reading required, the difficulty and complexity of the texts read, the genre and variety of the texts, what students are asked to do with the texts, what students are asked to accomplish with their writing, and if the reading and writing employ disciplinary literacies (Burrell, Tao, Simpson, & Mendez-Berrueta, 1997).

Simpson (1996) said that if students are to be able to transfer what they learn from developmental classes to credit-bearing classes, instructors of developmental classes must understand the kinds of reading, writing, and studying done in credit-bearing classes. To accomplish this, developmental instructors need to conduct *reality checks* by observing college-level classes, interviewing instructors, reviewing syllabi, and surveying faculty about course literacy demands so that the tasks students do in developmental classes will reflect the tasks required in content area classes. Simpson said developmental instructors need to answer questions about the for-credit classes like:

- What types of reading materials are students assigned?
- What is the relationship between assigned readings and activities in class?
- Are students expected to read one text, or synthesize ideas across texts?

- Do professors expect students to read assignments before class?

- Do professors provide an overview of their lectures in form of outline?

- Do students write papers outside of class? If so, what kinds of papers?

- What types of tests are students given?

- What level of thinking do the exams require?

- What criteria are used to evaluate the students' essays or written work?

Obtaining answers to these questions allows instructors to develop classes that prepare students for reading and writing in the academic disciplines. Data to answer these questions should be collected through both qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys, interviews, document analysis, and observations and a variety of data-analysis methods should be used to allow for triangulation (Simpson, 1996).

The study reported here used qualitative methods to conduct a reality check of the literacy demands of two college transitional programs in an attempt to answer some of the questions suggested by past research (Burrell, et al., 1997; Simpson, 1996). Qualitative methods were appropriate for this study's focus on how reading and writing are used in context because qualitative studies allow the researcher to use multiple, emergent methods of data collection in a natural setting to develop a broad, complex, and holistic understanding of social phenomena within a specific context of time and place (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative data allow the researcher to delve deeper than "snapshots of 'what' and 'how many' to 'why' and 'how' things happen as they do" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). In qualitative studies, the researcher makes no effort to remove the context from the research, which increases the likelihood of understanding aspects of issues that might not be obvious from a review of purely quantitative data. Qualitative

data are preferred for discovery and exploration of a new area of research, as well as for supplementing quantitative data on the same topic (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The strategy of inquiry used for the study was case studies of four classes at two post-secondary institutions. Creswell (2003) says that when conducting a case study the researcher "explores in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals" (p. 15). The data collection and analysis for this study also use the strategy of grounded theory for data analysis, in which the researcher " . . . attempts to derive a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction grounded in the view of the participants in the study . . . using multiple stages of data collection . . ." (Creswell, 2003, p. 15). Grounded theory uses the constant comparison of data to develop and refine categories that emerge throughout an iterative process of collecting and analyzing data. Case studies and grounded theory are well-suited for exploring processes and activities (Creswell, 2003).

Merriam (1998) defines a case study as "an examination of a specific phenomenon, such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (p. 9). Case studies are appropriate when the goal of the study is description or explanation (Merriam, 1998). Yin (2009) says "you would use the case study method when you want to understand a real-life phenomena in depth, but such understanding encompassed important contextual conditions—because they were highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study" (p. 18). Rather than manipulating one or two variables, as in experimental research, a case study focuses on numerous variables in a single unit of study, examining them with any research tool that can yield insights into the case. Often, the variables of interest are unknown or vague, or are too embedded in the context to be

isolated for an experiment. The case is heuristic, meaning it is valuable for the insights it offers into the larger phenomena of study. In this case, the four classes are useful for understanding how college transitional class instructors align the kinds of reading and writing they assign their students with what students do in their gateway classes. The knowledge derived from a case study is highly contextual compared to the more abstract knowledge generated by experimental or quantitative designs, making case study an appropriate method for a study of how reading and writing are used in college classes (Merriam, 1998). A case is an instance, not a representative, and case studies only represent a slice of reality. Although one must be careful not to draw too many generalizations from such a limited slice, a case study "offers insights and illuminates meanings that expand its' readers' experiences" (Merriam, 1998, p. 32). Case studies are generalizable to "theoretical propositions," but not to populations in the sense that experimental research is (Yin, 2009).

According to Glaser & Strauss (2012) grounded theory generates theory from data using an inductive approach to data analysis, as opposed to generating theory from *a priori* assumptions. The theories generated from this methodology are grounded in the data. Because the theory is so closely tied to the data, a grounded theory methodology is suitable for generating theory that is useful in the context that is the focus of the research. Data from the units of analysis that are the focus of the study are subjected to comparative analysis, which generates conceptual categories and the properties that define them. The process of constant comparison of the units of analysis in the study reveals their similarities and differences. Categories emerge from the data through this process of analysis through comparison. The categories can then be used to generate a

hypothesis or theory about the relationships between the categories. Because comparative analysis is conducted throughout the research process, rather than after data collection has ended, it is useful for helping the researcher confirm the validity of initial assumptions. Comparative analysis helps the researcher find generalizations that are common between different cases and contexts. It leads to the development of both substantive (practical) and formal (conceptual) theory. Because theory and context are so intertwined, the categories should accurately reflect the context from which the data were obtained and how participants understand their behaviors and the context, so they should be easily understandable to both the researcher and the participants.

Grounded theory is used to develop theories that hold a high degree of accuracy as they relate to the context in which they were developed, making this strategy of inquiry an appropriate companion to case study research. The comparison the data is subjected to brings out "the distinctive elements or nature" of the case (Glaser & Strauss, 2012, p. 25). The categories arise from the context in which data were collected, making the theories developed likely to be a trustworthy reflection of the context. Grounded theory is also useful for making empirical generalizations because, once we understand how the theory operates in a given context, we are able to begin establishing the boundaries for the theory's applicability by comparing how it operates in similar situations in different contexts. Grounded theory is also used to verify theory by testing a hypothesis against comparative data and through the continual modification of existing theories (Glaser & Strauss, 2012).

Theoretical Framework

It is essential that the researcher develop theoretical propositions that are sufficient to guide the case study prior to beginning data collection (Yin, 2009). The theoretical propositions for this study are based on sociocultural and disciplinary theories of literacy. As acceptance of sociocultural theories of learning became widespread, educators stopped viewing literacy as a unitary set of skills that, once mastered, can be transferred into any reading or writing situation. Literacy is better understood as *literacies* or *multiliteracies* (New London Group, 1996), terms broad enough to encompass all the ways reading and writing can be used, both within and beyond systems of formal education. Definitions of literacy that include only mastery of a set of rules for how to read and write academic texts may contribute to poor educational outcomes for students who have been identified as needing developmental education because such definitions may result in skills-based methods of literacy instruction characterized by prescriptive teaching and decontextualized learning (Street, 2012). In contrast, a developmental view of reading, one that understands that a given student will have different levels of success with different kinds of literacy tasks in different situations, allows teachers a more complex and complete view of what we ask our students to do as readers and writers. Students are not simply grouped into immutable categories like good *writers and bad writers* or *proficient readers and struggling readers*. Their success in a given literacy situation is understood as an interaction between characteristics of the text, the students' prior domain and topic knowledge, the strategies the student has at his or her disposal, and the student's interest and motivation. Understanding these complex

interactions is necessary to helping students learn to read deeply and critically (Alexander, 2006).

This study is grounded in the idea that the goal of transitional classes should not be to make students literate by teaching them skills, like a system of proper grammatical forms or a set of guidelines for how to take notes from texts or lectures. Rather, transitional classes should facilitate students' participation in the literacies they will encounter in their first year of college by enabling them to begin the process of learning to read and write critically in the disciplines (Bartholomae, 1985). Becoming literate is not a linear process and students are not complete as readers and writers once they master basic skills. Rather, all people are always learning to read and write in new ways as they participate in new contexts that require new literacies (Alexander, 2006). Literacy is always embedded in a cultural context, and this study was designed to understand not only the kinds of reading and writing done in four college classes, but how reading and writing are *used* in those four classes. Understanding literacy involves understanding texts and the practices surrounding them (Barton, 2007.) Research and instruction rooted in literacy *practices*, how people use literacy to accomplish goals in a society, and literacy *events*, the specific instances of using literacy, examines how literacy is used within a given context (Scribner & Cole, 1978).

The structures of language evolve as new contexts require new ways of using language. In the context of a university, this means that language is differentiated according to field of study (Unsworth, 2002; Unsworth, 2008). Knowledge and meaning are situated within the characteristic ways of talking, writing, acting, and interacting in the disciplines, which is known as the discourses of the disciplines (Gee, 2000). Although

a student may well be capable of using reading and writing to accomplish out-of-classroom literacy tasks, or even be capable of using reading and writing in one discipline, that student may not be adept at using literacy in a discipline that is new to him or her. Students' struggles with writing in college may be attributed not to their lack of basic writing skills, but to their lack of command of the authority and language used in academia (Bartholomae, 1985).

To be able to read and write in the disciplines, students must be directly taught the conventions of the disciplines. Each discipline has its own way of using language that reflects how knowledge is created, talked about, and used in that discipline. Literacy in the context of college includes the ability to navigate discipline-specific literacies. Even students who have mastered basic reading skills may have trouble transitioning to higher-level texts requiring more sophisticated and less generalizable skills (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). Teaching literacy can be understood as the process of introducing students to the discourses privileged by the disciplines (Moje, 2008). According to Lee and Spratley (2010), "More and less competent adolescent readers will continue to struggle with both textbooks as well as primary source documents until explicit attention to text features, prior knowledge, vocabulary, comprehension monitoring processes become routine practices in classrooms where students are expected to read in order to learn" (p 9). Students are not truly literate until they are able to identify, articulate, and critique the discourses they are asked to use in college.

Viewed from the perspective of disciplinary literacy, the work of transitional educators is to facilitate their students' access to those discourses. This form of literacy is not a higher-level comprehension skill that should only be taught once students master

foundational skills; it can and should be taught alongside the foundational skills (Luke, 2000). The focus of this study includes considerations of how students in transitional classes are given opportunities to read and write in the academic disciplines and how they are being asked to use disciplinary knowledge in their reading and writing.

Study Context

In conducting qualitative research, participants should be selected purposefully, for their theoretical relevance (Glaser & Strauss, 2012). The researcher should choose sites and participants that will best illuminate the research questions (Creswell, 2003). The individual case is the unit of analysis in a case study, and a first step in conducting a case study is defining boundaries for the case, or, deciding how to set limits on the scope of the study (Merriam, 1998). The sampling process in qualitative research requires two actions: 1) setting the boundaries that define cases related to the research questions within the given limits of time and resources and 2) creating a frame that will help uncover the processes that are the focus of the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Merriam (1998) would define the sampling for this study as *criterion-based*: I established the criteria for the kinds of classes I wanted to study, and sought out a sample that fit those criteria. Using the descriptions of the different methods of sampling offered by Miles and Huberman (1994), the sampling for this study was *opportunistic* in selecting State University for inclusion: I was able to *follow leads* through professional connections to the Pathways program, whose academic director was interested in conducting research on the new program. After identifying this initial case, the inclusion of the CMM 103 class at State and the developmental education program at Metro were chosen through *stratified, purposeful* sampling, a sampling method that facilitates

60

comparison and allows for maximization of similarities and differences. I knew I needed to include a gateway class at State, and if possible, I wanted to find a class that had similar objectives to the ENG 150 class so comparisons between the two classes would be easier to make. I reached out to an instructor teaching CMM 103, which, like ENG 150, focused on oral communication skills.

I sought to include a community college program because examining how the same act (preparing students for college-level classes) was done in two different contexts (a university and a community college) would add depth and possibly additional insights to the study. Glaser and Strauss (2012) recommend including groups in a study that have their key features in common, but which also have enough differences to allow the researcher to see how properties of categories change in different contexts. This makes the inclusion of different groups useful for developing categories and properties. The two classes chosen at Metro were included through reputational sampling: the department chair recommended a list of instructors who might participate. The two instructors included in the study responded to my request for participants.

I chose to include multiple cases in this study because including evidence from multiple cases may be more compelling than conclusions drawn from a single case (Merriam, 1998). Multiple case studies strengthen validity of and give us confidence in our findings because we can understand how our findings replicate or do not replicate in different contexts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Selecting multiple cases that both maximize and minimize differences in the phenomena being studied strengthens our understanding of the categories and the theory derived from them (Glaser & Strauss, 2012). Multiple cases provide the opportunity for "analytic generalization, in which a

previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study" (Yin, 2009, p. 61). My goal was not to compare the different classes or schools in terms of ranking which had better aligned classes or which offered more of a certain kind of literacy task; rather, including the two sites allowed me to see how different contexts might affect the kinds of reading and writing done, the degree of alignment present, or how instructors made sense of alignment.

The first research site was State University, a public, regional university with an enrollment of about 14,000 students, located in central Appalachia. The undergraduate enrollment is around 10,000, almost 90% of whom are in-state residents or from the counties surrounding the university in bordering states. The majority of students at the university are first-generation college students from a region with a high rate of poverty and low rates of educational attainment; however, the students enrolled in the program that is the focus of this research do not fit those general demographics of the school. They are almost all international students who are in the United States on F1 visas. Because of the high cost of tuition for out-of-state students and the additional costs students pay for the Pathway Program, and the ineligibility of international students for most financial aid, the students in this program are more likely to be of a middle or upper-class background than other students at the university.

In 2012, as part of an effort to internationalize its student body and boost enrollment, State entered into an agreement with INTO University Partnerships, a private company that sets up public/private partnerships with universities to provide English-as-a-Second-Language and foundational courses for international students who want to attend college in an English-speaking country. In fall semester, 2013, the first class of

170 INTO-State students was admitted. Students from 23 different countries were represented in the program with the majority being from China and Saudi Arabia. Among the programs offered by INTO-State are its Undergraduate and Graduate Pathways Programs, designed for students who want to study in the U.S., but who are slightly below the TOEFL or IETLS scores required for regular admission to the university. In spring 2016, about 250 students were enrolled in the Pathways programs, though the majority of these students were in the graduate Pathway.

According to the program's promotional literature, the Pathway Programs combine "intensive language study, academic skills development and academic coursework in a program designed to move students successfully through the first year" of their degree program. Students in the Pathway Programs take for-credit classes designed to help them build their English language proficiency, develop academic skills, and adjust to a university in the U.S. For undergraduates, these classes include Academic Speaking and Listening (ENG 150), Academic Reading (ENG 151), and Academic Composition and Culture (ENG 160). All of the English classes are taught by faculty from the State University English Department. Many of the instructors are graduates of the department's M.A. in TESOL program. All of the English classes in the Pathway Program are credit-bearing: ENG 150 and ENG 151 will count as elective credit for students and ENG 160 fulfills the requirement for ENG 101, which all freshmen take. The Pathway Program is an example of an accelerated program, where students are mainstreamed into gateway classes while receiving academic support in the form of a companion class (Edgecomb, 2011). Because State University had a pre-existing Intensive English Program, which offered non-credit English classes for students who

wished to attend the university but did not have the required proof of language proficiency, much of the curriculum in the Pathway Program was modeled on the curriculum used in the higher levels of the IEP.

In addition to the English classes, students also take classes that will count toward graduation. Students are placed into a Pathway for their major or college. Popular pathways include Business, CITE (Computers, Information Technology, Engineering), Science, and General (Liberal Arts). The classes in each Pathway are established by the college, but students generally include CMM 103 (Communications), FYS 100 (a first-year seminar class in critical thinking and writing), math (the specific class depending on the students' Compass score and major), a fine arts class, and a social science class. All classes count toward majors in the college or toward the university's core requirements. All are classes typically taken by freshmen. Depending on their previous academic preparation and language proficiency scores, students in both the Undergraduate and Graduate Pathway Programs may remain in the program for either their entire first year at State or for just their first semester. Students who succeed in the Pathway will have earned at least 30 credits by the time they finish.

The second site for this study is Metro Community and Technical College, a public, two-year college in a small city in central Appalachia about an hour from State University. Metro's two campuses serve a six county region in the state. The college was formed in 2014 as a merger between two existing community colleges. Metro enrolls about 2000 students, many of whom are enrolled part-time. The college is located in a region with high rates of poverty and low rates of educational attainment. According to instructors interviewed for this study, many of the students at Metro are from a low socio-

economic background or are first generation college students. The region has high rates of unemployment, so many of Metro's 20 degree and 17 certificate programs are designed to help students find work in local industries, including with those manufacturers who have training partnerships with the college. Metro also has articulation agreements with local universities, including State University. Local students often begin their college education at a community college close to home, where they can continue to live at home and work, then transfer to the closest university to finish a 4-year degree.

Faculty and administrators who are currently in the Developmental Education department at Metro participated in a state-wide task force in 2011 convened to study how developmental education was delivered in 2-year and 4-year colleges throughout the state. After participating in extensive research on what works in developmental education, administrators decided to implement an accelerated, integrated reading and writing class at one of the colleges that would soon merge to form Metro. The class included composition skills, critical thinking skills, and affective skills needed to succeed in college. When the colleges merged, the accelerated reading-writing class was piloted as a bridge class, where students who did not have the ACT or Accuplacer scores required to take ENGL 101 could take one of two new credit-bearing classes as a co-requisite with ENGL 101. The first of those new classes, ENGL 096, requires an ACT score of English 16-17 and Reading 15-16. The second, ENGL 095, requires an ACT score of English 11-15 and Reading 12-14. Students who score below these cut-offs are referred to the college's adult education department. Both classes are designed to support the content in ENGL 101, not to add additional assignments. The primary difference

between ENGL 095 and ENGL 096 is the amount of additional instructional time the students receive; students in ENGL 095 receive three credit hours and students in ENGL 096 one. ENGL 101/096 and ENGL 101/095 are examples of an accelerated transitional program that uses a paired course model, which enrolls students who are in a linked college-level and developmental class, with the developmental class providing support to the college-level content (Edgecomb, 2011).

Administration at Metro has continually evaluated the co-requisite model and the curriculum in the classes since it was adopted. They decided that ENGL 096 is working well, but modifications were needed to ENGL 095. Specifically, 096 students were able to keep up with their peers in sections of ENGL 101, but students in 095 were falling behind their peers in that class. In fall, 2015, students who tested into ENGL 095 were placed into their own sections of ENGL rather than filling the sections with both students who were receiving developmental support and those who were not.

ENGL 101 is a prerequisite for many of the classes students take at Metro, especially if they are working on General Degree requirements for transfer to a four-year school. ENGL 101 is also a requirement of most of the degree and some certificate programs at Metro. Students may take skills-based classes in their program concurrently with ENGL 101. Administrators at Metro say they are currently working on creating a curriculum for ENGL 101 that will integrate the kinds of reading and writing students need in their specific trade or skills. Students may take classes in Personal Leadership, Math, Humanities, Computer Applications, and Personal Communication concurrently with ENGL 101.

Researcher Positionality

Qualitative research relies on the interpretation of data by the researcher. According to Glaser and Straus (2012), the researcher is a "highly sensitized and systematic agent" who has insights and can make the most of those insights through the kinds of "systematic comparative analysis used in the generation of grounded theory . . . The root sources of all significant theorizing is the sensitive insights of the observer himself" (p. 251). The researcher will bring preexisting insights to the research process and develop new insights throughout the process. Rather than try to escape the influence of those insights on the process of collecting and analyzing data, researchers should capitalize on them. In addition, the qualitative researcher is personally involved with the research participants, spending extensive time talking and working with them. These resultant relationships are a strength of qualitative research. Participants are likely to open up more freely to someone they have established rapport with; however, those relationships and the involvement of the qualitative researcher as the primary data collection instrument also present the possibility of ethical dilemmas. The researcher must examine his or her positionality and interests regarding the research (Creswell, 2003).

In conducting the interviews and classroom observations for this study, I did not present myself as detached or neutral. I have a personal and professional interest in the topic of the study because I have worked in post-secondary transitional programs for most of my career. I have a personal interest in one of the programs included in the study because I presently hold a faculty appointment teaching undergraduate English classes in the Pathway Program. As part of my responsibilities, I advise students, mentor faculty,

and have had some input in the class curriculum. I designed and proposed the study, including the selection of the Pathway Program as a site, before I knew of any possibility of my being hired for the position. My influence on what was taught in the ENG 150 class was minimal. I do not supervise the faculty who teach the class and did not have any direct responsibility for the content taught in the class during the spring 2016 semester, when the research was conducted. The class objectives and most of the key assignments were in place prior to my being hired, though I have had some input in developing the key assignments for the class, specifically, the annotated bibliography and content lesson presentation. The instructor chose not to teach other suggested key assignments in the spring semester and many of the assignments she gave were not part of the formal class objectives and suggested assignments.

I believe that knowing me and working with me facilitated open conversations with both interviewees at the site. In my interviews with the faculty and administrators from Metro and with the course director and instructor for CMM 103, I presented myself as interested in the topic not only for my dissertation research, but also as a colleague who was working with students in a transitional program. Our conversations moved between questions directly related to the dissertation research and questions related to our shared experiences as faculty teaching first-year students. I sometimes asked them for professional advice having nothing to do with the study. In particular, I sought advice from the CMM course director and the department chair at Metro on how I could encourage the faculty I work with to adapt teaching strategies that better reflect best-practices in the field of developmental education. This was a problem both had dealt with in developing their programs. I interacted with the faculty from Metro and State as a

fellow instructor. All the participants responded to me as a professional equal, and as someone who understands what they do and shares many of the same challenges. The transcripts of our interviews are peppered with comments like "as you know . . ." and "we teachers . . ." that indicate they saw me as a colleague in addition to a researcher. Perhaps as a result, the participants were quite honest about their challenges. Two interviewees shared that they do not feel ENGL 101/095 is successful. Another shared her uncertainty about teaching a credit-bearing class for the first time. The Pathways and CMM 103 administrators shared their challenges with building cooperation with the faculty as they built the programs and revised the curriculum. A teacher shared her struggles with lessons that did not work out well. Overall, I believe my ability to position myself as a colleague/researcher enhanced the quality of the study.

One of the preexisting insights (Glaser & Straus, 2012) I brought to this study was the importance of supplying instruction in transitional classes that directly supports students' learning in their content classes, rather than focusing on decontextualized skill instruction. The years I have spent in the classroom and my doctoral studies have convinced me that students who have been designated as needing transitional support should not be denied opportunities to engage in meaningful assignments that require them to think deeply and critically about issues that matter to them and to communicate their ideas to an audience that values their voices. I came to the study with the prior insight that students who have been designated as underprepared for college work are just as capable of engaging in these forms of inquiry as students in an honors class are. In teaching my own classes and in mentoring new faculty, I resist the idea that students need

to master a certain level of academic proficiency before they are ready to engage in critical reading and writing, and the data were analyzed through the lens of that belief.

My experience as someone who grew up using Appalachian English, a non-standard, low-status variety of English, and who has worked extensively with English Language Learners and other students who are likely to be judged negatively for not speaking *correct English* provides a lens through which I can understand the influence of language ideologies on our identity as teachers and learners. Appalachian people, especially those who live outside the region, make the same choices between status and solidarity as other speakers of non-standard Englishes (Jones, 1997). The connections between language and identity are very real to Appalachian people because language is what most clearly identifies us as being from the region (House, 2013). Appalachian language is often the object of ridicule and considered to be a sign that the person speaking it is from a lower social or economic class (Sohn, 2013). Using it in academic settings can result in discrimination and loss of access to academic capital. My experiences with using (or, at times, choosing not to use) Appalachian English within the context of higher education have influenced how I view non-standard Englishes, including Appalachian and African American English, as well the use of *imperfect* English and other languages by English Language Learners. I reject the belief that students must always communicate ideas using standard or error free English in academic settings, a belief that undergirds much of the instruction in college English classes. In constructing this study, I believed any understanding of how literacy is used in transitional classes could not be constructed without attempting to understand how the instructors viewed the use of non-standard Englishes by their students.

Methods

  Data collection. According to Maxwell (2013) qualitative research methods are useful for looking at a problem with an inductive, process-oriented approach. Qualitative methods allow the researcher to focus on specific situations or people and provide the tools for generating information that allows others to also learn from the specific case. Qualitative methods allow the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of a limited number of settings rather than collecting aggregated data from a large sample. This in-depth analysis of the specific can be a first step toward understanding the general. In this study, I used a qualitative, multi-case study to understand how the literacy tasks in the two transitional programs aligned with the literacy tasks in for-credit classes as a first step in generating theories of how reading and writing is used in transitional college classes and how those uses compare with gateway classes.

  The site for a case study should provide access to the data needed to answer the research questions. If multiple sites meet this criterion, the site most likely to lend insights to the research question should be chosen (Yin, 2009). The classes selected for inclusion in the study were chosen based on personal connections and recommendations, and all met both of Yin's criteria. The unit of analysis for the study, the definition of what a case is (Yin, 2009), was the four individual classes at the two schools. Because I work at State University, I knew many faculty members who teach both in the Pathway and other undergraduate classes. I selected the instructor for ENG 150 in spring, 2016 because I believed that, as a veteran teacher, she would not be intimidated by having a researcher in her class. Because ENG 150 focuses on academic speaking and listening skills, CMM 103, Introduction to Communication, seemed to be a natural gateway class

to also observe because it also focuses on oral communication. I knew a long-time instructor of the class and reached out to her to ask if she would be willing to participate, which she was. After obtaining verbal consent from the two instructors, I contacted the administrators who have control over the curriculum in the two classes to see if they would also be willing to participate in the study by being interviewed. Both agreed. This was important because both ENG 150 and CMM 103 have somewhat standardized curriculum, meaning that the instructors had limited control over class objectives and assignments. Understanding how the reading and writing tasks were selected for the classes required the participation of the curricular decision makers.

I also wanted to include a second site in the study, not to compare the two programs or institutions, but to provide additional insights into the research questions by examining data related to my findings from two different contexts (Glaser & Strauss, 2012). Both two-year and four-year institutions offer classes to help students transition into college, so there are substantial, significant similarities between the two contexts. Because much of the research on developmental education is based in community colleges and community college transitional programs may have been quicker to adapt new standards of best-practices in transitional education, and because the needs and populations of community college and university students are different, inclusion of a community college transitional program had the potential to illuminate interesting differences in a cross-case comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 2012). I sent emails to numerous community colleges within a two-hour radius of my home, and received a response from the Department Chair for English and Developmental Education at Metro Community and Technical College. As someone who had recently finished her own

doctorate, the chair was enthusiastic about participating in the study, and agreed to help me contact faculty to participate.

The two classes studied at Metro are essentially the same class; one is a section of ENGL 101 that enrolls students who are only in ENGL 101 (i.e., they meet the test score requirement to place directly into ENGL 101 with no developmental support) and students who are co-enrolled in both ENGL 101 and its co-requisite, ENGL 096 (i.e., they do not meet the test score requirement to place into ENGL 101 and are enrolled in ENGL 101 along with one credit of support for the class content). The second class, ENGL 101/095 is a section of ENGL only for students who do not meet the test score cut-off for direct placement in ENGL 101 or for co-enrollment in ENGL 101/096. The class covers the same basic content as ENGL 101, but at a slower pace and with three hours per week of additional support. ENGL 101/096 is not taught differently than a section of ENGL 101 that does not have ENGL 096 students co-enrolled. Because the two classes, ENGL 101/096 and ENGL 101/095 are taught differently and cover some different content, they are appropriate for inclusion in a study of how literacy tasks align in transitional versus gateway classes.

For the purposes of this study, I used a definition of alignment that was broader than the *fit between objectives, instruction, and formal assessments*. When we think of assessment, we most often think of formal or standardized tests, but the term can also be used more broadly to describe any way by which students demonstrate what they have learned. In the case of the learning that happens in transitional classes, the true assessment happens not on a test given in the class, but when students apply what they have learned in the gateway classes the transitional classes have been preparing them for.

In examining alignment between transitional and gateway classes, it would therefore be appropriate to look at how the learning done in transitional classes is assessed through application in gateway classes. The reading and writing assignments from CMM 103 at State and ENGL 101/096 at Metro provide samples of the kinds of reading and writing done in gateway classes at the two institutions. As such, they could function as the assessment of student learning in an alignment study: students who take transitional classes will show what they learned when they complete the reading and writing assignments in the two gateway classes. For the educational system to be aligned, the instruction offered in ENG 150 at State and ENGL 101/095 at Metro should align with the assessment--the reading and writing done in the gateway classes.

The configuration of the alignment between the pairs of classes at the two schools is different. ENG 150 and CMM 103 can be thought of as vertically aligned. Students take CMM 103 either concurrently with or immediately after ENG 150. ENGL 101/095 is taken instead of ENGL 101/096, and both classes prepare students to take a second English class. ENGL 101/096 and ENGL 101/095 can be thought of as horizontally aligned. The nature of the alignment relationship is not relevant for this study because it is focused on how the reading and writing in transitional classes in general aligns with the reading and writing in gateway classes in general, not on the alignment within a specific sequence of classes. Just as CMM 103 and ENGL 101/096 were appropriate sites for collecting samples of the kinds of reading and writing done in gateway classes in general, ENG 150 and ENGL 101//095 were appropriate sites for collecting samples of the kinds of reading and writing done in transitional classes in general.

The focus of the study was on how reading and writing were used in the four classes. The ENGL classes at Metro were an obvious fit for inclusion in the study because they focused on writing. The inclusion of the classes at State that focus on oral communication was also appropriate. In our initial conversations about the possibility of their participating in the study, the instructors of both classes confirmed that the classes include significant amounts of reading and writing. In addition, defining literacy as a social practice--the ability to appropriately use all the ways of making meaning within a discourse community--means that reading and writing cannot be separated from oral language (Gee, 2001). Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and other semiotic modalities are used in any given class; no class can focus on one or two modalities to the exclusion of the others. Therefore, understanding how reading and writing were used in the classes required understanding how language, both oral and written, was used in the classes. To limit the study to only classes that explicitly focused on reading and writing would be to operate under the false premise that one language modality (i.e., reading, writing, speaking) can be taught or used in isolation from the others. Operating under an expanded definition of literacy required that I look at how both oral and written language modalities were used in all the classes because all language modalities were present in all of the classes.

Case studies use multiple data sources and are strengthened by "some prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis" (Yin, 2009, p. 18). The data for this study came from three sources selected for their potential to illuminate the research questions: classroom observations, analysis of documents and texts, and interviews conducted with administrators and instructors at the two institutions.

The use of three data sources allowed me to consider the research questions from multiple viewpoints and allowed for triangulation of the data. The three forms of data provided different views of the categories generated and allowed more opportunity to confirm findings (Glaser & Strauss, 2012). Each of the three forms of data has its strengths and limitations. Using multiple methods of data collection allows the strengths of one method to offset the weaknesses of the others (Creswell, 2003).

The observations in this study were conducted with me in the role of *observer as participant*, with my status as a researcher known to the instructors and students in the classes. This allowed me first-hand knowledge of what was happening in the classes, the potential to observe unusual events that would not be captured in the other data (Creswell, 2003), and an understanding of how reading and writing were used in the classes that was not mediated through the viewpoint of the instructors, as the other forms of data collection were. The interviews allowed me to obtain historical and background information I needed to understand the context. They also allowed me to ask specific, controlled questions that were relevant to the research questions (Creswell, 2003). Finally, the assignments and texts I collected for the study, because they were prepared or selected deliberately and thoughtfully to support what the instructors believed their students needed to learn in the class, provided insight into how the class objectives translated into practice. Documents, such as the class objectives and instructions for assignments, were an unobtrusive form of data that enabled me to access the language of the instructors as they developed literacy tasks for the class (Creswell, 2003).

Qualitative researchers can have little to no pre-planned instrumentation or rely on highly structured and planned instrumentation. Because multiple-case studies enable

to researcher to make comparisons across cases, it is recommended that they employ standardized instruments for data collection so that the data collected will be comparable (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To achieve this suggested consistency in collecting data across contexts, I used the same interview protocol (Appendix B) as a starting point for all the interviews. I used the same protocol for recording notes in class observations and spent roughly the same amount of time visiting all the classes. I used the same literacy analysis framework for all the classes.

The research was conducted in four contexts over the period of seven months: 1) State University Pathway ENG 150 *Academic Speaking and Listening* class (a credit-bearing, sheltered class for students in the Pathway program); 2) State University CMM 103 *Fundamentals of Speech Communications* class that is part of the core curriculum for almost all students; 3) Metro Community and Technical College ENGL 095 *Accelerated and Integrated Reading and Writing*, a credit-bearing class that only enrolled students who did not receive the placement test score for ENGL 096 or ENGL 101; 4) ENGL 101/ENGL 096, *English Composition I/English Writing Skills* which enrolls students who meet the placement score for ENGL 101 and students who are co-enrolled in ENGL 101 and the support class, ENGL 096. I visited each of the classes two times, once mid-way through the semester and once in the last month of the semester, to conduct class observations. Conducting repeated observations over an extended period of time strengthens the validity of the conclusions drawn from the data (Merriam, 1998). Merriam (1998) lists several strengths of observations as a data-collection tool. They allow the researcher to see the phenomena of interest first-hand, rather than relying on second-hand information obtained from interviews. Observations allow the researcher to

record activities as they happen, which is valuable in a study of how reading and writing are used in the four classes. Visiting the research site multiple times helps the researcher learn to ask questions in the language of the research participants, which can elicit more meaningful responses. The researcher has the opportunity to look at something they observe multiple times, with new eyes each time. And the researcher has multiple opportunities to find answers to questions that arise from the data: there is a second chance to follow up on missed opportunities (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I took field notes during the observations, focusing on how reading and writing were used in the classes. I used the simple observation protocol suggested by Creswell (2003): a page divided by a line separating a place for descriptive and reflective notes. As much as possible, I tried to record descriptions of the setting and activities, direct quotations from the instructors and students, and observer comments, including questions I wanted to ask later and insights I had as I observed (Merriam, 1998). In six of the visits, the activities happening in the class were an extension of class assignments that were already included in the analysis of materials for the class. In these instances, I could observe the students working on some aspect of the assignment, providing me a chance to observe how students were engaging with the assignment. For example, in CMM 103, I was present when students administered the audience analysis survey that was an assignment for one of their speeches. In two instances, during a class visit, the class was engaging in a literacy event that was not directly related to an assignment that had been submitted for analysis. In these instances, the activities observed were included as a separate assignment in the class analysis. I relied on my notes for the visits because, after exploring the possibility of video or audio-taping the classes, I concluded the logistics of

obtaining consent from all the students, including translated consent forms for non-native

speakers of English and possibly parental consent for any minors, were prohibitive.

The second source of data for this study was the documents and texts used in the

classes. Documents have the advantage of being especially stable and objective forms of

evidence. Because they were not prepared for the purpose of being included in the study,

they are less likely than the other forms of data to have been altered to please the

researcher or to present a certain impression of the site and participants (Merriam, 1998).

Documents can be reviewed repeatedly and contain exact details of the event they are

associated with, in this case, the exact details of the different assignments (Yin, 2009). At

the beginning of the semester, I collected syllabi and textbooks for all the classes

observed. I read the syllabi to see what kinds of reading and writing assignments would

be required in each class and reviewed the textbooks for the classes to become familiar

with the class content. The four participating instructors were asked to provide

information on assignments and samples of the texts students read during the semester.

The information on assignments primarily took the form of assignment sheets for the

different classes, although the instructor for ENGL 095 gave a lot of verbal instructions

to her class, which she relayed verbally to the researcher. The assignment sheets for

ENGL 101/096 were especially detailed, and included the instructor's notes and lesson

plans. Many of them were several pages long. The assignment sheets for CMM 103 were

taken from the workbook used in the class and were also detailed, with models and

templates for each assignment. Many of the assignments for ENG 150 were printed from

the course's Blackboard site. The participating instructors provided many or all of the

major assignments and some of the minor assignments for their classes. Although the

definition of what counted as a discrete assignment was difficult to pinpoint (explained in more detail in *Data Analysis*), I categorized the assignments such that I had information on seven assignments from ENG 150, fourteen assignments from CMM 103, ten assignments from ENGL 101/096, and nine assignments from ENGL 095.

Because the study focused not on the texts in isolation, but on how reading and writing were used in the classes, information about what the students did with the texts was more important than simply analyzing features of the texts themselves. The information on the specific instructions for the assignments was crucial, as were my direct observations of students completing assignments in class because both allowed me to observe how the texts were used. In most cases, the instructors also supplied information about or copies of the texts that were used as a basis for the assignments. Those texts were included in the analysis for the classes. I used a simple framework created for analysis of reading and writing tasks in the classes (Appendices C and D). This framework guided both the observations and the analysis.

The original framework included categories for text features like amount of reading (measured by word count) and a measure of text complexity that were included in past studies of literacy tasks (i.e., Orlando, Caverly, Swetnam, & Flippo, 1989; National Center on Education and the Economy, 2013). It included categories to capture what purpose the reading or writing assignment served in the class. For example, reading assignments could support content learned in the class, prepare students to participate in a class activity like a lab, or serve as the basis of a writing task. Writing assignments, for example, could be a response to something the students read or be a reflection on their personal experiences. Reading tasks were categorized according to the kind of text (e.g.,

fiction, reference, website). Writing assignments were categorized according to the kind of grading or feedback provided and if students had the opportunity to make revisions to the assignment. The framework also recorded what the grade was based on, primarily form, primarily content, or some combination of both. Some of the categories for the reading and writing frameworks were based on Orlando et al, 2013, who categorized he purpose of reading assignments in relation to other class activities. Other categories were based on the reality check questions from Simpson 1996. The questions Simpson suggested included "What is the relationship between assigned readings and activities in class?", "What types of reading materials are students assigned?", "What criteria are used to evaluate the students' essays or written work?"

Qualitative data analysis is often recursive, allowing the researcher to refine or change the framework for analysis even as the analysis is in progress, and this was the case with the framework. It underwent continual modifications throughout the study as I discovered what worked and did not work as I applied it. I also made modifications to it based on conversations with the instructors about their purposes for the reading and writing in the classes. For example, because critical thinking was such an important topic in conversations with the instructors, the framework was modified to capture that.

The final source of data was a series of individual interviews with the faculty teaching the classes and the administrators with responsibility for the curriculum in the Developmental Education program at Metro Community and Technical College, the Pathways Program at State University, and the CMM 103 class in the Communications Department at State University. Interviews help the researcher understand what cannot be observed, like participants' beliefs and interpretations of events (Merriam, 1998). They

can be targeted to the specific phenomena the researcher seeks to understand and help the researcher understand the historical context of the site (Yin, 2009). I conducted in-depth interviews with seven people at various points during the spring, 2016 semester, using the same interview protocol as a starting point for all interviews (Appendix B). Having a set of prepared interview questions allows the researcher to ensure the topics discussed in the interview are closely related to the research questions (Merriam, 1998). The questions were designed to help me learn both about the specific interviewee and about the specific case (Yin, 2009). All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. In addition, I communicated with the participants, in particular the four instructors, throughout the process of data collection and analysis. Much of this communication was informal, via email or personal conversation, but it enabled me to have questions answered as they arose throughout the study. Consistent with grounded research methods, early interviews relied more on a formal set of questions, with subsequent conversations less structured and directed by the categories and properties that emerged from data-analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 2012).

The interviews and conversations had two purposes. First, talking with the participants helped me triangulate the findings from the initial review of the data. I was able to clarify what I thought I understood about the assignments and also ask questions that arose about the classes. These conversations caused me to rethink the framework I used for analysis of the documents, which enabled me to make adjustments to better suit how the instructors were using literacy in their classes. The iterative nature of grounded methodology allowed me the flexibility to continually revise the instrument in response to how the participants defined and valued the constructs that were the focus of the study.

In addition, the second research question, regarding how instructors and administrators align the instruction in developmental classes with that in credit-bearing classes, was answered primarily from data collected through the interviews with instructors and administrators. The interviews were semi-structured. I developed a brief protocol for each interview (Appendix B), but added questions or otherwise modified the protocol based on the responses received during the interviews. All of the interviews veered off of the list of interview questions and turned more into conversations about the classes.

      Data Analysis. Consistent with grounded theory, the data for this study were analyzed as they were collected over the course of the study. Rather than waiting to analyze and draw conclusions from the data until data collection has ended, the processes of conclusion-drawing and verification-testing were ongoing, beginning with data analysis and continuing until all data is collected and analyzed. All initial conclusions were "held lightly" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11) and subjected to testing against new understandings based in the data for their "plausibility, their sturdiness, their 'confirmability'—that is, their validity" (Miles& Huberman, 1994, p. 11). According to Glaser and Strauss (2012), the collection, coding, and analysis of data should "blur and intertwine continually, from the beginning of an investigation until its end" (p. 54). This ongoing analysis allowed me to continually refine the analysis framework to better reflect the realities of the literacy tasks carried out in the classes. It also allowed me to refocus and refine each round of observations and ask additional questions of the participants based on what I was learning. Early and on-going analysis of data are recommended in qualitative studies because this helps the researcher generate strategies for collecting new, and possibly better, data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction, the process by

which the researcher selects from, focuses, and transforms the data, is an ongoing process that allows the researcher to draw, home in on, and verify conclusions and eventually tell the story of the data in a final narrative form (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

I followed the steps recommended by Creswell (2003) and Glaser and Strauss (2012) for the data analysis process:

1) First, I organized the data by class and date. The materials included both case study documents, like the texts and assignment sheets, and case study notes, the interview transcripts and my observation notes (Yin, 2009).

2) I read through the data to develop a *big picture* understanding of the story it was telling. This included looking for general themes and evaluating the overall depth and quality of the data, information which shaped subsequent stages of data collection and guided revisions to the rubric for analyzing the texts for the classes

3) I analyzed the interview transcripts and observation notes in detail by sorting the data from them into categories. I unitized the transcripts and notes in fairly large chunks, usually by paragraph, but occasionally by sentence (Merriam, 1998). I color-coded the categories, then copied and pasted them into one document so I could read what was said and written about the categories across classes and participants. I made notes on the properties that belonged to the categories. I analyzed the texts and assignments according to the rubric. Glaser and Straus (2012) say some categories will be constructed by the researcher and others by the participants. The interview protocol guided the participants to some categories and properties constructed by me that were the focus of the research, like what instructors believe their students needed to be successful.

Other categories and properties, like source evaluation and providing emotional support, were constructed by the participants.

4) I used the categories and coded data to create descriptions of the categories and group them into prevalent themes. These themes were compared across the four classes included in the study.

5) I identified narrative passages and examples from the data that best illustrated the themes to help me operationalize the categories and properties.

6) I made notes, or memos, in the documents about my interpretations of the categories and emerging themes. These memos were first very informal, then increasingly more polished, as I continued to review the data, reflecting my evolving interpretation of the themes.

7) As the conclusions I was generating solidified, I reduced the categories to the ones that were most relevant to emerging theory and the research questions and wrote memos about the conclusions I had drawn. Throughout the process, I tested out emerging themes on the participants, which verified or clarified my conclusions and helped me fill in holes in the data (Merriam, 1998).

For all three forms of data, I used the constant comparative method of data analysis. Glaser and Strauss (2012) describe constant comparison as combining the explicit coding of quantitative methods of data analysis with the less-structured inspection of data for themes that is used in qualitative data-analysis methods. The data are not exhaustively coded as they would be in a quantitative analysis; rather, they are coded only to the extent that a theory about their meaning is suggested. In a constant comparative analysis, the researcher systematically looks for conceptual categories and

accompanying conceptual properties that emerge from the data. These categories and constructs are used to generate hypotheses or generalizations about the categories. Categories are elements of the theory and should be general enough to encompass characteristics of concrete examples in the data. For example, in this study, "instructors' understandings of student needs" is a category. Properties are the elements of the categories. "Critical thinking skills" and "affective and motivational needs" are a property of the "instructors' understandings of student needs" category. The process of comparing the groups helps the researcher understand both the similarities and differences between the cases, which aids the generation of the categories. For example, as I analyzed the data from the interviews, the observations, and the texts and assignments, I noticed the prevalence of "critical thinking skills" and "source evaluation" across all four classes. I also noticed that only the faculty working with the Pathways program emphasized the need for students to learn a standardized English.

Interview Transcripts. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed. The first step of analysis of the interviews was several readings of the transcripts, looking for general themes and a sense of the big picture for each class. I then reread the notes, making notes in the margins of the text about the topics discussed. I arranged these topics into more general categories and corresponding properties, and the notes were color-coded according to those. During the process of reading and coding the notes, I was also reviewing the texts and assignments for the class, conducting observations, and communicating informally with the instructors about the classes. I noted anything that was said in the interviews that could illuminate what I was finding in my other forms of data collection. For example, I found an anecdote in my field notes how the 101/095

instructor handled a request from an English language learner to use pictures in her research paper to replace words she did not know, by saying she "gets a pass" because she is still learning the language. I could relate that anecdote to information in the interviews on whether or not instructors expected their students to conform to standard, academic forms of English in their classes.

I identified three intersecting categories from the interviews that were relevant to the purposes of the study: 1) Beliefs about what students need to be successful in the class and in college 2) Beliefs about the purpose of the class 3) The process of arriving at those beliefs. These three categories were pertinent to the second research question, regarding how instructors aligned the content of their class to the other classes their students took, because their understandings of what students need to do well in college classes and an idea of how the classes they were teaching fits into the big picture of a students' education guide classroom practices.

Properties for the categories emerged from the transcripts. The topic of critical thinking as the most important skill students need emerged in all the interviews. Related to critical thinking, the ability to critically evaluate sources of information was mentioned by six of the interviewees. The desire for opportunities to talk about course alignment with faculty who teach gateway classes outside one's own department came up in four of the interviews. Finally, because the of how I defined academic literacy (students' need to work with reading and writing situated in a discipline, as opposed to students' need for a set of basic reading and writing skills that conform to standards of *correct* academic English and which must be mastered before a student can work with ideas), the interviewees were asked how they handle it when students in their classes use non-

standard varieties of English. The interviewee's responses to this question were also coded, as a property of *student needs*.

The blocks of text that were coded according to the categories and properties were pasted into a document, grouped three ways: by category/property, by institution, and by interviewee. I could then "read the story" told by the participants, a process which helped me make better sense of what was happening in the four classes and how the classes were alike and different.

Field Notes. The field notes from the observations were typed and analyzed immediately after the visit using the constant-comparative methods detailed above. I reread them occasionally throughout the data collection process to remind me of what had happened in past visits. At the end of the data collection phase, I read the notes in their entirety, evaluating the validity of the conclusions I had made throughout the research process. In particular, I was looking for how reading and writing were used in the classes and any incidents that could illuminate what I had learned from other forms of data collection, for example, examples of the instructor emphasizing motivational elements of student success or asking students to make connections to texts or apply source evaluation.

In addition to being coded for categories emerging from the analysis, the notes were also coded according to the categories in the framework for determining literacy alignment. Examples of reading and writing being used in the classes were coded, as were examples of critical thinking, references to source evaluation, and instances of students making textual connections. The times an assignment that was submitted for inclusion in the study was part of class activities (for example, when I observed the

speeches the students gave) were noted. This allowed me to see how the assignments I had read about were enacted during the class.

Because one of the purposes of the study was to determine how well the framework aids understanding the alignment of literacy tasks, each round of observations, the interviews, and the ongoing conversations with participants were used to revise and refine both the framework and the focus of the study. For example, critical thinking skills were added to the framework early in the study because it was a theme that consistently emerged from the interviews, but would not have been captured by the original framework.

Assignments and Texts. The most complicated aspect of data analysis proved to be analyzing the portfolio of texts and assignments collected for each class. All of the instructors supplied me with a syllabus and a handful of assignments at the beginning of the semester. I also purchased a copy of the textbook for each class. Additional assignments and texts were added to the portfolio as I received them throughout the semester. I usually received them when I visited a class or when I asked if the instructor had anything new I could add to the collection. Because of the piecemeal manner in which the data was received, it was sometimes difficult to see how all the individual assignments fit together. The landscape for each class became clear only after all the materials for the semester had been collected and entered into the literacy analysis framework. At this point, I asked for missing documents needed to fill in gaps and for clarification as needed.

Miles and Huberman (1994) say researchers know what they display: "Valid analysis requires, and is driven by, displays that are focused enough to permit a viewing

of a full data set in the same location, and are arranged systematically to answer the research question at hand" (pp. 91-92). When I first planned the study, I envisioned the competed literacy framework as being an end result of my analysis for each class. But as I began analysis of the assignments for the classes, I found getting the big picture of the assignments for a given class and making comparisons between classes required that I visually display a condensed version of the assignments. The literacy framework I had drafted for the study served as a matrix that filled this need, so it functioned as a data analysis tool to help me understand what was happening in the classes. A matrix uses common codes to make cross-case data comparable, allowing the researcher to make meaning from a large amount of information (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

A second challenge that emerged during analysis of the texts and assignments was that all the classes used the required textbook for the class minimally, if at all. The instructor for ENG 150 did not use the two textbooks for the class. The instructor for CMM 103 did not use or refer to the textbook during class, but students were required to read the textbook independently and take standardized quizzes, required of all students taking any section of the class, that were based on the book. Other than two essays from the textbook students read in ENGL 101/096, both ENGL 101/095 and ENGL 101/096 primarily used the textbook as a resource for students to refer to with questions about the composition process. The original plan for this study assumed all or most of the classes would depend heavily on content from a textbook, and the framework for analyzing literacy tasks was designed based on this assumption. I decided not to include the textbooks in this study because they were used so minimally. Instead, I focused on the texts students read for class assignments or discussion. This meant the original plan to

analyze the texts for readability scores and word count were less meaningful because it was hard to make comparisons between texts for the different classes (i.e., in CMM 103, students mostly read sources they found themselves; in ENGL 101/095, students read assigned essays, discussed them in class, then wrote about them.)

A third challenge that emerged was the difficulty in determining what counted as an assignment for the class. The instructors submitted individual assignments that were a step in the process of completing a bigger assignment. Where a major assignment had multiple smaller steps, I counted each of the smaller steps as one individual assignmen. This allowed for a finer-grained analysis of the kinds of reading and writing being done. But, still, the lines between discrete assignments were not always easy to define. In ENG 150, students listened to a lecture, took notes on the lecture, and wrote a summary of the lecture, which they compared with their classmates' summaries. I counted this as two separate assignments (1. listening/note-taking; 2. summarizing/comparing) because of how the activities were structured (the listening and note-taking taking place in class; the summarizing being assigned as homework). In another case, students in CMM 103 completed multiple steps in preparing each of their speeches. For two of their speeches, they had to write an audience analysis survey, administer it to their classmates, and include the results in their speech. I grouped these three steps as one assignment because of how the assignment was structured on the assignment sheet and because they were all necessary steps to complete a finished product (a statement of what the audience knows about the speech topic). I verified my conceptions of what constituted a discrete assignment with the instructors, and made adjustments as needed based on their input, but there is still possibility of inconsistency in how I grouped the assignments.

A related challenge that arose was how to categorize assignments as either a reading or writing assignment. As expected, much of the writing done in all the classes was based on things students read. When an assignment contained both a reading and writing task, it was analyzed for both. In addition, ENG 150 used auditory texts—videos and podcasts—as the basis for writing and other assignments. When I believed the skills called for by the assignment were the same as those that could be required by reading a written text, like finding a main idea or outlining, I included the auditory text in the analysis for reading.

Another challenge was the inadequacy of the original analysis framework. Some of the problems that arose have already been discussed. In talking with the participants and thinking about the purpose of the study, it became clear that the framework needed to emphasize what students were doing with the text, not only the kind of assignment they were asked to complete (personal reflection, support of class content, etc.), but also the kinds of connections students were making with the text and the kinds of thinking the assignment called for. The framework clearly needed to be revised to better reflect how the participants understood and valued reading and writing. The need for this revision was supported by research I was reading at the time. Research into transitional classes indicates that a rigorous curriculum that requires students to read challenging materials, introduces research and inquiry without waiting for students to master basic skills, encourages students to collaborate as scholars on their inquiry, and expects students to engage with topics that are immediately relevant to their lives, instills confidence in students and helps them build the reading, writing, and critical thinking skills they need in college (Charlton, 2010). Research also says that students may be capable of making

text-to-self connections and text-to-world connections, but find it more difficult to make connections between and across different texts, so class activities should help students connect what they read to their lives. They should be also be given opportunities to engage with the text through discussing it with their peers (Jolliffe & Harl, 2008).

The theme of text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections came up in interviews with the two instructors from Metro. They emphasized encouraging students to make connections between different texts in addition to finding personal connections to a text. The framework was revised to reflect these different forms of text connections. It was also revised to try to capture how critical thinking was used in the assignments. The assignment instructions were reviewed, looking for a verb or verbs that defined what the students were expected to do. This verb was then added to the rubric, along with the category from Bloom's taxonomy that the verb fell under. When no verb was explicitly available in the instructions, I chose the verb I felt best described what the students were asked to do. These designations for critical thinking were also validated with the instructors.

The framework was also modified to reflect if students were asked to critically evaluate the sources they were using in class. The theme of source evaluation arose in multiple interviews. It seemed to be a good marker of the kinds of critical thinking skills instructors wanted freshmen to be developing: the ability to decide if a given source of information was credible or not, and why. As I defined it based on my conversations with the instructors, critical evaluation of a source could be deciding if a source was suitable for a research project, finding appropriate sources using a search engine like Credo, or questioning an author's argument or assumption in class discussion. Although the final

framework used for the analysis of literacy tasks (Appendix C) was markedly different from the originally proposed framework (Appendix D), I believe it better reflected what the instructors felt were important uses of literacy and what was happening in the classes observed for this study.

A final challenge in analyzing the data from the class assignments was how to define disciplinary literacy. Disciplinary literacy is the unique way each discipline works with ideas and knowledge (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). For the purposes of this analysis, I needed a way to operationalize the term that could be easily communicated to the participants and could, as much as possible, provide clear criteria for categorization. In explaining the concept to participants and in making decisions about categorization of assignments, I relied on Fisher and Frey (2015), who said:

> A vital aspect of disciplinary learning occurs when students apply content knowledge using formats that are authentic to the field of study. For example, historians engage in debate in order to arrive at new understandings about events in history. In a similar fashion, young social studies students learn about the discipline through debate with their peers about questions that are not easily resolved . . . (p. 528)

Using this definition, the task of completing an audience analysis and classical outline for a speech would constitute disciplinary literacy in a communications class, as would discussing why an author used informal language in an essay and how that choice affects the author's message would constitute disciplinary literacy in an English class. Learning vocabulary for math operations in a speaking/listening class to assist in understanding a math lecture would not constitute disciplinary literacy because, although the students are

using the language of the discipline, they were not using it in the way mathematicians do. Researching a difficult concept from a gateway class so that you can teach it to your peers may or may not constitute disciplinary literacy, depending on the sources used and the depth of understanding of the content being taught. As with the other categories, the classification of the assignments according to inclusion of disciplinary literacy were sometimes problematic. Again, to minimize likelihood of miscategorization, I checked my classifications with the instructors.

After grouping the assignments for each class in a logical order, I read through all the assignments several times, making notes on what the students were expected to do for each assignment and dividing larger assignments into their components as seemed logical. I went through multiple iterations of categorizing the assignments and texts according to the analysis framework. Sometimes an assignment would make me rethink how I had classified previous assignments, so I would go back to redo some of my work. What finally emerged were literacy profiles for each class, which included the completed analysis checklist (Appendix C) and a summary of the assignments for the class. I also did some quantitative counts of the kinds of literacy tasks in each of the classes. This information, viewed as a whole, allowed me to better understand the kinds of reading and writing done in each of the four classes.

Generating Conclusions

The goal of data analysis is to make meaning of the data. According to Miles and Huberman (2012), in developing grounded theory, the researcher begins the study with preexisting personal insights and experiences that have value and inform the research process. Further insights are developed throughout the study, both from the researcher's

own experiences and from the experiences of others. The process of data analysis is, in a sense, the ongoing reflection on these insights and the conversion of anecdotes from the data into elements of emerging theory. Additional insights should be cultivated through the conclusion of the study, but always within the framework of the theory that is emerging from the data. The process of applying systematic comparative analysis to the data yields "broad, rich, integrated, dense, and grounded theory" (p. 256).

In multiple-case study designs, each case is a whole study, and conclusions from one case are tested by the other cases. Each case should be written up in its own report, and the summary report of the cases should explain how cases confirmed or challenged the theories generated (Yin, 200). I followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) advice to work from the bottom up, or from the specific case to the general conclusion. First, I established the findings for each individual class by looking for patterns within the data for that case. Next, I related the cases to one another, by looking for patterns, contrasts, and comparisons across cases. I named the patterns I found by grouping the specific instances found in the data into a general category. I then used tactics suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) to generate meaning from the data collected from the interviews, observations, and class materials. As I reviewed the data from each part of the study, and as I looked at the data as a whole, I looked for patterns and themes that emerged across the cases. The human mind is quick to find patterns, and once it settles on a pattern that offers a possible explanation of the data, it is prone to only notice additional evidence that confirms that pattern. It is, therefore, important to be skeptical about patterns that emerge (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I used informal and formal member-checking with the study participants to guard against my prematurely accepting a pattern as valid. For example,

the Pathways program seemed to rely more on traditional, skills-based instruction than the CMM and ENGL classes, despite the instructors and administrators saying how important it is to incorporate high-level critical thinking skills in the class. In informal conversations with the ENG 150 instructor at the end of the semester, she confirmed that the class had not covered those higher level skills to the extent she had hoped.

Related to pattern-finding is the tactic of subsuming particulars into the general. As suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), as I read and coded the data, I asked myself "What is this specific thing an instance of? Does it belong to a general class?" (p. 255). This process of seeking to "locate the immediate act, event, actor, or activity in a more abstractly defined class" (p. 255) is characteristic of the constant-comparative method of data analysis. The choice of which general classes to use in data-analysis depends on the research questions. For this study, I used general classes related to what instructors and administrators believed their students needed to know, how instructors and administrators arrived at those beliefs, and what instructors and administrators had to say about the assignments and objectives for the class.

I also made contrasts and comparisons as I drew conclusions from the data. Comparisons are useful for testing a conclusion if we choose the right comparisons to make and always evaluate our comparisons in light of their practical significance (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Although the focus of the study was to understand how reading and writing were used in the four classes, not to compare the two schools or the individual classes with one another, the choice to include two sites and four classes in the study made it inevitable that I would notice comparisons and contrasts between the cases. For example, the ENGL classes at Metro were more closely aligned than the ENG 150 and

CMM 103 classes were at State. ENG 150 had fewer assignments using high-level, critical literacy skills than the other classes. All of the instructors mentioned the importance of critical thinking and the need for their students to master more than reading and writing skills if they were to succeed in college. Although they were not the focus of the study, the comparisons and contrasts between the classes helped illuminate what was happening in the individual classes.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, or validity, in qualitative research is measured by how accurate the findings are from the standpoint of the researcher, participants, and the readers of the research (Creswell, 2003). For the qualitative researcher, the verification of conclusions occurs throughout the research process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I tested the meanings and conclusions I was drawing from the data through my on-going, informal conversations with the research participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I used three of the methods suggested by Creswell (2003) to establish the validity of the study. First, the use of three different methods of data collection—analysis of texts, classroom observations, and interviews and focus groups—allowed me to triangulate my findings. The interviews and conversations in particular served the purpose of giving the instructors the opportunity to give feedback on the purpose and nature of the literacy assignments in the classes. On-going communication with the instructors during data collection and analysis allowed me to cross-check her analysis of the data with the participants. These steps also strengthened the construct validity in the study, increasing the likelihood that the categories and properties generated from the study reflected reality (Yin, 2009).

I also used member-checking to make sure I was applying the framework consistently to the data, and to test the validity and reliability of the framework. I did informal member-checking throughout the study and asked the instructors to categorize some of the assignments using the framework and verify my findings after the study was over and I had written up my findings. Conducting member-checking at the end of the research process is helpful because findings at that point are less tentative and participants can give feedback on conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). When there was a discrepancy in how the data were categorized in the framework, the instructor and I discussed our thought-processes in applying the framework. This helped me clarify my understanding of the assignments and modify the framework.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Research Question One: *How well do the literacy demands in the postsecondary transitional classes align with the literacy demands of gateway classes?*

ENG 150 at State University

Background. ENG 150, Academic Speaking and Listening, is a three-credit class offered through the English Department. Its enrollment is restricted to students in the Undergraduate Pathways Program. The catalog description for the class states:

> The course promotes development of English language fluency by nonnative speakers of English. It specifically targets the language skills necessary for oral communication within an academic context. Students work to develop their intensive and extensive listening skills, their pronunciation, and their intensive and extensive speaking skills.

The class focuses on oral communication and listening, but the program coordinator and class instructor both say all the Pathways English classes incorporate academic reading and writing. For example, according to the course objectives (see Appendix A), students in ENG 150 are expected to participate in discussions about reading assignments and incorporate written sources into a presentation. When asked at the beginning of the semester how reading and writing would be used in the class, Susan, the instructor said:

> Well, they'll be doing background readings for the mock lectures we do in class. They'll be doing readings to support the videos that they watch in order to create and annotate a bibliography. They'll be writing summaries, maybe doing some paraphrasing, but maybe just that they'll be doing orally, I'm not sure, I haven't decided on that yet. But they'll be

writing reaction papers and reflection papers – two types of assignments that I think most of them are not comfortable with and probably don't understand the format for. They will, I think I already said that we're doing summaries, background information. They'll be writing notes, and they'll be analyzing those notes in writing, as well as in speaking.

The class syllabus lists the objectives that are to be met during the semester and the specific assignments that should help students practice and meet those objectives. The objectives are standardized for each section of the class, and all instructors are expected to teach toward those objectives. The key assignments are strongly encouraged, but instructors have more flexibility about incorporating them into the class. Although the class follows a standardized curriculum for all sections, the instructors for Pathways classes have more autonomy in how they teach the class than instructors do in the other three classes that are part of this study. In part, this is because there is a little oversight of the instructors compared to the other programs. Also, because the program is new, the curriculum is still being developed. The curriculum that is in place in ENG 150 is modeled on upper level speaking and listening classes in the Intensive English Program (which provides non-credit, ESL classes) that was in existence before the Pathway Program started.

The instructor for ENG 150 has been teaching at State University for 20 years. Prior to the spring, 2016 semester, she had always taught non-credit ESL classes and had worked most closely with the IEP program. The ENG 150 class was her first experience teaching a credit-bearing English class, though she has had experience teaching TESOL methods classes to graduate students. The non-credit ESL program was in place at State for many years before the establishment of the Pathways Program, so the Pathways

Program borrowed faculty, as well as many elements of their curriculum, from the ESL program.

The section of ENG 150 included in this study had 11 students in it: four students were from China, two from Japan, and one each from Thailand, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and Russia. All students in the class were classified as freshmen, and this was their first semester at the university except for three students who are repeating the class after failing in the fall.

All sections of Pathways English classes use the same textbook, which is decided on by a textbook committee each year. The required texts for the class were *Giving Academic Presentations 2nd edition* by Reinhart and *LEAP Advanced Speaking and Listening* by Beatty. Both texts are targeted toward advanced level ESL students in an academic English program. The instructor did not use either text for the class because, as she explained to the researcher, she felt the texts were too high-level for the students in the class. She chose instead to use supplemental materials for class activities.

Literacy tasks. The ENG 150 instructor supplied seven assignments to analyze for the class. Four were classified as having both a reading and writing component, one had only a writing component, and two had only a reading component. During the two class observations conducted during the semester, I observed how two of the assignments were used in context: the pronunciation practice assignment and the evaluation of statistics assignment. The seven assignments analyzed for the class are explained below.

Conversation partners. For this assignment, students were assigned another student, usually a native speaker of English, as their conversation partner for the semester. The pairing was facilitated through the university's conversation partner

program. Students were instructed to meet with their conversation partner at least three times during the semester and write three reports about the meetings. The reports were to be 150, 150, and 200 words in length, and, according to the assignment instructions, were to be "be in paragraph form and display good organization, grammar, sentence structure, and interesting information." Some examples of the questions to be answered in the reports are listed below:

- When and where did you meet? What did you do during the meeting? What things did you talk about?

- Write in detail about one thing that you now realize is different between your culture and your partner's culture.

- Write in detail about three positive results these meetings have had for you.

- Write in detail about three positive results these meetings have had for your conversation partner.

- Are there any negative aspects about having a conversation partner? Explain in detail and explain why you think they are negative.

- At the beginning of the semester, I asked what things you and your partner had in common. What additional things have you discovered that you have in common since then?

In addition to the instructions for the assignment, the instructor also supplied a sample report she had written for the students to use as a model for their reports.

   Math vocabulary. The instructor said her students were having trouble with listening in their math classes, so at the beginning of the semester, she assigned a series of videos for them to watch as homework that presented "basic and intermediate" math

terms. She also gave them a hand-out with math verbs (*add, subtract, divide, multiply*), the words usually used when giving a math equation verbally (*plus, minus, divided by, times*) and corresponding symbols. She followed this up with a quiz in class where she read vocabulary words (e.g. *less than, times, added to*) and students wrote the corresponding operation. The quiz also included her reading math problems aloud with students writing them down as they listened.

Podcast presentation. Students worked in a group to present information from an NPR *Planet Money* podcast they were assigned to listen to as homework. The topics were "The Oil Kingdom," "Why do we tip?" and "The Hoverboard Life." Susan gave the students a detailed handout for how to access the podcast. They were instructed to listen to it once while trying "to discriminate between the actual program and the non-program announcements." Next they were to listen while taking some notes. Then they were to listen again, filling in any information they missed from their notes. The instructor encouraged them to listen "as many times as you are able."

Students brought their notes to class and worked with their group to clarify their understanding and fill in any gaps. As a group, they wrote an outline of the podcasts' main points and submitted it to the instructor for a grade. They then wrote individual introductions, summaries, and conclusions for the podcast, which were also graded for accuracy of information. The group then gave a five-minute presentation on their podcast to the class. The students took notes on their classmates' presentations, which were also submitted for a grade. The notes were to include "main idea, main points, and a few details."

Evaluating statistics. A professor from the math department delivered a "mock lecture" on statistics to the class. Students were instructed to take notes on the lecture, using the Cornell Method, which had been taught in class. The Cornell Method has students divide their paper into three parts with a space for notes, a space for a word or two that summarizes or condenses the notes, and a space for a summary. When I visited the class for my second observation, the students were comparing their notes, specifically, how they had reduced the notes into the summary words. The instructor showed her notes as an example for the class. The students then were asked to write a summary of the notes and compare their summary with a partner. The summary was submitted for a grade.

Pronunciation practice. During another class visit, I observed students listening to the teacher read lists of minimal pairs from an ESL pronunciation textbook and asking the students to discern differences in short vowel sounds. The students were to circle the word they heard as the teacher read it, using a worksheet they had been given. They then practiced schwa sounds by reading lists of words in unison with the teacher. For homework, the students were to read a script of a *conversation on a train* and a *lecture about the Rankine Cycle* while listening to a recording of their teacher reading the texts out loud. The students were told to listen to the recording numerous times, then to read along with it, while trying to emulate their teachers' pronunciation and phrasing. They would then record themselves and submit the recording to the teacher, who would grade it on "vowel sounds, consonant sounds, stress-syllables, stress-words in sentence, intonation, pausing."

Annotated bibliography. A research librarian taught the class how to use academic databases available through the library website to find video and audio resources that were credible. The class instructor then gave the students a list of websites that contain credible video and audio information, and instructed them to find resources that would help them understand a concept from one of their other classes that is not clear to them. This assignment was given toward the end of the semester, so the students were encouraged to use this to help study for their final exams in the other classes they were taking. They were to watch the video several times and write a summary of it, with the "main topic and several subtopics." They were to bring this to class with them for peer review, then compile the summaries into an APA style annotated bibliography as their final assignment for the class.

Presenting a lesson from a content class. Students were instructed to teach a lesson to their peers about something they learned in one of their other classes they were taking that semester. They planned what they wanted their audience to learn, and then prepared an outline of the presentation. They could use their textbook, class notes and handout, and resources from their annotated bibliography as sources in the presentation. They videotaped themselves doing the presentation, and the teacher graded both their outline and the video. They were graded for use of sources, organization or presentation, use of sub-points and illustrations, use of a visual aid, and their handling of questions and answers by the audience. Students were also instructed to take notes on their peers' presentations, also for a grade.

Analysis

All assignments for the class had some element of reading, though the reading often was minimal. At the beginning of the semester, the instructor said students would be doing background readings for lectures, but none were submitted for inclusion in the study. For the conversation partners assignment, the only reading was the sample paragraph, so it was not included in the analysis. The website for the Planet Money podcast had a short written introduction to the audio content, but the students were not explicitly instructed to read this information before listening, so they may or may not have. The students had to read the handout with the scripts for the pronunciation activity, but the scripts were short (the *Conversation on a Train* script had 69 words; the Rankine Cycle lecture had 310) and at a relatively low level of text complexity (the *conversation* script had a Lexile score of 240; the *Rankine Cycle* script had a Lexile score of 990). Similarly, the math vocabulary handout involved some reading, but it only had 45 words excluding the links to the videos the students were supposed to watch. The students received a sample of the instructor's notes on the statistics lecture, which had 144 words. Many of the observed instances of text being read in class were when students worked with one another's writing. For example, students traded their own sets of notes on the statistics lecture with a partner during class so they could compare content.

Because the students did not use a textbook in the class and because much of the content in the class was delivered through auditory means, this class had fewer examples of what we typically think of as college-level reading assignments than the other three classes. The reading that was done was usually short, based in student-generated writing, and at a low level of text complexity. Students did access more challenging content for the Planet Money presentation and the annotated bibliography, but it was through

listening. One exception to this was the presentation of a lesson from a content class, which required students to use their textbooks, notes, and supplemental materials from a gateway class they were taking that semester to teach their peers about something they had learned.

Most of the reading that was done specifically for the class was in preparation for another assignment. For example, students read the pronunciation scripts in preparation for emulating the speaker on the recording and read the math vocabulary handout before they watched the videos and took the quiz. None of the assignments asked the students to respond personally to the things they read or heard. The pronunciation activities done in and out of class asked the students to read lists or words or scripts without any attention to or discussion of their meaning. When students were asked to respond to something they read or listened to, they were asked to capture its main points in a summary, as in the Planet Money and statistics lecture assignments. Only one class assignment required students to make any form of text connection: the presentation of a lesson required that students use information drawn from several texts to teach a concept to their peers.

It is interesting to note that on two occasions during the class observations, students raised critical questions about the content they had read and spontaneously had a discussion about the content. In one instance, during a class discussion about the statistics lecture, a student asked the teacher questions about what taxes are used for, what the tax rate in the U.S. is, who decides what the tax rate is, and who decides how taxes are used. After the instructor explained, the student said she did not feel that it is fair to people who work since people who do not work benefit from taxes. She then asked if the government could steal people's taxes. This resulted in a short conversation among the students about

how taxes work in the U.S. and their home countries and the basic fairness of the idea of taxes. During that same class, when the students were comparing their notes, a student asked her partner what statistics were. The partner attempted to explain the concept. The student asking the question still did not understand, and her partner constructed an explanation based on how she uses statistics when she gambles, so that she can calculate her odds. This led to a discussion about the use of statistics in gambling, and whether this is a form of cheating.

Writing in ENG 150 was often done to summarize ideas the students had listened to. The grading for these summaries was based on the students' success in capturing accurate main ideas and supporting detail. Students usually received feedback from both their instructor and their peers on their writing. For the podcast presentation, students worked independently on their notes, summary, introduction, and conclusion, and then did revisions with peers in class before submitting them to their instructor for a grade. Students wrote their summaries for the annotated bibliography out of class, and then brought a draft to class for peer review. Students shared the summary they wrote of the statistics paper with a peer before they submitted it for a grade.

In our interview at the beginning of the semester, Susan said she planned to assign both reflective and reaction papers. Asked to clarify how she understands the distinction between the two, she said:

> Reaction paper would be that type of paper where they're analyzing what they've read or heard based on other academic work and their own previous educational experiences. Whereas I tend to think of reflection papers as being more on the personal side, and that would be where they're reflecting on what's happening

within themselves as they're, for example, having their meetings with their conversation partners or the meetings that they have with their professors. So where do they see themselves in that process of becoming comfortable with those types of things. So that to me is reflection. Reaction is more critical thinking and analysis.

Analysis of the writing assignments done in the class shows the writing was usually a summary of content they had read or listened to. An exception to this was the conversation partner reflections, which is a good example of a reflective writing assignment as defined by the instructor because it required students to think about their experiences in meeting with their partner.

The presentation of a content lesson, although presented orally, was graded in part based on its use of sources and was based on a presentation outline and notes on the topic. It represents the best example from the class of students having the opportunity for reading and writing in the disciplines and making connections across texts. This assignment was the only one where students were asked to make text connections. Although we do not know if students achieved the standard for disciplinary literacy set for this study in their work on this assignment, the assignment does provide the opportunity for students to attempt to use knowledge as experts in the discipline might. The assignment asked students to find information about a disciplinary concept from multiple sources, and then incorporate that information into a presentation to teach the concept to their peers. Peers evaluated the presentation on the clarity of connections between ideas in addition to things like pronunciation and prosody. The teacher graded the presentation notes on their organization and content.

Both the lesson presentation and the annotated bibliography required students to search for credible sources of information, which required critical thinking skills as they evaluated different sources. Most of the reading done in the class was selected by the teacher, but the sources for these two assignments were selected by the student. The students went to the library for a workshop on selecting credible sources, but for the annotated bibliography, the instructor gave them a list of websites to use to search for the videos. They chose news sources and periodicals, textbooks, websites, and reference databases for these writing assignments.

All of the assignments for ENG 150 were characterized as *remembering* or *understanding* according to the Bloom's Taxonomy of verbs. Students were usually asked to summarize texts or things they read or explain things they read or learned. The annotated bibliography and lesson presentation asked students to evaluate sources, but there were no assignments that asked students to evaluate claims or criticize ideas they read about.

One additional characteristic of the class is that it had more discrete assignments—assignments that were not steps in a sequence leading to a final product—then the other classes did. For example, in CMM 107 each of the speeches required a written proposal, a survey to be used as audience analysis, an outline, notes, and a self-critique. Each of these individual writing assignments is a component, or a step in the process of a larger assignment: the speech. With the exception of the annotated bibliography, which could be used for the lesson presentation, the assignments for ENG 150 were stand-alone assignments.

CMM 103 at State University

    Background. CMM 103, Fundamentals of Speech Communication, is the communication class required of all students at State University except for students in the College of Business, who take a different communications class. Students are supposed to take the class as freshmen, but it is common for students to postpone taking it until later in their college career. The catalog description for the class says CMM 103 is "a course designed to enhance the development of critical thinking skills and their application to verbal and non-verbal interaction in interpersonal and public communication contexts." The course philosophy says:

> CMM 103 is a part of the university's general education requirements. We believe that communication is a fundamental and essential part of life. We also believe that improving both your understanding of communication and your ability to communicate effectively will serve you well in your career, your relationships, and your civic life. This course is designed to help you become more confident, more articulate, and better able to interpret the communication of others.

The instructor who participated in this study, Jun, has taught CMM 103 for eight years, first as a teaching assistant while she worked on her graduate degree and then as an adjunct instructor. The course director who had been there for years had recently retired, and a new course director, Laura, replaced her in August, 2015. She was in the process of revising the class curriculum. CMM 103 has a set curriculum, key assignments, and objectives that are uniformly taught in every section of the class. Laura is revising the curriculum to better follow national standards for freshmen communications classes. She says Jun follows the older model for the class, but Laura is comfortable with that because

she is an experienced instructor and effective in teaching the class. Jun mentioned the transition to the newer curriculum in her interview, explaining how speeches now had to be based on a civic issue and students now use the same topic for both major speeches:

> This semester was the first time I made them pick a policy based topic, which was... the challenge there was making them understand what policy based meant. So in the past I've just said, "Pick whatever topic you want, anything that you want," because I would let them do the informative unit different than the persuasive unit. They could have two different topics. Whereas this past semester I made them do the same topic for both informative and persuasion in the hope that they could build on the previous one and focus more on the persuasion than finding a new topic.

CMM 103 was the only of the four classes that made regular use of a textbook. The class used two books, a textbook, *Public Speaking: Strategies for Success* by Zarefsky and a workbook, *Fundamentals of Speech Communication Student Handbook,* which was written by Laura specifically for the class. The Zarefsky text is used for open-book, on-line quizzes throughout the semester. Despite being open-book, both Laura and Jun said these quizzes are difficult for students. Topics covered in the assigned readings from the textbook included:

- Welcome to public speaking
- Your first speech
- Presenting your speech
- Listening critically
- Choosing a topic and developing a strategy

- Researching the speech

- Organizing the speech

- Outlining the speech

- Informing

- Persuading

Because the quizzes for the class are drawn from a bank of questions used by all instructors every semester, I could not use the quizzes on the textbook as part of this study. In addition, Jun said she did not use the textbook much as she taught the class. She depended on the students to complete the reading assignments and quizzes on their own. She said:

> I don't feel like I have the same amount of face time with the students to chunk out different readings and assignments, so in my class a lot of the text reading takes place at home for the students, and we quickly review it and review any questions, and then I tend to teach through the assignment. So the text is an important part of the course, because it's what the unit exams are based on, it's on the text. But a lot of the teaching time in the classroom is teaching towards the presentations and the assignments. So I do utilize the text for that, but then other times there are activities that are not out of the text. So the students are expected to read it and understand it, and if they don't, if they have questions, to bring those questions to class, which they never do.

Because I did not have access to the quizzes on the textbook and because it was minimally incorporated into the class activities, for this study, I chose to focus on the

reading and writing texts and tasks that were part of class assignments, not those drawn from the textbook.

The workbook was written specifically for the State University CMM 103 classes by Laura as part of her effort to update the class curriculum. The book included specific instructions, examples, and rubrics for all the class assignments. Laura says of the class texts:

> There was a workbook that accompanied it [the textbook] as well that was meant to give a little bit of direction. And then I came in and I revised every feature of the workbook to be as clear and concise and detailed as possible, although it could be more detailed. That it really provides on that detailed guidelines that I talked about at the beginning that were missing before, because we needed to hit all these benchmarks that were missing in terms of research and topic selection and things like that. So I revised all the assignments and put in the rubric for every assignment, and then I put in some activities and things instructors could use into that workbook.

There were about 30 students in the section of CMM 103 that was part of this study. Jun provided information on 15 assignments. These assignments were the individual steps leading to the three speeches students did during the semester. Each speech followed the same basic process, with the same assignments, except that the introductory speech did not require sources. An overview of the three speeches and their constituent assignments follows.

Introductory speech. This was a 2-3 minute speech that introduced the students to their classmates and instructor at the beginning of the semester. It does not require any

outside research. The speech was graded on delivery and structure; it should have an introduction, body, and conclusion. It was delivered extemporaneously, with no notes, but the students turned in an outline in advance of the speech. Students may use one notecard with keywords written on it. The notecard was submitted to the teacher after the speech. Points are deducted if the speech is too long or too short. Laura said that she encourages instructors to grade the first speech leniently, to build confidence in hesitant public speakers before they move on to the more academic speeches.

The component assignments for this speech are:

Word-for-word outline. A typed presentation outline with the title, statement of specific purpose, thesis statement, introduction, body, and conclusion. Two examples for the outline are in the workbook.

Self-critique. Students write a 500-word critique of their speech after watching a video recording of it. The critique was graded based on the students' ability to "integrate class vocabulary into your critique, the use of examples to back up your claims, and the correct use of grammar and spelling." Students are given five questions to reflect on in their critique.

Informative speech. Students do a 5-7 minute informative speech that focuses on a civic issue. It is suggested that this topic relate to the students' majors, but not a requirement. Students are required to research this speech and use five outside sources.

The component assignments for this speech are:

Audience analysis. Students write a survey, poll, or questionnaire to be distributed in class that will help them understand how much their audience knows about the topic and their audiences' level of interest in the topic. After administering the instrument,

students compile descriptive statistics on the topic. This information was to be incorporated into the speech.

Informative speech proposal. Students write a proposal that identifies their topic, provides general and specific purpose statements and a thesis, lists the main points, identifies and organizational pattern for the speech, and provides information on each of the five oral citations they are required to have for the speech. The sources need to be cited in MLA or APA style. Information on the author's credentials and why this makes them credible sources must be provided.

Informative speech preparation outline. This is a complete version of the speech written in paragraph form. It includes transitions in full-sentence format and in-text citations in APA or MLA style. This outline is reviewed by a peer before it is submitted to the teacher for a grade. The outline is graded using a rubric the awards points for topic, a report on the audience analysis, a specific purpose statement, an appropriate thesis statement, three main points that "fit well with the thesis," selected organizational pattern, and "five high-quality sources chosen with the topic and audience in mind."

Informative speech peer evaluation. Students complete this form for each of their peers. It provides a place for students to rate the speaker on his or her delivery and the speech's content. It also asks the student to answer questions about the most effective parts of the speech and specific recommendations for improvement. This form is given to the speaker and used as he or she writes the self-critique.

Self-critique for informative speech. Students write a 500-word critique of their speech after watching a video recording of it. The critique is graded based on the students' ability to "integrate class vocabulary into your critique, the use of examples to

back up your claims, and the correct use of grammar and spelling." Students are given

five questions to reflect on in their critique. Summaries of the questions are listed below:

- How was the experience of seeing yourself in the presentation video?

- How did you feel during the presentation?

- Are you happy with your content choices?

- Did dimensions of your delivery—eye contact, movement, gestures, and voice— give you the best possible expression of your topic?

- Name at least three specific things you will work on to improve your next presentation.

Persuasive speech. For the second major speech given in CMM 103, students deliver

a 6-8 minute speech related to the civic issue they used for their informative speech. The

idea is that, now that they have informed their audience about the topic, they should

persuade their audience to do something about the topic. The speech must "use

compelling arguments that use sound reasoning and credible evidence. The purpose of

your speech must be to do one of the following: strengthen commitment, weaken

commitment, conversion, or induce a specific action." The component assignments for

the persuasive speech are explained below.

Audience analysis. Students write a survey, poll, or questionnaire to be distributed

in class that will help them understand how much their audience knows about the topic

and their audiences' level of interest in the topic. After administering the instrument,

students compile descriptive statistics on the topic. This will be used in the speech. I was

in class the night students distributed their audience analysis instruments for this speech.

All but a handful of the students had forgotten to do the assignment in advance. The

instructor gave them time to write down their questions on scratch sheets of paper. I had the opportunity to read many of the surveys as they circulated the room and I thought some of the questions were unclear.

The topics included the following: Donald Trump for president, Native American casinos, human trafficking, prostitution, funding for college education, abortions, obesity, drug testing of welfare recipients, drug testing in sports, and media's impact on our lives. The format of the surveys varied. Several were yes/no questions: *Do you support abortion? Others were short answer: What do you think of Donald Trump?* One asked to rate level of knowledge on the topic on a scale of 1-100. Jun explained that the purpose of the survey was to establish the speaker's authority on the topic. She told them to graph the information (done in class) and use that to plan the goal for the speech.

Persuasive speech proposal. Students formulated a persuasive argument that determined their focus for the speech, the focus of the problem, and/or the focus of the solution. Students wrote a proposal that identified their topic, listed two ways they will establish ethos, provided general and specific purpose statements and a thesis, listed the main points, identified an organizational pattern for the speech, listed five persuasive appeals, and provided information on each of the five oral citations they were required to have for the speech. The sources need to be cited in MLA or APA style. Information on the author's credentials had to be provided as evidence of source credibility.

Persuasive speech preparation outline. This was a complete version of the speech written in paragraph form. It included transitions in full-sentence format and in-text citations in APA or MLA style. This outline was reviewed by a peer before it was submitted to the teacher for a grade.

Persuasive speech peer evaluation. Students complete this form for each of their peers. It provides a place for students to rate the speaker on his or her delivery and the speech's content. It also asks the student to answer questions about the most effective parts of the speech and specific recommendations for improvement. This form is given to the speaker and used as he or she does the self-critique.

Self-critique for persuasive speech. Students write a 500 word-critique of their speech after watching a video recording of it. The critique is graded based on the students' ability to "integrate class vocabulary into your critique, the use of examples to back up your claims, and the correct use of grammar and spelling." Students are given the same five questions to reflect on in this critique as were used in the informative speech self-critique.

Analysis

Although more writing assignments than reading assignments were submitted for this study, there is a lot of reading in CMM103, primarily in preparation for the two major speeches. I had the opportunity to observe the students' persuasive speeches. They cited sources from news organizations, respected websites, academic journals, textbooks, and reference databases. The class curriculum puts emphasis on establishing the credibility of the source, directly teaching students how to find credible sources and how to establish the credibility of the sources for their audience. Part of the students' grade on the informative and persuasive speeches is based on their providing evidence of the sources' credibility in their oral citations.

All of the CMM 103 reading assignments analyzed for this study asked the students to make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections. The nature of

the assignments assured this: students were asked to identify a civic issue they cared about, locate various texts that could be used to inform or persuade on the issue, and draw support from the texts that was integrated into a cohesive speech. Students were explicitly told to draw from their own experiences for the speech as a means of establishing credibility and rapport with the audience, a process that facilitated text-to-self connections. One student spoke about doping among athletes. He was a student-athlete from Sweden, and his examples came from high-profile doping cases in Sweden that he follows in the news and his own experiences as an athlete facing the pressure to take performance-enhancing drugs. Throughout his speech, he cited both his personal thoughts on the examples and information he had learned from his research. Another student spoke about Human Trafficking, citing statistics on human trafficking in his home state. He ended with stories about his experiences working with a local organization that advocates for survivors of human trafficking. His plea was for his audience to also get involved with the organization as well.

There is also a lot of writing in CMM 103. Jun told me that the speeches they do for the class should follow the same structure and standards as a research paper. This is reflected in the writing students did in preparation for the speeches. The outline needed to have all the content for the speech written in paragraph form and following APA or MLA format. The writing students did in preparation for the two major speeches asked them to draw on both their personal experiences and the texts they found in their research. These writing assignments were quite comprehensive in what they asked students to do:

- Students communicated personal experience when they established why the topics were important to them.

- They summarized the ideas of others when they drew support from their sources.

- They made connections between texts as they integrated support from various sources.

- They had to use what they learned to support their original thesis statement, so they generated original ideas based on their research.

- They had to evaluate all the sources and establish why those were credible.

Some of the writing that was done for the class was reflective. Although neither Jun nor Laura mentioned this purpose directly, it seemed assignments like the proposals, the peer reviews, and the self-critiques were designed to encourage students to write-to-think. In these assignments, students were asked questions that address the organizational pattern that would be most effective for the speech, their strengths and weaknesses as a speaker, and how they plan to establish pathos and ethos. To do this, they had to think about and apply the concepts they were learning in class and provide a written response based on those thoughts. Writing the audience analysis instrument forced students to think about their topic from the perspective of their classmates.

One hallmark of the reading and writing done in CMM 103 is how integrated it was. There were no stray reading or writing assignments that were not a step in the process of creating a speech. Laura told me that the class is set up to walk students through the process of developing a speech step-by-step. The consistency of the assignments between the three speeches gives students opportunities to learn and improve as the semester progresses. The textbook reading assignments reinforced what students were working on that week in class.

CMM 103 provides students opportunities to use disciplinary literacy; students were asked to take the first steps towards reading and writing the way experts in the field of communications would. The processes of analyzing an audience for their prior knowledge and interest in a topic, writing a proposal for a speech, preparing a classical outline, and preparing detailed notes for a speech are all examples of how students in the class were introduced to the conventions of the discipline. The workbook included a chapter on how speakers incorporate oral citations into their speeches, including examples of the specific language speakers use to do this. The templates for the outline and proposal assignments that were provided in the workbook are examples of how an introductory class can apprentice students into disciplinary discourses. The self-critiques were graded "based on your ability to integrate class vocabulary into your critique," which provides an opportunity for students to use discipline-specific language.

ENGL 101/096 at Metro Community College

Background. ENGL 101/096 is a combined class. Half the students in the class are enrolled only in ENGL101 and half are co-enrolled in ENGL096 and ENGL101. ENGL 096 is for students who did not qualify to take ENGL 101 based on their ACT or Accuplacer score, but who score higher than the range for students to be placed into ENGL 095. Students in ENGL 096 take ENGL 101 with one additional hour per week of support from their instructor. ENGL101 is required for students in most programs at Metro, and is a prerequisite for other classes students take in the general studies curriculum, including ENGL 102.

The catalog descriptions and learning outcomes for the two classes state:

Course Description for ENGL- 096 Accelerated Writing Skills:

This course targets writing skills, including the drafting, revising, and editing processes; instruction in grammar, mechanics, and usage; the research process; and reading strategies for comprehension, critical thinking, and logical reasoning.

ENGL 096 Course Goal:

English 096 is part of Metro's Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) and is taught as a co-requisite with English 101. The ALP Program is designed to allow students to move through their English requirements in just one semester as opposed to 2 semesters. This ENGL 096 class will include those topics covered in ENG 101 with additional scaffolding and support. This ENGL 096 class will provide supplemental instruction for the English 101 course assignments as the need is demonstrated by the students or identified by the English 101 instructor. The supplemental instruction will target writing skills, including the drafting, revision, and editing processes as well as instruction in grammar, mechanics, and usage. The course will provide additional opportunities to apply these skills, practice that is necessary for success in college-level courses.

The ENGL 096 class will also address how to succeed as a college student and the problems interfering with the student's progress. Students take the class during their freshman year because it is a prerequisite for most other classes at Metro.

Course Description for ENGL- 101 English COMPOSITION I:

This course targets writing skills, including the drafting, revising, and editing processes; instruction in grammar, mechanics, and usage; the research process; and reading strategies for comprehension, critical thinking, and logical reasoning.

Both ENGL 096 and ENGL 101 use the same textbook: *The Bedford Guide for College Writers*. This text provides content on the writing process, instruction in how to

read college texts, and selected readings for students. Peggy, the instructor for ENGL 101/096, used the text for support in teaching students the writing and reading processes they needed to complete class assignments. When students were writing their compare/contrast essay, for example, she referred them to specific pages in the chapter that explained that structure, which they could use as a reference as they wrote. She also drew some of the reading assignments for the class from the text's anthology, which includes a large number of essays and articles that integrate with the reading and writing activities in the book, but she often supplements the textbook with outside readings. There are about 16 students in ENGL 101/096, though Peggy said that there were several more enrolled who had not been attending regularly.

Peggy has taught developmental education in community colleges for 15 years. Prior to that, she was a public school teacher. She supplied me with 12 reading and writing assignments for her class. I also analyzed an in-class writing activity that I observed while visiting the class. It was related to the compare/contrast essay, but was not part of the assignment materials submitted by the instructor. All of the materials were component assignments for the two major essays the students wrote during the semester: a *compare/contrast* essay and a *taking a stand* essay. These essays are standardized assignments for all the 101/096 sections, though teachers have freedom in how they structure the assignments for their individual classes.

Taking a stand essay. The assignment instructions below, taken from information provided to the students, provide an overview of the assignment and an example of the additional support provided to students co-enrolled in ENGL096:

"Taking a Stand" Essay

Your position essay must be related to the broad topic of Chronic Traumatic

Encephalopathy (CTE), which is discussed in the 6 readings for the module. You

*may select any specific position about the topic, but you must refer to at least **two***

***(2)** of the 6 articles as a source of your information. You will cite all sources,*

using in-text citation and a works cited sheet; citations will be explained later.

You may also find and cite additional articles if you want to; additional sources

*are not required. **Print out your draft and bring a copy to class, during which***

***you will conduct peer reviews for your group.** As we discussed in class, your*

essay must have a narrowed, specific topic, must be written for a specific

audience, and must have a thesis statement with a clearly stated purpose.

Instructor Review:

After you have rewritten your first draft based on the input from the peer review,

give both the first- and second-drafts to the instructor for a one-on-one review.

This will be in conjunction with the one-hour support session for ENGL 096 to

give a full 2 hours for the instructor to review the entire class.

Final Draft for Grading:

Incorporate all of the feedback for improvement that you have received and

rewrite your essay, using MLA format and submit for grading.

The taking-a-stand essay included several component assignments that led to the final

written essay:

    Taking-a-Stand Reading Assignments. The students read six articles, selected by

Peggy, on the topic of CTE. The articles represented different perspectives on the topic.

The students were eventually to use these articles for their paper, but first they were to

carry out a series of activities with the readings to aid in their understanding of the topic. These are outlined in Peggy's lesson plan:

*You are provided with digital copies of the readings and links to several videos and a website. Everyone is required to complete the readings, watch the videos, and explore the website **outside of the classroom**. Read deeply the material you have been provided. Annotate as you read and be prepared to share your annotation, or engagement, with the instructor and class. Take notes, making a list of any words with which you are having difficulty, questions you may have, interesting facts you learned, reactions you want to share, etc.*

After reading and annotating the text, you may want to reread it in to be sure you understand the material on both a <u>literal level</u> (know, comprehend, and be relate information) and an <u>analytical level</u> (break down the information into parts, combine information to make a point, and evaluate the information).

Look back on your annotations and think about what you have read. Were you able to connect the reading to something you already know? Be prepared to share any words with which you are having difficulty, questions you may have, interesting facts you learned, and reactions you had to the readings.

Post Reading Activities

In‑ Class activities are for students to process, clarify, and engage with ideas/information from readings – e.g. small group and whole class discussions, in‑class writing, debates, games – will be directed by the instructor. Metacognitive conversation will be woven throughout to increase students' awareness of strategies for approaching academic reading, critical thinking, and writing.

- *After reading and annotating the assigned readings for the "Taking a Stand" essay, **students will bring their annotations to class** to demonstrate they have read the material. **Students will share with the class the notes** they took, presenting difficult words, the questions they had, facts they learned, reactions they wanted to share, etc.*

- *Next, each article will be discussed by a different group of students with the group assigned to develop a set of discussion questions for their assigned article. The **group will reteach the article to the class**, using the discussion questions to engage the class.*

- ***Assignment – Annotated Bibliography:** Prepare an annotated bibliography for the assigned readings for the "Taking a Position" essay. Include a summary of each and a reflection on each (how you feel or what you think about it). Attached on Engrade.com are resources that describe how to create an annotated bibliography.*

The taking-a-stand essay was the second of three essays students wrote for the class. Like the other sections of ENGL101, Peggy started the semester by having the students write a personal reflective essay that did not require any outside sources. She assigned the topic *the most wonderful place on earth*. Peggy explained that the taking-a-stand essay was the first step in helping her students to learn to evaluate sources and integrate information from sources into a paper in support of an argument. She said she selected the sources so the students would have a common topic to write about and so she could scaffold research skills for the class.

Compare and contrast essay. The third and final essay for the class, the compare and contrast essay, required students to choose their own topic and locate and evaluate sources independently. Like she did with the taking-a-stand essay, Peggy divided the process of writing the essay into several component assignments, discussed below. I was present during one of the classes when the compare and contrast essay was introduced and observed how Peggy began discussion of the assignment with an in-class writing activity.

Introduction to structuring compare and contrast essays. Peggy had the students work with a partner. The pairs looked at two photos in their textbook of a street in New Orleans that had been affected by Hurricane Katrina. One photo was from 2005 and one was from 2010. Students were instructed to find similarities and differences and make note of what they found. After letting the students work for a few minutes, Peggy wrote a chart on the board. She said they would use chart as practice for how to structure a compare/contrast essay. The chart looked like this:

	Pt. 1	Pt. 2	Pt. 3
Subject A			
Subject B			

While they were working, some students asked questions about the order of the photos, which came first. The students asked other questions as they worked, for example, "Can we compare not just physical stuff but also the atmosphere?" Peggy then had each group share three points, including both comparisons and contrasts. She wrote what they said in the chart on the board. After the chart was finished, she asked, "What would the purpose

be if we wrote an essay about this? To show improvement? To inform? Has it improved as much as we'd expect?" Students discussed how they would use the information in the chart to support the possible purposes for a writing assignment. Peggy then told them to complete the same chart on their compare/contrast essay topics. She instructed them to choose the two things they will compare and what the points might be. She told them to show her what they had written before they left class for the day.

  Compare/Contrast Readings and Discussion Board. Students were assigned two readings from the textbook: *The Opportunity Gap* by David Brooks and *Karate Kid vs. Kung Fu Panda,* an example of a compare/contrast essay written by a student writer. The assignment instructions said:

> *Read the 2 essays in Chapter 7 to learn how to write an essay in which you compare (where you point out similarities) or contrast (where you point out differences) of two (2) related subjects in order to inform or to draw a conclusion/make a judgement [sic] about the two subjects. Answer the questions at the end of each essay about the writing strategies. This activity is to help you learn from other writers. Submit your written responses to this dropbox.*

In addition, students participated in a discussion board on Blackboard about the Brooks essay:

> *After reading the essay on page 118, "The Opportunity Gap," reflect on these questions:*
>
> - *In The Opportunity Gap essay on page 118, does David Brooks favor one group of parents and students over another? Identify specific details or statements in the essay that back up your opinion. (Post 1)*

- *What is the author's purpose in writing this essay? Is he explaining or trying to convince the reader of something. Name a specific detail in the essay that helps you decide on his purpose. (Post 2)*

Your answers should be 2 well-formed paragraphs. Read the responses of your classmates and write a substantive reply to at least 2 of your classmates as well.

Writing the compare contrast essay/annotated bibliography. Students chose a topic for this essay and were responsible for finding three sources for it using EBSCOHost. They visited the library during class to get help with their research and were encouraged to return to the library for additional help on their own. Students incorporated the three sources into an MLA style annotated bibliography, along with a summary and reflection on each source. (Students could use one source that is not from EBSCOHost.) They were instructed to look for "facts, statistics, observations, expert testimony, illustrations, examples, reasons and case studies that will make the points to support your essay thesis. Support your position with sound, reliable, current, and relevant evidence." After submitting the annotated bibliography for feedback, students used the sources to write the essay. Both the annotated bibliography and the essay received peer and instructor feedback before students submitted the final draft of the paper. The final paper had to have in-text citations and an MLA style works cited page.

Letter to the editor. Students concluded the compare/contrast essay assignment by writing a letter to the editor of a local paper. The instructions for this assignment are below:

Media research shows that the letters to the editor section is one of the most widely read parts of the paper. It's a natural forum for sharing your opinion and story with

your community. You are going to write a letter to the editor of the Town

Newspapers, arguing which is better for people, _____ or _____.

Compare and contrast these two (2) subjects in your editorial, using evidence from a

source to back up your thesis.

Analysis

Like CMM 103, the reading and writing assignments for ENGL101/096 build on each other and work together to accomplish a larger goal. There are no discrete assignments that functioned in isolation. The in-class activity where students completed the graphic organizer with similarities and differences from the photo is a good example of how class activities helped support the major class projects. Another example would be when students completed an annotated bibliography before they wrote the two essays. This helped them summarize and evaluate the sources and organize the information before they wrote. The assignments were also scaffolded. For the first essay (not included in this study), students wrote a reflection based entirely on their personal experience. The next essay, the taking-a-stand essay, had the students read and incorporate support into their essays, but because all the students read the same essays, the teacher was able to provide support for the process and provide insights into her justification for choosing the sources. The final essay, *compare/contrast*, left the selection of the topic and process of finding and evaluating of sources entirely up to the student.

The reading assignments for ENGL 101/096 were some of the more complex samples of text included in this study. The Lexile score for the seven readings I analyzed for this study ranged from 1170-1680. The high scores may be due to the use of medical

jargon in some of the articles on CTE. Students read a lot in the class. The shortest reading assignment analyzed was 433 words and the longest was over 2000.

The class, like CMM 103, placed emphasis on evaluation of sources. The extended instructions for the assignments provided detailed information about how to locate credible sources. This was a theme that came up often during class time. Whenever Peggy was asking students about how their research was coming, she questioned them about the credibility of their sources. Sometimes she teased them that they had better not submit Wikipedia as a source. Again, the concept of source evaluation was scaffolded for the students. The taking-a-stand essay provided the students with sources that had been vetted for their credibility by the teacher. In the compare/contrast essay, students were supported with guidance from a librarian as they evaluated sources themselves.

The reading and writing assignments in the class provided opportunities for all three kinds of text connections. Students made text-to-text connections in the taking-a-stand essay. The divergent views reflected in the readings required the students to think about the similarities and contrasts between the different texts. The students were asked if they could think of any examples of CTE they had heard about and they had to find an example of an athlete who had a brain injury, which facilitates a text-to-world connection. The letter to the editor assignment that served as a capstone for the compare/contrast essay is a good example of a text-to-self assignment. Students had to explain how the issue they researched affected the community where they live.

All the assignments for the class were classified as having a component of disciplinary literacy. The assignments asked students to formulate an argument or thesis and provide support for it from a credible source. This is a characteristic of reading and

writing in the discipline of composition. In the annotated bibliography and Blackboard discussion assignments, students were asked to read something and respond to it with their own ideas, also a characteristic of the discourse used in composition. The *Kung-Fu Panda* and *Opportunity Gap* readings were chosen to help students analyze and begin to use the rhetorical structures of compare/contrast essays, an example of how an introductory class can apprentice students into a discipline by directly teaching how knowledge is used in that discipline.

Several of the class assignments required students to formulate their own ideas and find support from texts to justify those ideas. The reading and writing done in ENGL101/096 often asked students not only to understand texts, but also to evaluate or analyze them. Instructions for the taking-a-stand essay asked students to argue an opinion on the topic of CTE. The *Opportunity Gap* discussion asked students to choose support from the essay to justify their answers to the questions. The letter to the editor assignment applied those higher-level thinking skills to a real-life context, asking students to write about a problem or situation that others in their community would be interested in.

A final characteristic of the reading and writing done in ENGL 101/096 is how much the students were expected to learn some concepts independently by reading texts. Students did some work on the essays in class, but much of the reading and writing itself, as well as the learning *how* to read and write, was done outside of class. Instructions for where to look in the textbook to find the procedural and background information students needed to complete the assignments were sprinkled throughout all the assignment instructions:

- "You should read Chapter 34, pages 687-699 to get a better idea of how to use sources"

- "Read Chapter 7, pages 125-133 to learn about writing a comparison/contrast essay"

- "On page 128, read about how to state your purpose in a thesis."

Peggy said that she usually had her students read the material outside of class and apply it in class, what she called using "flipped classroom-light" method.

ENGL 101/095 at Metro Community College

  Background. ENGL 101/095, Accelerated Integrated Reading and Writing, like ENGL 096, is for students who do not achieve the ACT or Accuplacer score needed to take ENGL101. Students who do not make the cut-off score to be in ENGL 096 enroll in ENGL 095, which covers the content from ENGL 101 at a slower pace, meeting for an additional three hours per week. Students earn credit for both ENGL 101 and ENGL 095, a total of six credits for both classes combined. The catalog description for the class says, "This course focuses on developing reading comprehension, composition, and critical thinking skills necessary for academic success in college." The course goal for ENGL 095 is the same as for ENGL 096. Unlike ENGL101/096, students in ENGL101/095 are in their own section, without any students who are not taking a developmental support co-requisite. The students in the class received their extra support in the form of three extra hours of additional whole-class instruction per week. So, although much of the content of the three classes (101, 096, and 095) is the same, the model for delivery of the content differs. The ENGL101/095 class is structured more like a traditional

developmental education class, where students who have been identified as needing extra support are grouped together.

The students enrolled in ENGL 095 use the same textbook as students in ENGL 101: *The* Bedford *Guide for College Writers*. Like ENGL101/096, the text was used primarily as a reference in the class. Most reading assignments were based on essays and articles the instructor copied for the class.

The ENGL 101/095 class I visited had about 20 students enrolled. Karen, the instructor, said that three of the students were "low level ESL" and that she had to work with them more to help them succeed in the class. Karen has taught for over ten years, but only recently started teaching developmental classes. She began as a humanities teacher at a local community college and continues to teach both humanities and developmental English classes today. For inclusion in this study, she provided information on three essays the class read and discussed, one of the major writing assignments for the class, and two smaller assignments on summarizing and paraphrasing. During class visits, I was able to observe class discussion about one of the essays and the initial stage of planning for the persuasive essay assignment. In her conversations with me, Karen emphasized the importance of class discussion to the overall objectives of the class. She felt those discussions were the foundation for the class and for her students' learning of the class content. That was borne out in the activities observed during class visits. For that reason, the researcher chose to include those discussions in the analysis for Karen's class.

Class activity one: Discussion of I Want a Wife/learning summarizing. As homework, students read the essay *I Want a Wife* by Judy Brady. Class began with a

discussion of the essay. There were no discussion questions provided, and the students engaged more with each other than with the teacher (directing questions to each other rather than waiting for the instructor to ask questions). After the discussion, Karen gave out copies of *Shitty First Drafts* by Anne Lamott and instructed the students to read it. She then asked them to write a summary of *Shitty First Drafts* in class and *I Want a Wife* as homework. She also showed a PowerPoint that explained how to do a summary. She told me that she had originally planned to cover paraphrasing also, but decided to allow the students the entire time to work on their summaries.

Paraphrasing. After practicing summarizing two essays they had read and discussed in class, the students practiced paraphrasing. They viewed a PowerPoint in class on what a paraphrase is and looked at examples of paraphrases. Then they did a paraphrasing exercise in class. The exercise asked the students to paraphrase eight short selections from a variety of sources, including *Newsweek*, *Consumer Reports*, and *Audubon* magazines, and essays on topics like immigration and women's equality in education.

Discussion of What is Poverty/Writing an extended definition essay on family. Students were assigned to read this essay outside of class and discussed it in class. They used this as a model for writing an extended definition paper, their first essay of the semester. This paper did not require any sources and was based entirely on personal experience. The topic of the paper was *what is family?*

Argumentative-persuasive paper. Students chose a topic and either took a stand or offered solutions to a problem related to the topic. They were required to use two outside sources and write a four page paper in MLA format.

Class Visit Two: Spontaneous discussion of local news event, Planning for argumentative/persuasive paper. Before class, Karen told me she was struggling to get the students to understand how to structure their persuasive papers. At the beginning of the class, one of her students brought up a local news story about a middle school teacher who had been caught viewing pornography at his desk by one of his students. He berated and threatened the student, while other students recorded the incident on their cell phones. The students in ENGL095 discussed their opinions on the incident, while Karen listened. She occasionally posed questions, usually just a one word question like "Why?" but the students led the discussions, just as they led the discussion of *I Want a Wife*. The topic turned to how much control an employer should have over an employee's private time or online life. Karen began to tie the discussion back to formulating an argumentative paper. She wrote notes on the students' different views on the board in the form of a graphic organizer. She then led the class in thinking about how the topic of social media could be used for a problem-solution and persuasive paper. She called attention to how the support selected and the structure of the essay would be different for the two kinds of papers, but how both purposes required the use of relevant support.

Analysis

Because Karen relied a lot on verbal instructions and made some instructional decisions in the spur-of-the-moment based on what she perceived to be the needs of her students, I did not have the same breadth of a sample of materials from ENGL095/101 as from the other classes. Consequently, I spent more time talking to the instructor than for the other classes, so I developed a good understanding of what happens in the class despite having fewer assignments submitted to me.

One might expect that the students in 101/095 would be less able to discuss complex reading assignments or topics than students in the other three classes, but I did not find this to be the case. All of the reading assignments for the class dealt with complex topics: poverty, the role of women in a marriage, the frustration of the writing process. Even the random samples of paragraphs used for the paraphrasing activity, although not connected to any other reading the students had done, were relatively high level of text complexity. Karen did not make use of lower-level texts to teach a skill like summarizing or paraphrasing before asking the students to apply the skill to more challenging texts, but expected her students to be able to manage complex reading assignments.

Of all the classes, the students in 101/095 were the most engaged in discussion of the readings (and, in the news story about the teacher, non-text-based topics). Karen said in an interview that she wished the students would participate more in discussions and "take more ownership" of class discussion, rather than relying on her lead:

> One thing I do is a circle discussion, and I give them an essay on Tuesday and on Thursday we discuss it, the last 30 minutes of class. I put discussion questions up and I let them talk. I step back, I let them do the talking. They need to learn how to and not have me do it for them. Which is the habit sometimes, students will watch for that. They want the teacher lead the conversation, and I'm like, "I want to be quiet, it's your turn."

She even began one of the classes by telling the students, "You all need to discuss or I will have to find a way to make you discuss." But the classroom observations revealed that the students did engage in class discussion. All of the students contributed

at least one comment to both of the class discussions. If someone was quiet, Karen asked them what they thought. Students directed questions directly to one another and drew from both the reading material and their own experiences as they discussed what they read. Karen's involvement, after starting off the discussion with "Who had an opinion on *I Want a Wife*?" was minimal. Although they may have been confused about some of the details of the reading—several of the students misunderstood and thought it was written by a man, a misunderstanding Karen let the students clarify without her interjecting— they were able to grapple with and make sense of the underlying concepts of the essay. These discussions provided rich opportunities for students to make connections with the texts. During class discussions, the students made connections between the essays and news stories, examples from their own lives, and anecdotes from popular culture. This is illustrated by an example from my notes from the discussion of *I Want a Wife*:

> *A student who I later find out is from Turkey shares an example from her country. She says the women have no money for themselves and have no right to get divorced. She talks about the stories of Syriah(?)—a movie from Turkey—and mentions about the gender roles in Islamic countries. Another student asks the class, "Did it make you think about your mother?" Several students share their experiences of how their mothers adhered to traditional gender roles, taking care of everything around the house while their fathers worked. One man shares a story of how his mother worked full-time but was still expected to do everything around the house, but she did not seem to mind. Two students share stories of how gender roles and sharing of responsibilities work (or do not work) in their own*

relationships. A woman says, "Sometimes you just want someone to do everything

for you. To make things easier. I get tired. It has nothing to do with gender roles."

Karen capitalized on her students' ability to make meaningful connections between texts, the world, and their lives when she used the student-generated topic of the news story to teach how a persuasive essay is organized. She began to organize the students' ideas into a graphic organizer on the board, and then occasionally asked them questions that could lead them to think about how they were using arguments and support for the opinions they were expressing. After this had gone on for a few minutes, she made an explicit connection to their paper by saying, "What we are doing is brainstorming ideas. Do you see how this could be used for an argumentative paper? Now, how would you research this?"

Like ENGL101/096, the way students used knowledge in the class often reflected authentic uses of knowledge in the discipline of composition. The summarizing and paraphrasing assignments were exceptions to the use of disciplinary literacy in the class. Students were reading, discussing what they read, and formulating original ideas that could be supported by the text. Class assignments often asked students to analyze or evaluate information. For example, in class discussion, students were asked to analyze the author's purpose in *I Want a Wife*. Karen also asked the students to compare the language used in the essay with the language used in *What is Poverty* and to speculate on why the authors chose to use the language they did to accomplish their purpose.

With the exception of the argumentative essay, higher-level skills like analyzing and evaluating seem to be used more in class discussion than in formal writing assignments. After the rich discussion of *I Want a Wife*, the students were asked to write

a summary of the essay without incorporating their own ideas. In fact, Karen explicitly cautioned them against including their own ideas in the summary because the purpose of a summary is to convey only the author's ideas.

The teacher relied on students' ability to co-construct knowledge and support one another as learners. She allowed them to work out the meaning of the text with little guidance, even when they misunderstood something. For example, some students thought that the essay, *I Want a Wife,* was written by a male. Karen let the class discuss who the author was before she provided an answer. She allowed them to function as a community of scholars who did not need a teacher to guide them as they learned. In her interview, she explained how she relied on the students to teach each other a concept they had struggled with in a previous class:

> So I think what I want to do with their homework tomorrow night, I'm going to put it up on the board and say, "Okay, it's class participation points, everybody has to participate, we are going to do this together. And that's how we're going to, you know... And actually they seem to work better. This class works better in the group than they do as an individual. I've noticed this. That's what I'll end up doing, working with them as a group tomorrow night. And I need to sit down and, like I said, tomorrow night I'm finding each class period, I notice when we do things together as the class they get better, because they help each other. And that's what I want to create that classroom—community—where they want to work together.

Discussion of Class Literacy Profiles

Before beginning a discussion of alignment, it should be noted that the two classes that were part of the study at each of the schools corresponded in their disciplinary focus: both ENG 150 and CMM 103 at State focused on oral communication; both ENGL 101/096 and ENGL 101/095 Metro focused on written composition skills. ENG 150, however, had the additional emphasis of helping international students with the listening they needed to do in college, so the correspondence between its objectives and those of CMM 103 is not perfect. ENGL 101/095 covers the same content as ENGL 101/096, but with additional transitional support, so there is a high degree of correspondence between the objectives for the two classes. The purpose of this study, however, is not examining the correspondence between the objectives in the pairs of classes. Rather, it seeks to understand how the reading and writing done in the classes aligns. Although having similar objectives increases the likelihood that the reading and writing done in the classes will align, alignment is not a given. Objectives are usually broad, leaving room for teachers to translate them into instruction that they believe will meet the needs of their students. For example, one of the objectives for both ENGL 101/096 and ENGL 101/095 is "evaluate sources for reliability and relevant." This could translate into a wide range of instructional activities, from a short, teacher led-activity that asks students to evaluate a few sources on a worksheet to an in-depth research project that requires students to independently find appropriate sources to answer a research question.

The transitional class ENG 150 was similar to the gateway class CMM 103 in that they both required students to locate and evaluate sources for some assignments. Students

were asked to do presentations with content summarized from multiple sources for both classes, though the purpose of those presentations was different. In CMM 103, students were asked to inform their audience about a topic, and then construct a persuasive speech about the same topic. In ENG 150, students' presentations were designed to help them clarify their understanding of difficult concepts they had learned in a gateway class by presenting (teaching) the concepts to their peers. A second speech assignment asked the students to explain a podcast the students had listened to while their audience practiced note-taking skills. The sources the students used while preparing their speeches were similar—students in both classes could use websites, reference works, and periodicals— but the CMM 103 speeches required more sources and focused more on establishing the credibility of those sources relative to the topic.

Because most of the reading done in CMM 103 was done in preparation for the speeches, students selected more of the readings in this class than in ENG 150 and the purpose of their reading assignments was often to write about what they had read. Reading assignments were more likely to be the basis for another assignment in ENG 150; for example, students read the math vocabulary handout to prepare for a quiz on math vocabulary and read the scripts from the pronunciation textbook to prepare to do the pronunciation assignment. This illustrates another difference in the classes; most of the assignments in ENG 150 were discrete assignments, meaning they were not a step in the process of completing a larger assignment. In CMM 103, assignments were always part of a larger assignment. Each of the speeches comprised smaller assignments that helped students complete the speech, with each assignment building upon the next in the process.

There is little to write about regarding the alignment between ENGL 101/096 and ENGL 101/095 because the tasks in those classes are so similar. Part of this is because of the paired course model used for the 101/095 class; a paired class should support the content being taught in the gateway class rather than introduce additional content. It also may be because both ENGL 101 and the ENGL 095 support class were housed in the same department at Metro, so it was common for instructors to teach sections of each class, giving them a deep understanding of what was expected in ENGL 101. The classes had a structured curriculum that was uniform between sections and specified exactly which assignments should be taught in each class. A note from my first class observation in ENGL 101/095 further illustrates the extent of the similarities between the classes: "This class seems exactly like 101/096. Ask to be sure you understood correctly that this is the 095 section." Both classes made extensive use of source evaluation and directly taught the students how to evaluate sources. Both classes required students to make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-text connections for assignments. Students applied disciplinary conventions when they discussed their interpretations of the essays read in both classes and analyzed how essays were structured and the rhetorical function of those structures. Both classes asked students not only to summarize ideas they had read, but to respond to them and to select support for their own ideas from things they had read.

Students in both classes were expected to learn independently. The textbook served as a reference, and the teachers directed the students to read parts of it to help them understand how to complete the assignments. Students came to class knowing something about the writing assignment from having done the reading, then would apply what they had learned during class time. For example, students were expected to create

an outline for their compare/contrast essays during the ENGL 101/096 class meeting and for their argumentative essays during the ENGL 101/095 class meeting, but in both cases it was expected that they knew how to do that.

One difference between the two classes was ENGL 101/095 had several discrete assignments. The paraphrasing activity was done in isolation, not as part of a larger writing assignment. Similarly, the summaries students wrote about the two essays were not incorporated into a larger paper or assignment, but were used solely to teach the skill of summarizing. All the assignments in ENGL 101/096 were steps in a completing a larger assignment.

All four of the classes included in this study incorporated source evaluation, specifically, they required that students locate sources and determine if they were appropriate to use based on their evaluation of the author or source's credentials. All of the classes required students to make a variety of text connections, except for ENG 150, which only required students to make text-to-text connections on one assignment. All of the classes except for ENGL 150 required students to draw on their personal experiences as they completed assignments. Students were expected to incorporate those experiences into their speeches in CMM 103 and into class discussions in the two ENGL classes.

All of the classes used websites, periodicals, and reference materials as sources for reading assignments. The textbook was used as a reference guide in the classes at Metro, something the students could use to help them understand what to do on their assignments. The text was not used at all in ENG 150; the instructor relied on materials she found for the reading material in the class. In CMM 103 the textbook was read independently by students to help them pass the mandatory online quizzes all students

enrolled in any section of CMM 103 took. It is noteworthy that no fiction was used in any class. The basis of the discussions and writing assignments in the English classes was always a non-fiction essay.

The majority of the assignments in all the classes required students to demonstrate understanding of material through summarizing or explaining it. CMM and the two ENGL classes also gave assignments that required students to evaluate or analyze information. Overall, the classes offered students opportunities to learn how to use disciplinary literacy. The exception to this was ENG 150. This may be because the class did not fall into any specific discipline.

Research Question Two: *How do the faculty and administrators in transitional programs align the literacy demands of their classes with those of the gateway classes their students take?*

Making Sense of Alignment

The second research question for this study was addressed through interviews with the four faculty members who taught the classes and the three program administrators who oversaw the curriculum for the classes (the course director for CMM 103, Laura; the chair of the developmental education department at Metro Community College, Claudia; and the Academic Director for the Pathway Program, Natalie.) The interviews were designed to help me understand how reading and writing are used in the classes and how the instructors chose the kinds of reading and writing that are incorporated into the classes. Curricular and instructional decisions are based on understandings of what students need from the class, so the instructors and administrators were asked what skills students needed, not only to be successful in their class but also in

the other classes they would take at the college or university. The instructors in ENGL 101/095 and ENG 150 were teaching the classes that would best fit the definition of a transitional class, but all of the instructors and administrators spoke in terms of preparing their students for college; ENGL 096/101 was a prerequisite for ENGL 102 and most other classes at Metro and CMM 103 is part of the core curriculum at State University and a prerequisite for some classes in the College of Liberal Arts. All the interviewees expressed a sense of the importance of the role their classes played in preparing students academically.

What do they believe students need? Two themes about what students need emerged in the interviews. First, although all the instructors mentioned the academic needs of their students, they also noted that their students' needs were not primarily academic. All the interviewees emphasized the importance of affective traits, like having confidence, and the need to cultivate the soft skills or personal behaviors displayed by successful students, like attending class and setting goals. All the interviewees stated that students who do not do well in their classes often do not do well because of negative behaviors rather than deficient academic skills. They believed that until students were able to establish the behaviors of a successful student, they would not benefit from improving their literacy skills.

Peggy said that is a bigger task than what can be accomplished in any one class, and depended on the students' willingness to assume the role of a successful student:

> You can't make it up with an academic refresher or teaching them those skills. They've got to come into it themselves, really, then I think that they can make up the difference academically, if they want to. It might take a long time, because

they are behind.... They've got to accept responsibility for their own learning.

And they've got to have, like you said, the soft skills. They've got to understand

they've got to go to the class rigorously on time, prepared and engage. I mean, as

you certainly know, you can get them to come and do nothing but sit and text. It's

not worth it to do this. They're paying for it. I talk all the time about the

importance of coming to class, coming to class regularly, coming to class

prepared, coming to class and engaging. And I tell them all the time you cannot

fail this class or I've never had anybody that did that came, came prepared and

engaged that couldn't pass it. To me, taking responsibility for their own learning

and doing that, coming to class, coming to class prepared and engaging in class

are what matters.

Claudia, Chair of the Developmental English Department at Metro Community

College, said that when the college changed to the accelerated delivery model, some of

the gateway class instructors at Metro had trouble adjusting to having students who

needed developmental assistance in their classes:

They [students] just displayed all the developmental ed. characteristics that we're

so familiar with. Students that don't know how to set goals, that don't know how

to behave appropriately in a class, that are not good at critical thinking, which is

part of our reading skills that they struggle with. And so it's not just the lack of

preparation and aligning – that can be dealt with. But it's all the other behaviors

that go along with this student who needs developmental ed. So, we really had

trouble with stepping up in the English 101. They came back, we're giving them

an assignment, and in the next day they come back with nothing. They say, "I

didn't really understand what you meant." And just behaviors like that. And it was very frustrating for the instructor that needed a certain maturity level to teach the class. Meaning maturity; as in preparation for college. So, faculty members in all the other disciplines realized that we do a lot more in developmental ed. than just teach students how to write, because they were shocked at the level of maturity and some of the behavior issues that were coming up in their college level classes all of a sudden.

All of the interviewees talked about trying to instill the behaviors successful students need as being an important part of what they try to accomplish in their classes. The subject of students' lacking confidence came up in five of the interviews. Karen said of the students in her 101/095 class,

> The retention is what we've talked about, and a lot of it is they get into the class and they feel deceived, because they are like, why am I in among students who need this class?, because I have to be in developmental ed. And I tell them when I register them for the classes, "Listen, I would probably have to be in developmental math. Math is not my strong point. But you can get stronger if you want to make it through." My role as a teacher is not just a teacher, but to give them that confidence. They can do it, they're not stupid. They can get better at their writing and their reading, we just have to work on it. So that's what... Sometimes I feel like I'm a half counselor, half teacher.

In addition to needing support in their affective skills, all of the instructors also pointed out that their students continued to need support in developing as readers and writers. This need did not just apply to the students taking transitional classes. Speaking

of all the students she teaches in CMM 103, Jun said they need help with an array of writing skills, in addition to needing confidence that they can succeed in the class:

The problem is not so much delivering a presentation, that part they can pick up on pretty easy. It's the writing, it's organization, it's knowing what a thesis statement is, which is the same term they should have heard in English classes for however many years or in writing classes, and that they could have or should have had in their English 101 or 102 class, if they're taking it simultaneously or before, and some of them still don't know how to write a thesis statement, or that a thesis statement is the main idea for the whole thing, or that a thesis statement should be short. You know, just one thought, not a paragraph long. So a lot of it is still teaching basic writing elements. It's not only presentation but also organization, so making sure students understand how to support a thesis, different ideas, how to group your ideas appropriately, how to organize those ideas in a way that sounds interesting. Also about learning the differences between hearing something versus reading something, so how you present to an audience you are going to speak to versus how you present to an audience that you're going to write to. And also just to build their confidence in that they do have the ability to write this and they do have the ability to speak.

Perhaps because both have a background in ESL, Natalie, Academic Director for the Pathways Program, and Susan emphasized the need for their students to continue to work on their language proficiency. Susan says:

They all need an increased exposure to the language. Certainly through their listening skills, but also they need to focus on what the meanings of those words

are by reading them. So... This is something that we're going to work on all semester, because I am getting the idea that they don't understand a lot about what their teachers are saying in their university classes. So we're going to be practicing spoken English a lot, including academic vocabulary, and then we'll get into more of it. But I think that they... most need to know that they don't know a lot and that they need to start practicing the language on their own. Because their language skills are still fairly low, so I see that they still need to be learning a lot of vocabulary. We did a vocabulary exercise yesterday, and I would say that 80% of the vocabulary, which is some academic, some not classified as only academic word lists, but used in academic settings, that they didn't know the words. They didn't know how to spell them, they didn't know the definition, and I would say that was everybody in class, except two people maybe.

Susan goes on to explain that her students seem to be passive, not only about class assignments and activities, but in their level of interest in building the English language proficiency she believes they need:

I would hope that they're going to learn is that they should be more pro-active about their own learning. I have some students in the class who have shocked me every single class time by saying, "So what's the homework?" And I will have just finished saying, "You should study these words" or "You should do this in order to be prepared for the next assignment that we'll be doing in class." And that's not viewed as homework. To me that says that the students are not invested in learning the language other than what they get coming out of my mouth for 40 minutes in class, what's on the board or what they see on the video. And I am

going to try to help them see that there's a reason for studying more English, but I can hope that. I'm not sure that my assignments and the way the class is going to go will promote that. But I can hope.

Natalie explained that building language proficiency in English was the purpose of both the non-credit Academic English IEP and the Pathways program she oversees:

So, basically, I think, of course, they are in the program either AE program or Pathway Program, because they need English proficiency. So that is the focus of it, but AE would be a lot more focused on English proficiency, but the Pathway Program would be split attention on the class objectives besides just English proficiency to prepare student a lot more to go to the college. But in terms of specific things of what they need for the college, I think that it's different from time to time, from a student to student, but in general, knowing their responsibilities, soft skills, knowing their goals, what they want to do, focus on their major and all that.

Both Karen and Peggy also had English Language Learners in their classes at Metro, but neither mentioned the need for them to continue to build their language proficiency in English. In fact, during a class observation, when Karen told the class they could not incorporate photos or graphics into their research papers, one of the students who is not a native speaker of English reminded her that she had been doing that when she did not know a word in English. Karen told her that was fine, and that she could "have a pass" on that policy because English was not her first language. During that same class, she told the class a student was allowed incorporate some Spanish words and phrases into a writing assignment because "she is still learning." On another occasion,

Karen encouraged the same student to ask a classmate, a native speaker of English who was also fluent in the students' first language, to help her understand vocabulary and concepts by translating for her during class.

Karen and Susan were the two instructors who mentioned the need for their students to learn grammatical structures through direct grammar instruction. Peggy said she never teaches grammar and Jun, Natalie, Claudia, and Laura did not emphasize it. Susan said understanding grammatical structures will help the students understand the language used in lectures in their content classes, while noting that such attention to grammatical features would not be done in other classes her students take:

> Well, we'll definitely be looking at smaller parts of the language, as I said, with the vocabulary and maybe even some grammar structures where the students may need some filling in. We will talk about language that is used in lectures as signal points, so that students can get an idea of the organization. We'll look at those under a microscope. They don't do that in their regular classes.

She also incorporated pronunciation practice into her classes because she wanted the students to feel confident speaking out in the classes they had with native English speakers. For one assignment, she had them to listen to a recording of her reading a script, then to record themselves reading the same script while emulating her pronunciation. Susan also expected her students to adhere to an English-only policy in her class. During one of my visits to her class, I observed her asking two students who were speaking Chinese as they tried to understand the meaning of the word "atom" to use English instead.

Karen said she believes the grammar lessons are an important step toward preparing students to communicate their message in writing:

> We actually just finished our grammar section, too, cause students tend to... I have a lot of students that tend to mix up the words that sound alike, like, *there, they're, their*. Yeah. And they tend to also write like they're texting me, and I'm like, no no no no no no. So I teach them the first four or five weeks of me teaching them the basic skills of grammar, reading, writing, critical thinking, and now we're getting into the format of an essay. I want to give them the tool with grammar before they get there.

Some teachers may hold the view that their students need to improve their language proficiency because they believe students should use standard English, in class, out of class, or both. All of the students who take the classes included in this study are likely to use a non-standard variety of English. The international students in the Pathway Program are all non-native speakers of English, and many of the students in the classes at Metro are either African American and/or Appalachian, both populations in which non-standard variations of English are widely used, accepted, and valued. Appalachia is one of the few regions in the country where a large number, perhaps even a majority, of the residents use at least some features of a low-status, non-standard English. Anyone who is from or who teaches in the region has had to confront questions of how they feel about Appalachian language, and, on a practical level, how to handle its use in the classroom. It is likely that the experience of living in Appalachia influences the research participants' language ideologies in general, as they relate to all speakers of a non-standard English. Because of this, the topic of how instructors handle non-standard Englishes was raised in

the interviews. Natalie, herself a speaker of English-as-a-second-language, was the most direct in her rejection of non-standard variations of English in all written and some spoken situations, even as she points out that she uses it:

> They shouldn't use non-standard English. [pause, laughing] I use myself to answer the question. So when in class, I would tell them. In the writing, definitely, I want their formal language. And then a student would say, "But this is fine. I heard American say this. My American roommates used it." And I say, "That's fine, it's okay. But no spoken language [in writing]." In whatever activities that I ask them to do, either a presentation or writing, of course, is all formal language that I would ask them to do.

Natalie also believed it was important to correct perceived errors in spoken English as well:

> For their speaking, its hard, because it's quick and it's continuous. So I note it as much as possible and then tell them in person or I tell them before class "You know, don't take this personal. I just want to make it educational, so I share this kind of thing with all the students in the class." So I point out mistakes and then tell them how to correct them.

Susan also says she corrects perceived mistakes in oral language if she believes they will interfere with being understood:

> Right now, I have just been letting them make their mistakes in writing, and I have not been correcting them . . . I just give very broad feedback about how well they complete class activities. I have not started correcting their writing or listening yet. I tend to just immediately give feedback on oral mistakes as soon as

someone has finished speaking. I might point out something that would be disruptive to the listener, but I certainly don't go into all the pronunciation, grammar, and word order mistakes that are happening.

Peggy says she tries to validate the use of non-standard Englishes in her classroom, teaching her students how to vary their language use according to the situation. She incorporates a lesson on the topic of non-standard Englishes into her class early in the semester, teaching the students how to navigate the complexities of using two Englishes. They discuss different language registers. She asks the class "Do you speak the same way at home as you speak here in the classroom? Do you speak the same way with your adult friends as you do with your children?" to introduce the idea that we speak differently in different situations. She says:

> You know, we talk a lot about slang, you don't talk the way you write, you write differently. You don't talk in front of your grandmother like you do with your friends. No. So when you write you have to adopt standard English. We talk about that. We do an exercise with The Little Red Riding Hood. We do Little Red Riding Hood where I read them the fairy tale, and they get in groups and they re-write it. And I had the best group the other day, they wrote a cross between hip-hop and rhyme. And another group did Appalachian, talked about "the crick." Another group did country. And I think a couple of groups did rap and stuff. But they got it. They understood exactly how they talk differently than how they're supposed to write. It's a real fun exercise to do.

Laura also accepts that it is appropriate, and even helpful, for students to sometimes use a non-standard English in an academic setting, even though she acknowledges some of the CMM faculty resist this idea:

Well, we've had a couple of different discussions about this, and I think the prerogative of different instructors kind of rules the day, but my way of thinking about it and the way that I teach my instructors and what I say is it is about delivery, is that you have to look at the audience. Who is in your audience and what are their expectations, because every presentation or speech is given for the purpose of the audience, the way you are speaking to your audience. So this is the way the audience speaks and this is the natural way the speaker speaks, not a contrived way, then it is totally appropriate. If they're being conversational, I also think it tends to be appropriate, because we teach speaking in a conversational style, so conversational style, so if they're being conversational in a classroom of college freshmen and above, and they maybe use a classic regionalism, "If you don't care to, now look at the slide," that's totally appropriate for that audience, because the audience knows exactly what they mean. If it's anything, there's identification there.

The second theme regarding student needs to emerge from the interviews involved the students' ability to read and writing critically. All the interviewees emphasized this need in our conversations. When giving an overview of the new ENGL 101/096/095 curriculum, Claudia said that the class begins with teaching foundational skills, but the goal is always to help students read and write critically:

At the beginning of the class, we spend a lot of time working on the reading

process, the critical reading process and the writing process. So we start out by

having them do some readings and respond to the readings in a variety of ways.

And so some people call those the reading journals, some people call it the

reading response. We'll do out-loud discussions in small groups that are guided or

ask questions that they answer and then bring in the answers and then discuss and

do presentations or whatever. But it's all different ways of learning to respond to

reading. We go through the reading process as far as any prior read, how do you

imitate, how do you outline, how do you devise questions before you read and

answer these questions, which is just reading in a guided way. So we work on all

those skills. Then writing wise we start out by just having them do some basic

summarizing skills. We work on, for example, a read response might be one

paragraph of summary, one paragraph of reaction. We go through some of the

rhetorical models formally. Most of them start out with one of the personal ones,

but not everybody does, unless we start out with a narrative or descriptive or

something really where they can write in first person and be comfortable for their

first essay. But we have to go through and model, and with the students do the

pre-writing. We have to model the brainstorming and then have them do

brainstorming and model the how do you for your writing, how do you do then

writing in class. You have to actually go through the writing process bit by bit,

particularly with the first essay. We do and as the semester moves on, you know,

the writing becomes more challenging, the readings are always challenging. We

try to do other reading on college level. What we hope is that by the end of the

semester they'll be able to also be able to read a selection and challenge it very critically and that they will be able to write a good, basic essay to be ready for English 102.

Natalie reflected on the importance of critical thinking through the lens of her own experience as an international student attending a U.S. college:

[Back home] we were taught to understand the material and memorize the material. That's all. So our assessment is *what is this?, when is this?, why is this?* But the answer for the "why is this," it's already in content, it's already there. But in here, in the American educational system in general, of course, not every class, but in general, would be, here is your theory, you understand before, you prepare yourself before the class. Once you come to the class, teachers will guide you how would you apply the content that you learned from home in the different scenario. And then assessment, the perfect assessment would be to give you a different scenario and see how students would use what they learn to fix the problem or apply or show the critical thinking. And that's kind of shocking for me, too, that the quizzes that I had, they didn't ask what the theory was. They asked *how do you use a theory?* Okay, they, like, I usually, I got used to the tests, and asked me, what does this guy say in his theory? And then you describe his theory. "This is what he said, this is what he's experiment, this is what outcome, lalalalalala. This is what he did." Done. You get the perfect score, because you know everything. But here, no, teachers even tell you in the test, because it's half a page long question, and already tell you, this is what this guy did, that you read. Yeah, we know you read it and this is what he did. And this is the scenario you see, how

would you address this theory applied it in the real life? And that I didn't know how to do that, because I wasn't taught how to do that.

 The instructors in this study incorporate the development of critical thinking into their classes in different ways. Jun has her students watch speeches and analyze how effective the speaker's arguments are:

I have them watch a couple of different persuasive speeches and say whether the person did good or wasn't good, and then we think about why, what was it that would influence them or would change their mind. So analyzing someone else's presentation, so they can get an idea of it. And then also we use this logic—not logic puzzles but logical steps, so if this idea is dependent on this idea, you have to put them together, you can't put part B in there without explaining part A. We talk about how some things that require a lot of critical thinking, like, math or science, aren't going to be able to be condensed... Math or science based topics are good to condense into a 7 to 10 minute speech, because you don't have enough time, so we talk about different elements of selecting a good topic and one of them is scopes, so making it fit in the range of time enough to speak.

So the critical thinking can happen on the judgment based ideas, as long as the time to understand it. And we talk about how people are surprised to hear things like reluctant testimony, which is when you can hear quote from a party you don't expect to say it. Like, if someone from the Republican party right now came out in support of Hillary Clinton, well, that would be a really good for Hillary's campaign, bigger than if someone from the Democratic party said it. So reluctant

testimony has more sway power than just like your standard testimony you would hear.

Peggy does not teach critical thinking skills as directly, but says she incorporates critical thinking into her class by challenging her students to think about issues that are relevant to their personal experiences. One example of this is a unit she did in a past semester about developmental education:

We have one that talks a lot about the developmental education programs at the University of Texas and what they found out, the research. So studies they've done in Baltimore on economics and education. Poor students versus rich students and things like that. And you get some fascinating discussions. When I do the unit on disadvantaged people are not successful in college, because they don't have those economic advantages and the vocabulary to start with, they're always behind. The students get real... "We can do this too." And it's really good to hear that. They don't buy that, they argue against it, which is fascinating to me. They don't hide behind it at all or say, "Yeah, I've had a hard time, because..." And most of our students are lower socially-economic, and you would expect them to relate to that. They don't at all. They defy it.

Karen also teaches critical thinking skills through having her students read, discuss, and make applications to their lives:

I've taught this semester, so far I've taught critical reading, and I've taught how to annotate when they're reading. I've taught them critical thinking skills, and I've taught them writing skills. The biggest skill that I've seen that some of them not necessarily lack but it's underdeveloped is the critical thinking and reading skills.

I've taught 300 level classes, when you get higher up the better their critical thinking and their writing and their reading, but those beginning classes we really, I really try to focus on getting them to read critically and make connections with those readings and to think about how to make connections for themselves. For example, I had the English 095 101 combination read *To Be a Jew*. And I had them read it, and I was a little worried, cause it's very difficult language, and I have several ESL students, and they were talking about the experience that Jewish people have in their countries, and they made that connection. And students that are not ESL made the connection with them. They were talking about it and if they started critically thinking – I was really proud, like, "Wow, they even stayed past class time, they were still talking about it." They were making connections between the political environments throughout history with this essay. And that's what I strive to do in all my classes, not especially, I mean, 095, 101, 096, and in the humanities 101. I try to teach them to broaden their horizons, broaden their minds, because it's not just black and white. There's so many shades of gray there. You have to be able to think outside that box and look beyond just what you see. So that's what I've tried to do.

Karen said she encourages the development of critical thinking skills through the writing assignments in her class as well:

I really strive as a teacher is that what I'm putting together the readings one of the first essays they have to write is a definition essay, an extended definition. And I'm like, it's easy to say, this is what a family is, now look at the broader structure of what family is. And then it's not just mom and dad now, it's grandma and

grandkids, it's mom and mom, it's dad and dad. So family is sometimes who you make your family among your friends, so I try, what I...The extended definition is very, I use that essay to get them to really think beyond the basic definition. And I try to pair readings with that, they read *To Be a Jew*. It's with the reading *What is Poverty*. And I want them to, and this is for them to really think about that. Beyond just that word.

Laura explained the importance of critical thinking in relation not only to class objectives, but to the larger purpose of the class—the reason why the university includes CMM 103 in the general curriculum:

I want all the objectives, but what I really want is for when people leave this class or leave the university, and they're in a situation where they need to use their voice, being able to say something. You know, like, "Yes, I want that promotion. Yes, I'll do that presentation. I'm being mistreated. This is not fair. My child deserves a better education, school board, I'm going to get up and tell you why." So both professionally, we are a place that's supposed to generate professionals, but also personally. So that it feels like when they need to, when there's this kind of situation they can open their mouth and articulate what the problem is and what they think the solution should be. And the other stuff is just high-level stuff that I want them to know, how to do research. I want them to be able to cite for making an argument. Of course, I think you need to say it clearly and things like that. But if we don't even have that base level voice, where they don't even feel like they could speak up if the situation warrants then we don't have a good foundation for other stuff.

One way the instructors expected their students to be able to demonstrate their ability to think critically was in evaluating sources used for papers and presentations. Susan and Peggy both took their students to the library for workshops on evaluating the credibility of sources before they started working on research projects for the classes. Jun also directly teaches the evaluation of sources in CMM 103 and says that is a skill her students struggle with:

> The other thing that, I would say, they have trouble with is college level research and material. So they're expected to use higher level sources, not just websites or not just Wikipedia and things like that, and a lot of times I have students who will just go and pull five websites, and some of them won't even be the official organization website or... They have a lot of trouble with that, so we have to go... We usually have a library day, and we do mock research in class to show this is where a journal article is, this is what this is, this is how you go and get it. And then I even let them use two websites. They have to have at least five sources, so then they have to go and get at least two books or three journals or whatever, but only two of them can be websites, so they have to, they're forced to broaden their sources. So, yes, college level research is something they struggle with, organization and basic writing principles like thesis statement and how you sort your ideas into different topic areas.

How do the instructors formulate their ideas about what students need? The instructors identified soft skills and good student behaviors, critical thinking skills, language proficiency, and the ability to read and write critically as the needs their students have to be successful in college. They have largely similar assessments of their

students' needs. I followed up with questions about the processes by which instructors and administrators determined the skills needed to succeed in college. Jun, Peggy, and Karen said all decisions about the curriculum for the classes were made by administrators. While also following a somewhat standardized curriculum, Susan said she asked her students about their classes and drew from her own personal experience in determining what her students need:

We've talked a little bit in class about the math problems that they're having in their math classes, and those tend to be more listening skill problems. I'm not sure how the reading and writing will come into that until I get a little bit further into what they're doing in those classes as far as what we call "math reading problems." And I don't know how those are being handled in the class, so I'd really like to sit in on some of those classes.

She then went on to explain what she thinks her students will need in the other classes they are taking, based on her conversations with them about the classes they were taking that semester and looking at syllabi for the classes:

In the case of the social sciences and the business I think that the skills they need to learn are just pretty basic ones that they know in their own language, but they have to learn to apply them in English, and that's just, you know, the skimming and scanning to get major ideas and supporting points and being able to outline on a paper, so that they can see the organization and the major ideas in something that they're reading. They also will need to be able to synthesize information from different sources and come up with a meaningful piece of writing synthesizing those ideas. So I mean I'm not going to be doing a lot of that in my class, but we

certainly will be, as they listen and try to write their notes, using those same processes. And then to be able to communicate those ideas in writing. I think that this semester those are the things they need to focus on.

Susan said she would like to have opportunities to communicate with the faculty who teach other classes her students take, but she is relying mostly on her personal knowledge of college:

I think just knowing what it takes to be successful in a university program based on my own experiences, and I've just had three children go through and get university degrees. And watching to see how the changes in what professors expect of their students these days and what they did when I went through. And also from just years of knowing when international students come here that they don't always expect the type of assignments that our professors give. They're not expecting often to, and I'm going to use the word again, synthesize, because that takes such critical thinking and being able to analyze two pieces of information and bring them together. That's something I think a lot of our students don't know how to do even in their first languages. So it may be too hopeful to think that they'll get all of that in one semester, one three hour class or in their six hours of English classes in one semester, I don't know, but at least it will be a start, so that's where I came up with these things.

Natalie says, based on her conversations with students, she believes what is happening in the transitional classes is different than what is happening in the content classes, but she sees that as a good thing:

Assignment-wise I think it's totally different. Very different, because for us we focus on the structure, like, essay structures or reading. We also focus on the structures on how to find main idea, things like that, but for when they really in class, the content classes, I don't think any, the non-English professor would say, "Okay, where is the main idea?" But they were straight with the question, which is that the main idea. So our students, that is one of the things that we have to teach our students, how to link the structures to applied in their classes. How they apply the structures that they learn in our classes to the content classes. But I would say it's totally different. So the content classes might say, "Describe this, and then tell us your opinion." So what is that? And they'll go back to English classes and say, "Okay, when you describe that, that's your descriptive essay. So you should do this narrative essay, this is how you do it, blablablablabla. And then once this comes to an opinion, you express your opinion. It's argumentative essay."

Perhaps because their transitional program is better established, Metro had a more systematic approach to developing, implementing, and assessing their curriculum than State University did. Peggy said most of that curriculum development happens at the administrative level, though she does have opportunities to informally collaborate with faculty in General Education because the Developmental Education department is housed in the General Education program. Karen agreed opportunities for collaboration across disciplines and between instructors of different classes in the English sequence were there. Those interactions influence the curriculum at a program level:

We get together, the full time faculty, we meet, we discuss what essays we think

they should be writing that could help them in their . . . Cause, again, we have a

lot of nursing students, a lot of business students, we have a lot of technology

students. We try gear the writing in our English classes that could help them in

those areas. To know how to do the research. So we do meet, the full-time faculty

meet, we discuss what needs to be done, what guidelines we need to follow, we

agree on the textbook. It's really a department decision. And they have to write,

this time they have to write a cause and effect, a compare and contrast of

arguments and then there's one essay that we can choose, individual teacher can

choose whatever essay they want. And I chose the extended definition, but some

will choose their narrative, some will choose analysis, just depending. But we do

come together to the meeting and we decide what type of, what do they need to be

writing, like in English 102 they definitely have to have a research paper work.

We actually just talked about this last semester that we want to teach MLA

citation in 101 and APA citation in 102, so they know how to do both types of

citations, cause we have classes here that do both types of citations. One will do

MLA, one will do APA, so we need to prepare them for that. So that's some of

the things. When we do sit down and talk about it we decide... And we all think

about what the state guidelines is, what our general guidelines are.

Laura described the process of revising the curriculum for CMM 103 to better

reflect standards established by the National Communications Association:

And what I noticed last summer when we gave the assessment in July of the

speeches the year before, is that we weren't hitting a lot of the assessment criteria.

So we used the National Communication Association's good speaker guidebook, which has kind of a criteria that every good speech should use. And we were just kind of unsatisfactory in way too many of those categories. Some delivery things, the overall in terms of content and a lot in terms of form. We were just falling short. So I revised to the course in a major way. I revised all the assignments. I revised all the rubrics. I was very explicit about my expectations... I mean, you know, today the persuasive speeches, or even the informative speeches, you have to have five oral citations. They have to be on a civic-based topic. From the assessment that I watched there were many three or four minute speeches on, like, "cats are better than dogs." And I was very, "Well... No." That's not college level. Is that what we want? No. That's not my vision for a college course. And still, we're not really explicit about the parameter of topics, really explicit about the level of research that's expected, really explicit about citing sources orally and things like that, and the types of visuals that are appropriate.

Natalie says the State University Pathways program is new, and it takes time to build a curriculum. She would like to incorporate more input from content area faculty into the curriculum design process and have her faculty work more closely with content faculty:

So ideally, ideally, which I think it's hard to do it, because that would be a lot of teacher's time to do, but ideally, if it's possible, would be teachers in the first week or two work with the students and see what their major, so what their focus, what they need to do and then teachers customize in the framework, they shouldn't customize everything 100% based on the major, they should have some

core. Maybe 60 to 70% of the major assignment and then leave the room, 30 to

40% that associate with the students' majors. For example, I think that science

students and liberal arts students need to be exposed to different types of reading

and writing assignments. But that, like I said, it's ideally, but practically, how

much we can do with that, how much we can communicate with teachers and

students to get things done that way. So, use the curriculum that teachers were

given from coordinators, which is you, as the core, and then contact students'

professor to see what is the major assignment of the professor that student would

be doing. Even the future classes of the student in that major, but the classes that

they would be taking once they exit the pathway program, that might be the input

in there also in students' interests. Put them all together in the pot, stir it out,

magic.

Natalie acknowledges there would be challenges to achieving this level of

cooperation:

The current professors that our students taking class currently, how much they are

going to give us, how much communications they will respond back to us? And,

definitely, future professors, how much we can reach out to them? I don't think

that... It's not impossible, it's not like totally difficult, but it would time

consuming to contact them consistently, you know, and all that. Are our teachers

willing to do it? It's easy, for any teachers it's easy to focus everything in their

class alone, and I think that... Well, let's say some, so that's how some teachers

would be focused on their class alone, and as long as they teach the class, finish

the class, meet the goal, even the class that that would be, teacher's feel that it's

enough, it's sufficient. But so asking them to contact somebody else for their students, they may feel that it's beyond. And how would we convey to the teachers that it's necessary, it's part of the class – I think that's one of the challenges.

All of the instructors and program administrators, not just those working with the two transitional programs, believed they had a role in preparing their students for college. The instructor for ENGL 101/096 spoke of preparing her students for the kinds of writing they would need to do in their degree or certificate programs and for the writing assignments in ENGL 102. The instructor for CMM 103 spoke of preparing her students for the critical thinking, public speaking, and research skills they would need throughout college. The course coordinator for CMM 103 spoke of how the class should not only prepare students, but also to have the tools to speak up when they need to throughout their lives. The gateway class instructors' focus on preparing students indicates the purposes of the gateway and transitional classes, at least from the perspective of the instructors, may not be all that different.

The instructors were also consistent in their beliefs about what skills and qualities their students need to succeed, both in the specific class included in this study and in college in general. All of the interviewees emphasized the importance of affective skills like confidence and goal-setting as well as behaviors like attending class. All of the instructors also believed it is their responsibility to teach these skills and behaviors through their class. Another need mentioned by all the interviewees was the ability to think critically. Instructors of all four classes stated that helping their students develop those skills was a main goal of their class. Instructors mentioned specifically that students

should be able to evaluate sources for their credibility and discuss their ideas about reading assignments.

Overall, when speaking of their students' needs, the interviewees all seemed more focused on thinking skills than on basic reading or writing skills. The interviewees associated with the Pathways program did, however, emphasize the importance of students' continuing to build English proficiency. The ENGL 101/095 instructor at Metro, who also had some English Language Learners in her class, did not mention improved language proficiency as a need, though she did say the language learners worked at a slower pace and needed more support. None of the interviewees emphasized basic skills, like grammar. Peggy said she never taught grammar in her ENGL 101/096. Karen said she did include a short unit on grammar, but because she believed it helped her students communicate their ideas better in the writing assignments. There is a perception that the problem students in transitional programs have is mistakes in their writing or being unable to comprehend what they read. For the most part, the interviewees in this study seemed far more focused on the behaviors and thinking skills their students needed to be successful.

The curriculum at Metro was more cohesive, and the alignment between ENGL101 and the developmental classes was better defined and articulated. This is likely because the curriculum in place was the result of a several-years-long process of examination and revision of their developmental program. Claudia described at length how they had come to develop their program and the next steps they planned to take in its development. The program had been shaped by several initiatives beyond the institution, including a task force on improving developmental education in the state and a Bridging

the Gap grant the school had received. Both Peggy and Karen referred to these as forces that defined what was taught in the classes. Natalie was aware that there was a lot of work to be done in developing the curriculum for the Pathways Program.

None of the instructors had many opportunities to talk with instructors from other disciplines or departments about their classes. Natalie wished her instructors had those opportunities, yet also said it was difficult to accomplish as it required time and commitment from both the transitional faculty and the disciplinary faculty. There seemed to be more opportunities for interaction at Metro than at State. Administrators at Metro had collaborated across disciplines in building the developmental curriculum, and the faculty had some opportunity to interact with faculty from other disciplines that were housed within their division, like the Humanities faculty. But even at Metro, this collaboration was informal and limited. Instructors mentioned relying on what their students told them about their classes or on their own experiences as they made decisions about what to teach in their classes. Although they recognized the value of talking with faculty who teach gateway classes, they had few opportunities to actually do so.

Research Question Three: How effective is the proposed framework for understanding the literacy tasks in a class?

The tool that was originally designed for the study was not suitable to the task of understanding the kinds of reading and writing done in the classes. Perhaps its biggest shortcoming was that, although it captured some of what students were doing with literacy, it did not capture how students were asked to think as they completed the literacy tasks. After talking to the administrators and faculty involved in each class, it was clear that the information that would be captured by the tool was inadequate, and, in

some cases irrelevant. All the interviewees stressed the importance of teaching students to think critically, so the instrument was revised to add a verb from Blooms Revised Taxonomy of Verbs that was used in the assignment instructions. Blooms Taxonomy was chosen because that was the tool that the instructors referred to when discussing critical thinking. If the instructions for the assignment did not include a verb, a verb was chosen that seemed to best summarize what students were being asked to do. Although this system was a rudimentary means of assessing critical thinking, the inclusion of this information did lend insight into the kinds of thinking the reading and writing elicited from the students. Because two of the instructors also emphasized the importance of students making personal connections with the texts read in class, an assessment of the kinds of textual connections, if any, that were required by the assignment was also added.

The rubric was also revised to include a note about whether any source evaluation was done for the reading and writing assignments. This change was made because it was the example of critical thinking skills that the interviewees mentioned most often. They wanted their students to not only be able to read and write about texts, but also to be able to choose sources that were credible and establish the basis for their credibility.

The inclusion of disciplinary literacy in the original framework was helpful, but in application I found it needed to be expanded upon and better defined. Before a literacy task can be evaluated for its incorporation of disciplinary literacy, the expectations for how literacy is used in the discipline must be understood and articulated. This requires additional research—relevant research on the topic of disciplinary literacy, but also of how literacy is used in the disciplines of the specific classes that the students are taking. Because the pairs of classes in this study corresponded to each other in terms of

discipline (ENG 150 to CMM 103; ENGL 101/095 to ENGL 101), I was able to develop

an idea of how reading and writing are used in the disciplines of Communication Studies

and English Composition. It would improve the analysis tool to list and define what

specific literacy acts would define disciplinary literacy in a given class.

The task of defining what assignments or activities constituted a literacy task also

complicated the use of the framework. Many of the assignments included both reading

and writing components. Many of the tasks were steps in the process of completing a

larger assignment. For this study, the framework was applied primarily to formal

assignments, with only a few examples of how literacy was used in more unstructured,

ungraded activities in class. The tool would be improved by better defining what

constituted a literacy task and how broad a range of tasks to include in the analysis.

Should it include only major assignments? All graded assignments, major and minor? All

assignments and all class activities?

Despite these limitations, the process of analyzing how reading and writing are

used in a class was helpful and led to insights that might not have otherwise been clear. I

might initially think instructors are using disciplinary literacy in a class, then realize they

are not when I considered whether or not a given assignment is asking students to use

knowledge in a way that approximates how scholars in the discipline use it. Or I might

think they are teaching critical evaluation of sources, but realize that because the

instructor selected all the reading assignments their students used in the class, their

students had no opportunity to apply that skill.

Perhaps the best use of a framework like the one used in this study would be for

teachers and administrators to review existing alignment frameworks for information they

would like to know about the reading and writing in their classes, and then to talk to their instructors to revise the tool to meet the needs of the program. This framework could then be applied to the class to see what worked and what doesn't, then revised again until a tool is developed that meets the specific needs of that program and class.

Analyzing texts using more quantitative measures of text complexity is valuable and important, but the following example shows how it is necessary to include information on what students are asked to do with the text: in ENG 150, students were asked to read a text about the Rankine Cycle that has a Lexile score of 990L. In ENGL 101/095, students were asked to read the essay *What is Poverty?,* which has a Lexile score of 800L. But the assignment for the Rankine Cycle reading asked the students to recite the passage while emulating the accent of their teacher. There was no element of discussion or even comprehension of the text required for the assignment. The students could read the words without understanding any of them and still earn a good grade on the assignment. The *What is Poverty?* assignment asked students to discuss the essay, making connections to their own lives, then to use the essay as a pattern for their own extended definition essay about families. Despite working with text that had a lower level of text complexity, students were asked to do a far more complex task with the text in the *Poverty* assignment. This demonstrates the importance of looking at not only samples of text, but what is being done with the text, when considering curricular alignment.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS

This study was designed to provide insights into questions of how well the kinds of reading and writing done in two transitional classes aligned with the kinds of reading and writing done in two gateway classes. In addition, the instructors and administrators for the programs included in the study were interviewed about how they made sense of questions of alignment: what skills they believe their students needed to do well in the class as well as in college, and how the instructors and administrators arrived at those beliefs. Finally, the study included an instrument for categorizing the literacy tasks in a class. This instrument was evaluated for its usefulness.

All of the instructors included in this study believed their class had a role in preparing students for college. We often view the roles of transitional and gateway classes in terms of a dichotomy between instructors who expect to be preparing students for college (transitional instructors) and instructors who expect the students in their classes to already be prepared (gateway instructors). The instructors and administrators in this study did not display evidence of this. All of them not only spoke of taking steps to prepare their students for college, but were also remarkably similar in their assessment of what students needed to achieve that preparation. All of the instructors said their students needed to develop confidence as learners, though the form of that confidence depended on the discipline being taught: in communications class, it meant confidence in giving a speech. In English class, it meant confidence communicating ideas in writing or participating in a discussion about things they had read. Instructors were also in agreement that their students needed to develop the kinds of skills and behaviors that

characterize successful students, like setting and sticking to goals, managing time, and attending class.

The traditional conception of developmental classes is that they should provide instruction in the foundational skills students need, like sentence level writing skills, grammar, and command of the conventions of standardized English, before students can succeed in college classes. Only the staff working with the Pathways program emphasized the importance of those foundational skills, specifically improved English language proficiency, as part of what their students needed. All of the instructors focused on the habits of critical thinking they wanted their students to develop. The CMM 103 and ENGL 101 instructors wanted their students to be able to evaluate sources for their credibility and develop a convincing argument using support from sources. The instructors in the ENGL classes wanted students to be able to respond to things they read with connections from their own lives. Although other instructors did mention the need for students to develop foundational reading and writing skills, those skills were employed in service of a larger writing task.

Metro was clearly further along in its process of developing the curriculum for its developmental classes. They had external guidelines to measure their program against and had conducted extensive research into best-practices in developmental education. Although there was some collaboration with instructors in gateway classes regarding the kinds of literacy that students used, these relationships were not fully developed, especially with instructors outside of the General Education department where Developmental and English classes were housed. The administrator for the Pathway program spoke of her desire for more interaction between the instructors in the Pathway

Program and other faculty at the university regarding what their students needed to be successful in classes, but she said, realistically, that might not be possible.

The classes chosen at the two institutions served as samples of transitional and gateway classes at the two schools. The four classes provided examples of how reading and writing were used in transitional and gateway classes. These samples were analyzed according to the literacy analysis framework to look for alignment between the kinds of reading and writing done in transitional classes and the kinds of reading and writing done in gateway classes at the two schools. Probably because they use a paired-course model, the kinds of reading and writing done in ENGL 101/095 and ENGL 101/096 were so similar that in reviewing class assignments and class activities, one was indistinguishable from the other. Similarity in class objectives does not necessarily translate into similarity in instructional activities. Objectives are general, and instructors provide the specific class activities used to help students meet the objectives. This could potentially result in students in ENGL 101/095 being given less challenging work than students in the corresponding ENGL 101/096 class. But the instructor for ENGL 101/095 did not "dumb down" the kinds of reading and writing she assigned to her transitional students; rather, she provided support through whole class discussion and collaborative learning to help her students master the challenging content. Students in both classes were asked to do reading and writing that required high-level thinking. Because this study did not look at how successful students were in completing the assignments, we do not know if students in 101/095 were as successful as students in 101/096, but evidence from the class observations indicates they were equally engaged with discussing the content of the reading assignments. We do know that students in both classes were given the kinds of

challenging reading and writing tasks that help students to transition into the academic discourse community.

The kinds of reading and writing done in CMM 103 and ENG 150 were less well-aligned. Students in ENG 150 spent more time working on basic skills, like summarizing ideas, while students in CMM 103 were organizing information to make an argument and critically evaluating information. Students in both classes were expected to evaluate sources, though students in CMM 103 did this more often than students in ENG 150. It is perhaps not fair to make a comparison between CMM 103 and ENG 150 because the purpose of ENG 150 was broader than just teaching students college level communications skills; it was also to help students handle the listening and speaking done in their gateway classes. Several of the assignments in the class, the annotated bibliography and lesson presentation, were explicitly linked to this second purpose.

The framework used to evaluate the kinds of reading and writing done in the classes was useful, but only after it was revised to meet the needs of the programs in the study. The original framework omitted the things that were most important to the instructors. The framework, after revision, was useful in determining how literacy was used in the classes, which helped me dig deeper into alignment than just looking at the traits of the texts being read and written would have. Students may be reading a text with a high level of complexity, but only being required to summarize it, or, in the case of the pronunciation assignment in ENG 150, to read it back verbatim without thinking about it at all. Capturing what is being done with a text is an important aspect of understanding alignment. Using a tool like the framework that forces instructors to think about the kinds

of reading and writing they are assigning helps them determine how well they are meeting class objectives.

It is useful to know how well the texts, both those read and those written, in a transitional class align with the texts read and written in a gateway class. Understanding what students are being asked to do in those assignments is an important element of the alignment. Instructors do not often have opportunities to contemplate how they determine what students need to be successful in college. Developing a framework that seeks to objectively review the literacy tasks in a class, a tool that is tied to the desired outcomes of that specific class, can be a useful part of program evaluation and curriculum development.

Limitations

This study has the potential to help educators better understand how well the literacy demands of transitional classes align with the literacy demands in other classes, how instructors understand and try to achieve this alignment, and how alignment can be evaluated. All classes teaching developmental reading and writing share commonalities, whether their students are English language learners, adult basic education students, students who are not adequately prepared for college work, or students who have some sort of learning difficulty. But, because this study was done in only two programs, each targeting a specific population, at two schools which have recently implemented co-requisite models for transitional classes, it is likely the instruction in those classes does not reflect the kinds of instruction found in other models of developmental classes. Because of the limited scope of the study, the students in the two programs do not reflect the diversity of the students who enroll in transitional classes nationwide. The instrument

used to understand the literacy tasks in the classes was based on what the instructors and administrators in those programs said were the goals of their classes, which further ties this study to the specific context in which it was conducted. The scope of this study is limited, both in context and in population, so findings cannot be generalized to other programs. It does, however, provide a foundation for other studies that might explore questions of alignment more generally, specifically, the alignment of text use rather than text features and the connection between how instructors understand student needs and provide instruction to meet those needs.

Future Research

As colleges and universities seek to serve a wider segment of the population, they will need to continually evaluate and modify how they serve students who are identified as under-prepared for college-level work. Conducting studies of the curriculum in both gateway and transitional classes can be an important part of this process. In addition to examining features of the texts being used and generated, it is necessary to also examine how reading and writing are used in the classes. How to most effectively accomplish this is a topic deserving of further research. Research could also help guide individual programs in how to develop instruments to assess how their curriculum aligns with the purpose and objectives for the class and how those objectives align with other classes students will take. There have been several studies of how classes align in terms of text demands. This study extended that to include how text is being used in the classes to complete class assignments. A logical next step in the line of research would be to include what students do in response to the class assignments. For example, if asked to

write a thesis statement and find support for it from credible sources, how well are they able to do so?

This study only looked at the reading and writing tasks from two transitional and two gateway classes. This small sample was appropriate for a qualitative case study, but conducting a study that included samples of reading and writing tasks from numerous transitional and gateway classes within the same institution would provide a more general picture of alignment. Further studies could also examine the relationship between different configurations of alignment between classes (vertical versus horizontal) and the alignment of literacy tasks in those classes. For example, are the kinds of reading and writing done in paired classes, like ENGL 101/095, more likely to be aligned than the reading and writing done in classes that are part of accelerated transitional programs, like ENG 150?

There are no studies that have examined how the objectives for transitional classes align with the objectives for gateway classes (S. Armstrong, personal communication, September 12, 2016). Although this aspect of alignment fell outside this study's focus on how reading and writing were used in the classes, examining the alignment between class objectives has the potential to provide valuable insights into how to design effective, contextualized curriculum for transitional classes and to provide additional insights into this study's research questions. Examining how the objectives translate into instruction in the four classes would strengthen our understanding of alignment in the classes. Two classes could have objectives that are closely aligned in theory, but the instruction provided to meet the objectives could result in a low degree of

alignment in reality. A study of how the class objectives are aligned would add to our understanding of the complexity of alignment between the classes.

Teacher beliefs about what their students need to learn are likely to influence the kinds of instruction they offer in a class. Understanding how instructors make sense of what their students need to be prepared for college is another area in need of further research. Possible topics to explore include how much understanding transitional instructors have of the kinds of reading and writing students do in gateway classes and what opportunities they have to collaborate with gateway instructors in developing class curriculum and assignments. Because more linguistically diverse students are enrolling in post-secondary institutions, how teacher beliefs about language, especially non-standard Englishes, affect instruction and the process of helping students construct their identity within academia is an area that needs additional research.

REFERENCES

ACT. (2012). *National Curriculum Survey: Policy implications on preparing for higher standards*. Iowa City, IA: Author.

ACT. (2013). *Readiness Matters: The impact of college readiness on college persistence and degree completion.* Policy Report. Iowa City, IA: Author.

Adelman, C. (1996, October 4). The truth about remedial work: It's more complex than windy rhetoric and simple solutions suggest. *Chronicle of Higher Education,* A56.

Alvarez, M.C. & Risko, V.J. (2008). Motivation and study strategies. In R.F. Flippo, R. & D.C. Caverly (Eds.), *Handbook of college reading and study strategy research* (pp. 199-119). New York, NY: Routledge.

Alexander, P.A. (2006). The path to competence: A lifespan developmental perspective on reading. In S.L. Armstrong, N.A. Stahl, & H.R. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: Historical, theoretical, and practical background readings* (pp. 60-80). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's Professional Resources.

Anderson, L.W. (2002). Curricular alignment: A re-examination. *Theory into Practice*, *41*(4), 255-260.

Armstrong, S.L. & Newman, M. (2011). Teaching textual conversations: Intertextuality in the college reading classroom. *Journal of College Reading and Learning, 41*(2), 6-21.

Armstrong, S.L., Stahl, N., & Kantner, M.J. (2015). Investigating academic literacy expectations: A curriculum audit model. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 38(2), 2-23.

Attewell, P., Lavin, D., Domina, T., & Levey, T. (2006). New evidence on college remediation. *Journal of Higher Education, 77*(5), 886-924.

Bacha, N. (2012). Disciplinary writing in an EFL context from teachers' and students' perspectives. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 3*(2), 233-256.

Bahr, P.R. (2010). Revisiting the efficacy of postsecondary remediation: The moderating effects of depth/breadth of deficiency. *Review of Higher Education, 33*(2), 177-205.

Baker, L. (1985). Differences in the standards used by college students to evaluate their comprehension of expository prose. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *20*(3), 297-313. DOI: 10.2307/748020.

Baldwin, R.G. & Wawrzynski, M.R. (2011). Contingent faculty as teachers: What we know: What we need to know. *American Behavioral Scientist, 55*(11), 1485-1509.

Bartholomae, D. (1985). Inventing the university. In E. Cushman, E.R Kintgen, B.M. Kroll, & M. Rose (Eds.), *Literacy: A critical sourcebook*, (pp. 511-524). Boston: Bedford/St, Martin's.

Barton, D. (2007). *Literacy: An introduction to the ecology of written language*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Bohr, L.A. (1994). *Toward a model of freshman literacy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago.

Bohr, L.A. (2003). College and precollege reading instruction: What are the real differences? In N.A. Stahl, H. & Boylan (Eds.) *Teaching developmental reading: historical, theoretical, and practical background readings* (pp. 60-71). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Boylan, H.B., Bliss, L.B., & Bonham, B.S. (1997). Program components and their relationship to student success. *Journal of Developmental Education, 20*(3), 2-9.

Boylan, H. (1999). Exploring alternatives to remediation. *Journal of Developmental Education, 22*(3).

Boylan, H.R. (2003). Developmental education: What's it about? In N.A. Stahl, & H. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: historical, theoretical, and practical background readings*, (pp. 1-10). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Boylan, H.R. & Bonham, B.S. (2014). Developmental education and the present. In H.R. Boylan, & B.S. Bonham (Eds.), *Developmental education: Readings on its past, present, and future (*pp. 59-63). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's Professional Resources.

Boylan, H.R. & Bonham, B.S. (2014). Innovative practices in developmental education. In H.R. Boylan, & B.S. Bonham (Eds.), *Developmental education: Readings on its past, present, and future (*pp. 251-255). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's Professional Resources.

Braxton, J. (2006). *Faculty professional choices in teaching that foster student success*. National Postsecondary Education Cooperative. Retrieved from: https://nces.ed.gov/npec/pdf/Braxton_Report.pdf

Bray, G.B., Pascarella, E.T., & Pierson, C.T. (2004). Postsecondary education and some dimensions of literacy development: An exploration of longitudinal evidence. *Reading Research Quarterly, 39*(3), 306-333.

Burchard, M., & Swerdzewski, P. (2009). Learning effectiveness of a strategic learning course. *Journal of College Reading and Learning, 40* (1), 14-34.

Burrell, K. I., Tao, L., Simpson, M. L., & Mendez-Berrueta, H. (1997). How do we know
 what we are preparing our students for? A reality check of one university's academic
 literacy demands. *Research and Teaching in Developmental Education 13*(2), 55-70.

Callahan, M.K. & Chumney, D. (2009). "Write like college": How remedial writing
 classes at a community college and a research university position "at-risk" students in
 the field of higher education. *Teacher's College Record, 111*(7), 1619-1664

Carroll, L. (2002). *Rehearsing new roles: How college students develop as writers.*
 Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Caverly, D.C., Nicholson, S.A., & Radcliffe, R. (2004). The effectiveness of strategic
 reading instruction for college developmental readers. *Journal of College Reading
 and Learning, 35*(1), 25-49.

Caverly, D.C., Paulson, E.J., & Reardon, R.F. (2011). *Access to higher education: A
 study of the effectiveness of post-secondary developmental literacy instruction.* Paper
 presented at the Sixty-First Annual Meeting of the Literacy Research Association,
 Jacksonville, FL. Retrieved from:
 http://ftp://download:download@conflibs.literacyresearchassociation.org/61st_Annua
 l_Mtg

Chamblee. C. M. (2003). Bringing life to reading and writing for at-risk college students
 In N.A. Stahl, & H. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: Historical,
 theoretical, and practical background readings*,(pp. 369-377). Boston, MA:
 Bedford/St. Martin's.

Charlton, J. (2010). Seeing is believing: Writing studies with 'Basic Writing' students. In

    S.N. Bernstein (Ed.), *Teaching developmental writing: Background readings* (*4th ed.,*

    pp.102-112). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Chase, N. D., Gibson, S. U., & Carson, J. G. (1993). Preparing students for college:

    Making the transition. *Georgia Journal of Reading, 19*(1), 4-10.

Clark, A. D. (2013). Voices in the Appalachian classroom. In In A. D. Clark & N.W.

    Hayward (Eds.) *Talking Appalachian: Voice, Identity, and Community.* (pp. 110-

    124). Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press.

Cline, T. A. (1972-73). Readability of community college textbooks and the reading

    ability of the students who use them. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 5*(2), 110-118.

Collier, P.J., & Morgan D.L. (2008). "The that paper really due today": Differences in

    first-generation and traditional college students' understandings of faculty

    expectations. *Higher Education, 55*(4*)*, 425-446.

Complete College America. (2012). Remediation: Higher education's bridge to nowhere.

    Report of Complete College America. Retrieved from:

    https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/CCA%20Remediation

    %20ES%20FINAL.pdf

Cox, S.R., Friesner, D.L., & Khayum, M. (2003). Do reading skills courses help

    underprepared readers achieve academic success in college? *Journal of College*

    Reading and Learning, 33(3), 171-196*.*

Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods*

    approaches (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

De Kleine, C & Lawton, R. (2015). *Meeting the needs of linguistically diverse students at the college level*: *Executive summary and paper commissioned by the College Reading and Learning Association.*

Doyle, W. R. (2010). *Open-access colleges responsible for greatest gains in graduation rates*. Policy Alert: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

Eckert, L.S. (2008). Bridging the pedagogical gap: Intersections between literacy and reading theories in secondary and postsecondary literacy instruction. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 52*(2), 110-118.

Edgecomb, N. (2011). Accelerating the academic achievement of students referred to developmental education. In H.R. Boylan, & B.S. Bonham (Eds.), *Developmental education: Readings on its past, present, and future* (pp. 256-264). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's Professional Resources.

Edmonds, M.S., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J., Reutebuch, C., Cable, A., Tackett, K.K., & Schnakenberg, J.W. (2009). A synthesis of reading interventions and effects on reading comprehension outcomes for older struggling readers. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(1), 262-300.

Eves-Bowden, A. (2001). What basic writers think about writing. *Journal of Basic Writing, 20*(2), 71-87.

Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2015). Selecting texts and tasks for content area reading and learning. *The Reading Teacher, 68*(7), 524-529.

Flippo, R.F. &, Caverly, D.C. (2008). Preface. In R.F. Flippo, & D.C. Caverly (Eds.), *Handbook of college reading and study strategy research* (pp. xi-xvi). New York, NY: Routledge.

Frazier, D. (1993). Transfer of college developmental reading students' textmarking strategies. *Journal of Literacy Research, 25*(1), 17-41.

Gee, J.P. (2000). Discourse and sociocultural studies in reading. In M.L. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, P.D. Pearson, & R. Barr, (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (vol. 3, pp. 195-207). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Gee, J.P. (2001). Reading as situated language: A sociocultural perspective. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 44* (8), 714-725.

Gee, J.P. (2003). Opportunity to learn: a language-based perspective on assessment. *Assessment in Education, 10*(1), 27-45.

Gibson, G. (2012). I ain't reading that book: Making room for resistance in the postsecondary literacy classroom. *Journal of College Literacy and Learning, 38*, 32-37.

Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. (2012). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New Brunswick, NJ: AldineTransaction.

Goudas, A.M., & Boylan, H.R. (2012). Addressing flawed research in developmental education. *Journal of Developmental Education, 36*(1), 2-12.

Gourgey, A.F. (2003). Teaching reading from a metacognitive perspective: Theory and classroom experiences. In N.A. Stahl, & H. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: Historical, theoretical, and practical background readings* (pp. 126-134). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Grubb, W. N. (2001). *From black box to Pandora's box: Evaluating remedial/developmental education*. ERIC Clearinghouse. Retrieved from:

http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/black-box-evaluating-remedial-education.pdf

Harklau, L. (2001). From high school to college: Student perspectives on literacy practices. *Journal of Literacy Research, 33*(1), 33-70. doi: 10.1080/10862960109548102

Haswell, R. (2008). *Teaching of writing in higher education*. In C. Bazerman (Ed.), Handbook of research on writing (pp. 331-346). New York: Routledge.

Hattie, J., Biggs, J., & Purdie, N. (1996). Effects of learning skills interventions on student learning: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 66*(2), 99-136.

Henrichs, M. (2003). Characteristics of highly proficient college freshmen readers. In E.J. Paulson, M.E. Laine, S.A. Biggs, & T.L. Bullock (Eds.), *College reading research and Practice: Articles from the Journal of College Literacy and Learning* (pp. 75-87). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Hilton, J.L., Wilcox, B., Morrison, T.G., & Wiley, D.A. (2010). Effects of various methods of assigning and evaluating required reading in one general education course. *Journal of College Reading and Learning, 41*(1), 7-28.

Hock, M. F., & Mellard, D. F. (2011). Efficacy of learning strategies instruction in adult education. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, *4*(2), 134-153.

Hodara, M., Jaggars, S. S., & Karp, M. M. (2012). *Improving developmental education assessment and placement: Lessons from community colleges across the country* (CCRC Working Paper No. 51). New York, NY: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.

Hogue-Smith, C. (2010)."Diving in deeper": Bringing basic writer's thinking *to the*

 surface. Journal of Adult and Adolescent Literacy, 53(8), (668-676).

Holschuh, J.P. & Aultman, L.P. (2008). Comprehension development. In R.F. Flippo, &

 D.C. Caverly (Eds.), *Handbook of college reading and study strategy research* (pp.

 121-144). New York, NY: Routledge.

House, S. (2013). In my own country. In A. D. Clark & N.W. Hayward (Eds.) *Talking*

 Appalachian: Voice, Identity, and Community. (pp. 193-204). Lexington, KY:

 University of Kentucky Press.

Jolliffe, D.A. & Harl, A. (2008). Texts of our institutional lives: Studying the "reading

 transition" from high school to college: What are our students reading and why? In

 S.N. Bernstein (Ed.), *Teaching developmental writing: Background readings* (4th ed.,

 pp. 126-145). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Jones, P. (1997). Dialect as a deterrent to cultural stripping: Why Appalachian migrants

 continue to talk that talk. *Journal of Appalachian Studies, 3*(2), 253-261.

Kamhi-Stein, L.D. (2003). Profiles of underprepared second-language readers. In N.A.

 Stahl, & H. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: historical, theoretical,*

 and practical background readings, (pp. 217-232), Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Kapp, R., & Bangeni, B. (2011). A longitudinal study of students' negotiation of

 language, literacy and identity. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language*

 Studies, 29(2), 197-208. doi:10.2989/16073614.2011.633366

Karp, M.M. & Bork, R.H. (2012). "They never told me what to expect, so I didn't know

 what to do": Defining and clarifying the role of the community college student.

 Community College Research Center. Retrieved from:

http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/defining-clarifying-role-college-student.pdf

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006, July). What matters to student success: A review of the literature. *Commissioned Report for the National Symposium on Postsecondary Student Success: Spearheading a Dialog on Student Success*. Retrieved from: https://nces.ed.gov/npec/pdf/Kuh_Team_ExecSumm.pdf

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., & Whitt, E. J. (2005). Never let it rest: Lessons about student success from high-performing colleges and universities. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 37*(4), 44.

Lam, B. H., & Tsui, K. T. (2014). Curriculum mapping as deliberation – examining the alignment of subject learning outcomes and course curricula. *Studies in Higher Education*, *41*(8), 1371-1388.

Lee, C. D. & Spratley, A. (2010). Reading in the disciplines: The challenges of adolescent literacy. New York: NY: Carnegie Corporation.

Lesley, M. (2003). Exploring the links between critical literacy and developmental reading. In N.A. Stahl, & H. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: historical, theoretical, and practical background readings* (pp. 72-85). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Luke, A. (2000). Critical literacy in Australia: A matter of context and standpoint. *Journal of adolescent & Adult Literacy, 43*(5), 448-461.

Lumina Foundation. (2013). *A stronger nation through higher education*. Lumina Foundation.

195

Martone, A., & Sireci, S. G. (2009). Evaluating Alignment Between Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction. *Review of Educational Research*, *79*(4), 1332-1361. doi: 10.3102/0034654309341375

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (vol. 41). Sage publications.

McCusker, M. (1999). ERIC Review: Effective elements of developmental reading and writing programs. *Community College Review, 27*(2), 93-105.

Mealey, D.L. (2003). Understanding the motivation problems of at-risk college students. In N.A. Stahl, & H. Boylan (Eds.), *Teaching developmental reading: Historical, theoretical, and practical background readings* (pp. 208-215). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Merisotis, J.P., & Phipps, R.A. (2000). Remedial education in colleges and universities: What's really going on? In H.R. Boylan, & B.S. Bonham (Eds.), *Developmental education: Readings on its past, present, and future* (pp. 63-80) Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's Professional Resources. Boston.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Moje, E.B. (2008). Foregrounding the disciplines in secondary literacy teaching and learning: A call for change. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 52(2), 96-107. DOI: 10.1598/JAAL.52.2.1

National Center on Education and the Economy. (2013). *What does it really mean to be*

college and work ready? A study of the English literacy and mathematics required for success in the first year of community college. Washington DC: Author.

National Commission on Writing. (2003). *The neglected "r": The need for a writing revolution*. New York: College Entrance Exam Board. Retrieved from: http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/writingcom/neglectedr.pdf

New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies. *Harvard Educational Review, 66*(1) 60-92

Orlando, V.P., Caverly, D., Swetnam, L.A., & Flippo, R. (2003). Text demands in college classes: An investigation. In E.J. Paulson, M.E. Laine, S.A. Biggs, & T.L. Bullock (Eds.), *College reading research and practice: Articles from the Journal of College Literacy and Learning* (pp. 118-125). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Pascarella, E.T., Salisbury, M.H., & Blaich, C. (2011). Exposure to effective instruction and college student persistence: A multi-institutional replication and extension. *Journal of College Student Development, 52*(1), 4-19.

Paulson, E. (2002). From Kant to Rosenblatt to the college reading class: Theoretical roots of transaction. *Journal of College Reading and Learning, 31,* 1-12.

Paulson, E. J. (2006). Self-selected reading for enjoyment as a college developmental reading approach. *Journal of College Reading and Learning, 36*(2), 51-58.

Paulson, E.J. & Armstrong, S.L. (2010). Postsecondary literacy: Coherence in theory, terminology, and teacher preparation. *Journal of Developmental Education, 33*(3), 2-12.

Paulson, E. & Armstrong, S. (2011). Mountains and pitbulls: Students metaphors for

college transitional reading and writing. *Journal of Adult and Adolescent Literacy, 54*(7), 494-503. **DOI:** 10.1598/JAAL.54.7.3

Pawan, F., & Honeyford, M.A. (2008). Academic literacy. In R.F. Flippo, & D.C. Caverly (Eds.), *Handbook of college reading and study strategy research* (pp. 26-46). New York: Routledge

Perin, D. (2011). Facilitating student learning through contextualization a review of evidence. *Community College Review*, *39*(3), 268-295. doi: 10.1177/0091552111416227

Perin, D. (2013). Best practices in teaching writing for college and career readiness. In. S. Graham, C.A. MacArthur, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Best Practices in Writing Instruction.* New York: Guilford Press.

Perin, D., Bork, R., Peverly, S., Mason, L., & Vaselewski, M. (2011). *A contextualized intervention for community college developmental reading and writing students.* Community College Research Center. Retrieved from: http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/contextualized-intervention-developmental-students.pdf

Porter, A. C., & Smithson, J. L. (2001). Defining, developing, and using curriculum indicators. *Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania, Consortium for Policy Research in Education*.

Powers, S. W. (2002). Real ways of talking and school talking: One Appalachian student's perceptions of teacher discourse during writing conferences. *Reading Horizons, 43*(2), 85-102.

Purcell-Gates, V. (1995). *Other people's words: The cycle of low literacy*. Cambridge,

MA: Harvard University Press.

Razfar, A., & Rumenapp, J. C. (2012). Language ideologies in English learner classrooms: Critical reflections and the role of explicit awareness. *Language Awareness, 21*(4), 347-368. doi:10.1080/09658416.2011.616591

Razfar, A. & Simon, J. (2011). Course-taking patterns of Latino ESL students: Mobility and mainstreaming in urban community colleges in the United States. *TESOL Quarterly, 45*(4), 595-627. doi:10.5054/tq.2011.268060

Roach, A. T., Niebling, B. C., & Kurz, A. (2008). Evaluating the alignment among curriculum, instruction, and assessments: Implications and applications for research and practice. *Psychology in the Schools*, *45*(2), 158-176.

Sanchez, D.M. & Paulson, E.L. (2013). Intersected literacies: Reading, writing, and critical thinking. In S.N. Bernstein (Ed.), *Teaching developmental writing: Background readings* (4th ed., pp. 113-126.) Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Scribner, S., & Cole, M. (1978). Literacy without schooling: Testing for intellectual effects. *Harvard Educational Review*, *48*(4), 448-461.

Shanahan, T., & Shanahan, C. (2008). Teaching disciplinary literacy to adolescents: Rethinking content area literacy. *Harvard Educational Review, 78(1),* 40-59.

Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Ziskin, M., Yuan, X., & Harrell, A. (2013). *Completing College: A National View of Student Attainment Rates-Fall 2007 Cohort* (Signature Report No. 6). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

Simpson, M. L. (1996). Conducting reality checks to improve students' strategic learning. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 40*(2), 102-109.

Simpson, M., & Rush, L. (2003). College students' beliefs, strategy employment, transfer, and academic performance: An examination across three academic disciplines. *Journal of College Reading and Learning, 33*(2), 146-156. doi:10.1080/10790195.2003.10850145.

Sohn, K. (2013). Silence, voice, and identity among Appalachian college women. In A. D. Clark & N.W. Hayward (Eds.) *Talking Appalachian: Voice, Identity, and Community.* (pp. 125-140). Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press.

Squires, D. A. (2009). *Curriculum alignment: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Street, B. (2012). Society reschooling. *Reading Research Quarterly, 47*(2), 216-227. DOI: 10.1002/RRQ.017.

Tinto, V. (2012). *Completing college: Rethinking institutional action*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Unsworth, L. (2002). Changing dimensions of school literacies. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy, 25*(1), 62-77.

Unsworth, L. (2008). Multimodal semiotic analyses and education. In L. Unsworth (Ed.), *Multimodel Semiotics: Functional analysis in contexts of education* (pp. 1-14). Great Britain: Continuum International Publishing.

Weissman, J., Bulakowski, C., & Jumisko, M. K. (1997). Using research to evaluate developmental education programs and policies. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, *1997*(100), 73-80.

Weissman, J., Silk, E., & Bulakowski, E. (1997). Assessing developmental education policies. *Research in Higher Education, 38*(2), 187-200.

Williamson, G.L. (2008). A text readability continuum for postsecondary readiness. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, *19*(4), 602-632.

Yin, R.K. (2009). Case study research: Design and methods (4th ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zachry-Rutschow, E., & Schneider, E. (2012). Unlocking the gate: What we know about improving developmental education. *MDRC Paper*. Retrieved from: http://www.mdrc.org/publication/unlocking-gate

Zhu, W. (2004). Faculty views on the importance of writing, the nature of academic writing, and teaching and responding to writing in the disciplines. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*, 29-48. DOI: 10.1016/j.jslw.2004.04.004.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Course Objectives

ENG 150 Course Objectives

Student learning outcomes	How students will practice each outcome in this course	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this course
Students will produce notes for content class lectures (or other verbal instructions in content classes) that are useful for completing class assignments and studying for tests	In-class note-taking activities	Three sets of notes from content classes
Students will identify and apply strategies for preparing for academic listening tasks, overcoming challenges in academic listening, and taking effective and useful notes	In-class note-taking activities	Three sets of notes on content class lectures
Students will analyze a lecture for its underlying structure, main ideas, and key words	In-class note-taking activities	Three sets of notes on content class lectures
Students will identify challenges to listening and classroom participation in their content classes and employ strategies for coping with those challenges	Reflection assignments on speaking and listening; in-class assignments	Three sets of notes on content class lectures; reflection assignments
Students will use appropriate language, pragmatics, and behavior when participating in classroom discussions (whole class and small group)	In-class activities	In-class activities
Students will produce a speech on an academic topic, using citation of sources, visual aids, and effective communication techniques	Preparation for the authentic and content class lesson assignments	Authentic presentation and content area lesson
Students will interact formally and informally with classmates, college staff, and professors, both inside and outside of the INTO program	In-class activities, Conversation partners, University event attendance	Conversation partners/Meeting with faculty/University events/Authentic presentation
Students will locate and use appropriate sources for inclusion in an academic presentation	Library visit and research	Annotated bibliography
Students will explain the definition of plagiarism according to U.S. expectations of academic honesty and employ methods to avoid plagiarism in their classwork	In-class discussion and activities	Annotated bibliography, Lesson on Content Class, Authentic Presentation

CMM 103 Course Objectives

Students will be able to recognize communication as a transactional process by:

- Determining audience orientation toward the topic

- Identifying supporting material most relevant to the audience

- Recognizing and adjusting to nonverbal audience feedback

Students will learn to demonstrate critical thinking in the production and evaluation of

communication events by:

- Differentiating between various types of evidence

- Extrapolating valid claims from evidence

- Identifying and producing factual, value, and policy claims

Students will produce organized information and persuasive presentations by:

- Demonstrating the ability to capture audience attention

- Stating the thesis and previewing their oral remarks

- Using transitions and signposts to emphasize speech structure

- Concluding their remarks with a summary of the main points

Students will develop effective extemporaneous speaking skills by:

- Maintaining eye contact with the audience while speaking

- Using gestures which complement the verbal message

- Speaking with varied vocal cues

- Identifying the types of reasoning that link evidence to claims

- Identifying the limitations of evidence

Appendix A (continud)

Prroducing valid claims

ENGL 096 Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- Use pre-reading techniques to facilitate understanding of texts;

- Apply active and critical reading strategies to unlock the meaning from texts;

- Identify different patterns of organization in reading to facilitate factual textual understanding;

- Apply various rhetorical modes in composing essays;

- Format documents correctly in MLA style.

- Identify and discuss abstract concepts found in readings;

- Form and explain legitimate inferences from specific data;

- Synthesize ideas and information to develop a personal viewpoint on a topic;

- Organize ideas clearly and effectively in writing using essay format;

- Formulate a controlling idea (thesis) to focus writing;

- Support each point with adequate and varied evidence;

- Tailor writing to address a specific audience;

- Incorporate elements of style, including tone, sentence variety, and diction;

- Detect and correct major mechanical and grammatical errors.

- Research to locate appropriate academic sources;

- Evaluate sources/evidence for reliability and relevance;

- Cite researched sources in MLA style using both in-text citations and a reference page;

BVCTC General Education Outcomes: (Bolded outcomes apply to this course.)

Upon graduating from BVCTC, the student will be able to

- **Communicate effectively by listening, speaking, and writing using appropriate technology.**

- Use quantitative and scientific knowledge effectively to solve problems, manipulate and interpret data, and communicate findings.

- Demonstrate interpersonal skills and ethical behavior appropriate for living and working in a diverse society.

- Apply critical thinking skills to analyze problems and make informed decisions.

ENGL 101 Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- Use pre-reading techniques to facilitate understanding of texts;

- Apply active and critical reading strategies to unlock the meaning from texts;

- Identify different patterns of organization in reading to facilitate factual textual understanding;

- Apply various rhetorical modes in composing essays;

- Format documents correctly in MLA style.

- Identify and discuss abstract concepts found in readings;

- Form and explain legitimate inferences from specific data;

- Synthesize ideas and information to develop a personal viewpoint on a topic;

- Organize ideas clearly and effectively in writing using essay format;

- Formulate a controlling idea (thesis) to focus writing;

APPENDIX A (continued)

- Support each point with adequate and varied evidence;

- Tailor writing to address a specific audience;

- Incorporate elements of style, including tone, sentence variety, and diction;

- Detect and correct major mechanical and grammatical errors.

- Research to locate appropriate academic sources;

- Evaluate sources/evidence for reliability and relevance;

- Cite researched sources in MLA style using both in-text citations and a reference page;

BVCTC General Education Outcomes: (Bolded outcomes apply to this course.)

Upon graduating from BVCTC, the student will be able to

- **Communicate effectively by listening, speaking, and writing using appropriate technology.**

- Use quantitative and scientific knowledge effectively to solve problems, manipulate and interpret data, and communicate findings.

- Demonstrate interpersonal skills and ethical behavior appropriate for living and working in a diverse society.

- Apply critical thinking skills to analyze problems and make informed decisions.

English 095 Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

1. Use pre-reading techniques to facilitate understanding of texts, including

    - Access background knowledge in the subject area

    - Establish own purpose for reading the material

    - Assess the difficultly of the text, including vocabulary, sentence structure, and concepts and make a plan for approaching it

    - Establish outcomes for reading material prior to reading, for instance, forming appropriate questions and using structural cues about how the textbook or essay is organized

2. Take charge of reading, applying strategies to unlock the meaning from texts, including

    - Identifying passages that are causing difficulty to comprehension

    - Developing strategies to work through difficult passages

    - Identifying and correcting reading miscues

    - Understanding such text features as structure, transitions, captions, graphs, charts

    - Using context clues and word parts to identify the meanings of unfamiliar words

3. Read actively and critically, and effectively use textual annotation

4. Identify different patterns of organization, using pattern effectively to prepare study guides or take notes, whether in outline form or a graphic organizer

5. Distinguish fact from opinion

6. Identify and discuss abstract concepts found in readings

7. Form and explain legitimate inferences from specific data

8. Synthesize ideas and information to develop a personal viewpoint on a topic

9. Organize ideas clearly and effectively in writing

10. Formulate a controlling idea to focus writing

11. Support each point with adequate and varied evidence

12. Research to locate appropriate academic sources

13. Evaluate sources/evidence for reliability and relevance

14. Cite researched sources correctly using both in-text citations and a reference page

15. Formal documents correctly in MLA style

16. Tailor writing to address a specific audience

17. Develop varied sentences to relate and emphasize ideas

18. Detect and correct major mechanical and grammatical errors

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol for Administrators and Faculty in Transitional Programs

1) What do you believe your students most need to know to succeed in their university classes?

2) What kinds of reading and writing do students do in your class? How do you choose these assignments?

3) How do you figure out what your students need to know to succeed in their university classes?

4) How much feedback or input do you have from the faculty who teach the classes your students take?

5) Do you ever have the opportunity to visit the classes your students take?

6) What kinds of assignments will your students have in their for-credit classes?

7) Do you ever have the opportunity to look at the textbooks your students will use in their for-credit classes?

8) How are your classes similar to the for-credit classes your students will take?

9) How are they different from the for-credit classes your students will take?

10) What steps do you take to be sure what you teach is the kinds of skills your students will need?

Interview Protocol for Faculty Teaching Gateway Classes

1) What kinds of reading and writing do students do in your class?

2) What characterizes a well-written paper in your class?

3) What are the challenges your students face with the reading and writing in your class?

4) How well-prepared are your students for the reading and writing in your class?

5) What do you believe students need to learn to do if they are to be prepared to succeed in your class?

Completed Literacy Frameworks

ENG 150						
Reading Assignment	Math Vocabulary	Evaluating Statistics	Pronunciation Practice	Presenting a Lesson	Podcast Presentation	Annotated Bibliography
Complexity	NA	NA	240L/990L	NA	NA	NA
Use						
a) Support of class content				Of disciplinary class		Of disciplinary class
b) Discussed in class						
c) Basis of writing task				Notes for lesson		
d) Basis of other assignment	Math vocabulary quiz	Note-taking and summarizing	Recording of reading the script	Lesson presentation	Summary, Presentation	
e) Unclear						
Type						
a) Textbook				X		
b) Power Point/Study Guide for class notes	X	X		X		
c) Periodical/News					X	
d) Fiction						
e) Reference						
f) Disciplinary				Possibly		Possibly
g) Other			ESL Pronunciation Book			Web Videos
Connection: (TT, TS, TW)	None	None	None	Text to Text	None	Text to Text

Who selects text?						
a) Student				X		X
b) Instructor	X	X	X		X	
Critical Thinking	Remembering (Write/Memorize)	Understanding (Summarize)	Remembering (Recite)	Understanding (Explain)	Understanding (Summarize)	Understanding (Summarize)
Source Evaluation	N	N	N	Y	N	Y

ENG 150					
Writing Assignment	Lesson Presentation	Conversation Partner	Podcast Presentation	Annotated Bibliography	Evaluating Statistics
Critical Thinking	Understanding (Explain)	Understanding /Analyzing	Understanding (Summarize)	Understanding (Summarize)	Understanding (Summarize)
Use					
a) Respond to class content	X				
b) Communicate personal experience		X			
c) Response to reading assignments					
d) Summarize the ideas of others	X		X	X	X
e) Respond to the ideas of others					
f) Generate original ideas					
g) Make connections between texts	X				

h) Other					
Source Evaluation	Yes	NA	No	Yes	NA
Writing in the disciplines? Y/N	Maybe	No	No	No	No

CMM 103						
Reading Assignment	Informative Outline	Persuasive Outline				
Complexity	NA	NA				
Use						
a) Support of class content						
b) Discussed in class						
c) Basis of writing task	X (Sources)	X (Sources)				
d) Basis of other assignment						
e) Unclear						
Type						
a) Textbook						

b) Power Point/Study Guide for class notes						
c) Periodical/News	X	X				
d) Fiction						
e) Reference	X	X				
f) Disciplinary	Yes	Yes				
g) Other	Websites	Websites				
Connection (TT/TS/TW)	TT/TW/TS	TT/TW/TS				
Who selects text?						
a) Student	X	X				
b) Instructor						
Critical Thinking	Understanding (Restate)	Understanding (Restate)				
Source Evaluation	Yes	Yes				

CMM 103							
Writing Assignment	Intro Outline	Intro Critique	Info/Pers. Audience Analysis	Info/Pers. Proposal	Info/Pers. Outline	Info/Pers. Peer Eval	Info/Pers. Critique
Critical Thinking	Remember (Tell)	Evaluate (Assess)	Analyze (Examine)	Understanding (Explain)	Understanding (Explain)	Evaluate (Assess)	Evaluate (Assess)
Use							
a) Respond to class content						X	X
b) Communicate personal experience	X	X			X		X

Response to reading assignments							
c) Summarize the ideas of others			X	X	X	X	
d) Respond to the ideas of others						X	
e) Generate original ideas				X		X	
f) Make connections between texts						X	
g) Other							
h) Source Evaluation	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Writing in the disciplines? Y/N	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

ENGL 101/096				
Reading Assignment	Concussion Articles	David Brooks Opportunity Gap	Karate Kid vs. Kung Fu Panda	Compare /Contrast Essay
Complexity	L1250-L1680	L1170	L1340	
Use				
a) Support of class content			X	
b) Discussed in class	X	X		

c)	Basis of writing task	X	X		X
d)	Basis of other assignment	X			
e)	Unclear				
Type					
a)	Textbook			X	
b)	Power Point/Study Guide for class notes				
c)	Periodical/News	X	X		X
d)	Fiction				
e)	Reference				X
f)	Disciplinary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
g)	Other				
Connection (TT/TS/TW)		TT/TW	TS/TW	NA	TT/TW
Who selects text?					
a)	Student				X
b)	Instructor	X	X	X	
Critical Thinking		Understanding (Reteach)	Evaluating (Justify)	Analyze (Examine)	Evaluating (Support)
Source Evaluation		No	No	Yes	Yes

APPENDIX C (continued)

ENGL 101/096						
Writing Assignment	Brooks Blackboard Discussion	Sources Compare/ Contrast Essay	Letter to the Editor	Hurricane Katrina In-Class Writing	Annotated Bibliography (Compare/Contrast)	Sources Taking a Stand Essay
Critical Thinking	Evaluating (Justify)	Evaluating (Support)	Evaluating (Support)	Analyzing (Compare/Contrast)	Understanding (Summarize)	Evaluating (Argue)
Use						
a) Respond to class content						
b) Communicate personal experience			X			
c) Response to reading assignments	X			X (Photos)		
d) Summarize the ideas of others		X	X		X	X
e) Respond to the ideas of others	X	X			X	
f) Generate original ideas		X	X			X
g) Make connections between texts		X	X			X
h) g. Other						
Source Evaluation	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Writing in the disciplines? Y/N	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

ENGL 101/095				
Reading Assignment	What is Poverty?	Shitty First Drafts	I Want a Wife	Sources Argumentative /Persuasive Paper
Complexity	800L	1270L	1170L	NA
Use				
a) Support of class content				
b) Discussed in class	X	X	X	
c) Basis of writing task	X	X	X	X
d) Basis of other assignment				
e) Unclear				
Type				
a) Textbook				
b) Power Point/Study Guide for class notes				
c) Periodical/News				X
d) Fiction				
e) Reference				X
f) Disciplinary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
g) Other	Essay	Essay	Essay	
Connection (TT/TS/TW)	TS	TS	TS/TW	TT/TW
Who selects text?				
a) Student				X

APPENDIX C (continued)

b) Instructor	X	X	X	
Critical Thinking	Analyzing (Examine)	Understanding (Summarize)	Evaluating (Discuss/ Critique)	Evaluating (Support)
Source Evaluation	No	No	No	Yes

ENGL 101/095					
Writing Assignment	Summarizing Essays	Paraphrasing Worksheet	Argumentative /Persuasive Essay	Extended Definition Essay	In-Class Brainstorming
Critical Thinking	Understanding (Summarize)	Understanding (Paraphrase)	Evaluating (Select/Justify)	Understanding (Put into your own words/Explain)	Evaluate (Justify)
Use					
a) Respond to class content					
b) Communicate personal experience				X	
c) Response to reading assignments					
d) Summarize the ideas of others	X	X	X		X
e) Respond to the ideas of others					X
f) Generate original ideas			X	X	X
g) Make connections between texts			X		X
h) Other					

Source Evaluation	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Writing in the disciplines? Y/N	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

Explanation of terms

Number of words: Word count for assignment

Complexity: Lexile Score of text

Use: How the reading or writing assignment is used in the class.

Support of class content: Prepare for class lecture or activities, to clarify material learned in class, to prepare for assignments

Discussed in class: Reading text was necessary to fully understand and contribute to class discussion

Basis of writing assignment: A writing assignment was based on the reading (research paper, reflection)

Basis of other assignment: The reading assignment was necessary to be able to complete another class assignment (lab work)

Disciplinary text: A text whose primary audience would be practitioners of a specific discipline or that employed ways of using ideas that are characteristic of a discipline (i.e., a history textbook that makes conclusions based on evidence from primary sources)

Respond to class content: Write a reflection on a class activity or assignment (e.g., a reflection on fieldwork or a group activity; a response to a lecture)

Communicate personal experience: The primary content of the assignment is drawn from the students' personal experiences, not from class content or readings

Response to reading assignments: The primary content of the assignment is drawn from readings the student has done for the class. The student is either incorporating ideas from the texts into the writing assignment or reflecting and responding to ideas in the text.

Respond to or summarize the ideas of others: The purpose of the assignment is for the student to think about and use ideas drawn from other texts or sources in writing the paper

Generate original ideas: The purpose if for the student to develop original ideas on a topic and to articulate them, with or without support from other texts. An example of this would be forming a thesis statement.

Critical thinking: The verb from Bloom's Taxonomy of Objectives (revised) used to explain what the students are expected to do in the assignment

Source Evaluation: Were students asked to evaluation sources for the assignment to establish their credibility or relevanc

APPENDIX D

Original Literacy Framework

Writing Assignment										
Number of Words										
Complexity										
Use										
a. Respond to class content										
b. Communicate personal experience										
c. Response to reading assignments										
d. Respond to or summarize the ideas of others										
e. Generate original ideas										
f. Other										
Stringency of Grading										
a. No grade or response										
b. Feedback on content/no grade										
c. Feedback on form/no grade										
d. Feedback on both content and form/No grade										
e. Grade on content										
f. Grade on form										
g. Grade on both content and form										
Opportunity for revisions										
Grade given on assignment										
Source of feedback										
h. Peer										

i.	Instructor								
	Writing in the disciplines? Y/N								

Use: The function of the writing assignment within the class

Respond to class content: Write a reflection on a class activity or assignment (e.g., a reflection on fieldwork or a group activity; a response to a lecture)

Communicate personal experience: The primary content of the assignment is drawn from the students' personal experiences, not from class content or readings

Response to reading assignments: The primary content of the assignment is drawn from readings the student has done for the class. The student is either incorporating ideas from the texts into the writing assignment or reflecting and responding to ideas in the text.

Respond to or summarize the ideas of others: The purpose of the assignment is for the student to think about and use ideas drawn from other texts or sources in writing the paper

Generate original ideas: The purpose if for the student to develop original ideas on a topic and to articulate them, with or without support from other texts. An example of this would be forming a thesis statement.

Feedback on content: The instructor provides feedback focused primarily on the ideas contained in the paper, not on the grammar or form

Reading Assignment								
Number of Words								
Complexity								
Use								
a. Support of class content								
b. Discussed in class								
c. Basis of writing task								
d. Basis of other assignment								
e. Unclear								
Type								
a. Textbook								
b. Power Point/Study Guide for class notes								
c. Periodical/News								
d. Fiction								
e. Reference								
f. Disciplinary								

g. Other									
Who selects text?									
a. Student									
b. Instructor									

Reading Assignment: One entry for each assignment given

Number of words: Word count for assignment

Complexity: Coh-Metrix Level of text

Use: How the reading assignment is used in the class.

Support of class content: Prepare for class lecture or activities, to clarify material learned in class, to prepare for assignments

Discussed in class: Reading text was necessary to fully understand and contribute to class discussion

Basis of writing assignment: A writing assignment was based on the reading (research paper, reflection)

Basis of other assignment: The reading assignment was necessary to be able to complete another class assignment (lab work)

Disciplinary text: A text whose primary audience would be practitioners of a specific discipline (e.g., a professional journal article)

NAME: MOLLY MCCLENNEN

Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia   August 2014-Present
English Instructor/Undergraduate Pathway Coordinator
Coordinates the Undergraduate Pathway Program, which provides transitional/bridge classes and support services to ELL freshmen students. Develops and evaluates curriculum for the Pathway reading, writing, and speaking/listening classes. Advises Pathway students and assists in their registration. Teaches classes in the Pathway Program. Provides guidance and support to university faculty regarding Pathway student success.
Key Accomplishments:
- Developed and taught *transition to the university* classes for Pathway and other ELL students
- Designed and executed research projects for program development and evaluation, including the Pathway Project, which analyzed how speaking, listening, reading, and writing were used in graduate and undergraduate content classes
- Participated in the First Year Seminar Institute, a semester-long class to train faculty to teach an interdisciplinary, inquiry-based seminar class required of all freshmen

Waubonsee Community College, Aurora, Illinois   September, 2013-August, 2014
Manager of the Adult and Family Literacy Project
Oversaw a grant-funded program that provides literacy and math tutoring to the students in the college's adult education department. Supervised the Adult Education Computer Center (AECC), which provides computer-based instruction to students and technical resources and support to faculty. Managed all grant writing, reporting, and budgeting. Worked with faculty to develop the curriculum for ESL and GED preparation used in the AECC. Developed community partnerships and planned community events to maintain funding and support for the Adult Literacy Project. Participated in the Community College Area Planning Council, Adult Education Technology Roundtable, and Greater Aurora Literacy Coalition. Supervised staff on the Adult Literacy Project and in the AECC. Provided training and on-going support for faculty and tutors on literacy, technology, and curriculum design. Worked with advisory board to guide program decisions.
Key Accomplishments:
- Developed and presented workshops for faculty and tutors on effective literacy instruction and using technology in instruction
- Presented on the National Academies' report *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction* at the spring, 2014 Community College Area Planning Council meeting
- Conducted research to better understand the faculty's needs for integrating tablets into their instruction
- Overhauled data reporting methods to better capture outcomes of the tutoring provided to students
- Wrote and received funding for three grants totaling $78,000

Scholar's Path Tutoring and Instruction, Oak Park, Illinois
2012-2013

Owner, Instructor

Provided individual and small group instruction in literacy and English language development for adults and children. Conducted training and offered consulting on how educators can best support the literacy development of their students. Specialized in literacy development for English language learners and struggling readers and writers.

Key Accomplishment:

- Developed and taught online ESL speaking/listening and academic writing classes for VB Ensino de Linguas language school in Porte Alegre, Brazil

University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Education   2011-2013

Graduate Research Assistant

Assisted a professor with research into literacy and language

Key Accomplishment:

- Worked on the SREB-Gates College Readiness Transitional Course Project, which developed a curriculum for ameliorating literacy under-preparedness in middle and high school students so that they will be college and career ready upon graduation

Learning English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) Program, Marshall University   2004-2011

Coordinator for Administration/Instructor, 2008-2011

Taught academic English classes to adult language learners and provided one-on-one tutoring and advising to students. Managed program administrative tasks, including student registration, TOEFL and placement testing, orientation, and record keeping. Hired, trained, and supervised staff, including up to 15 adjunct faculty, graduate students, and clerical workers. Provided crisis management to students.

Key Accomplishments:

- Assisted in program accreditation application process
- Overhauled and increased participation in the Conversation Partners Program, which paired native English speakers with ESL students for cultural exchange
- Developed workshops and activities to educate international students on academic success and faculty, staff, and students on working with ELL students

Adjunct Instructor, 2004-2008

Prepared lesson plans for writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, listening, and pronunciation. Taught and evaluated language learners at all levels of English proficiency.

Marshall University   1993-2008

Assistant Director of Residence Services, 1998-2008

Oversaw daily operation of a 78-unit apartment complex and ten residence halls housing 2000 students. Responsible for security and residence life operations in university housing. Supervised a staff of approximately 150 full-time, part-time, student and contract workers, handling all personnel matters including hiring, training, evaluations, termination, and contract oversight. Served as a departmental liaison with various university offices and committees. Represented the department and the university at recruitment, marketing, and public relations events. Administered the budget for the residence life and security programs. Wrote, updated, and edited departmental publications. Oversaw judicial process for residents. Negotiated contracts with vendors for hall services and purchases.

Key Accomplishments:

- Developed and oversaw execution of a comprehensive educational programming model for residents
- Collaborated in the design and construction of a 500-bed, 5-building housing, recreation, and dining complex
- Chaired the committee to oversee writing, design, and development of new departmental web page
- Served on standing committees on institutional assessment, orientation, and student retention

Marshall University
Supervisor of Residence Halls, 1996-1998
Oversaw staff and daily operations in six residence halls and a 78-unit apartment complex.

Marshall University
Residence Halls Director, 1994-1996
Oversaw staff and daily operations in six residence halls housing 2000 students.

Marshall University
Graduate Hall Director, 1993-1994

ADDITIONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2015-Present
Marshall University Adjunct Instructor, Honors College
Taught HON 200, an interdisciplinary class for sophomores in the Honors College that addressed the themes of ethics, leadership, and civic engagement

2013
Dominican University Adjunct Instructor, College of Education
Taught a graduate-level literacy teaching methods class to K-12 Teach for America teachers working in Chicago Public Schools

2013
Brooks Middle School, Teaching Practicum/Classroom Volunteer
Planned lessons and taught students in a middle school, multi-categorical, special education class using whole class, small group, and individual instruction

2012
University of Illinois at Chicago, Teaching Apprenticeship
Co-taught CI 414, Middle and High School Literacy, a class for undergraduate teacher candidates, under the supervision of a professor

Marshall University Higher Education for Learning Problems (HELP) Program 1995-2005; 2008-2011
Part-Time Reading Specialist/ Part-Time Remediation Specialist
Provided one-on-one assistance with basic skills for college students with reading and learning difficulties. Prepared detailed reports on student progress each semester. Developed remediation

plans for individual students. Worked with medical students from throughout the country to improve their reading comprehension and speed.

Marshall University 2004-2008
Instructor UNI 101
Taught study and college success skills to freshmen students

Marshall University, Counseling Department 1994-2008
Adjunct Faculty
Taught or supervised a graduate assistant in the teaching of an undergraduate course on student development theory

<div align="center">

EDUCATION

</div>

Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction: Literacy, Language, and Culture, University of Illinois at Chicago, (Anticipated graduation: December, 2016)
- Dissertation: *Alignment of Literacy Tasks in Post-Secondary Transitional Programs,* Dr. Timothy Shanahan, Chair

Education Specialist in Curriculum and Instruction, Marshall University, 2004
Master of Arts in Special Education, Marshall University, 1997
Bachelor of Arts in History and Secondary Education, West Virginia Wesleyan College, 1993

<div align="center">

TEACHING ENDORSEMENTS

</div>

State of West Virginia:
- **English as a Second Language,** Kindergarten through Adult
- **Special Education, Specific Learning Disabilities,** Kindergarten through Adult
- **Multi-categorical Special Education (LD, BD, MI),** Grades 5 through Adult
- **Social Studies Education,** Grades 5 through 12

<div align="center">

PRESENTATIONS, PUBLICATIONS, AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

</div>

Wrote, distributed, and analyzed a national survey of developmental literacy instructors to better understand the connections between their professional development and their classroom practices. In the process of preparing the results for submission for publication, 2013-Present

"Moving Beyond 'Our Students Can't Read or Write': Identifying and Assisting 'Underprepared' Students," co-presenter for ACUHO conference, June, 2013

Reviewer for conference proposals, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages 2014 annual conference

"First Comes Understanding: Developing English Language Literacy among Native Arabic Speakers," presented at TESOL conference, 2013

"College from a Different Perspective: Students with Learning Challenges in the Campus Community," presented at the 2001 WVASPA Conference

"Bridging the Gap: Training a Monocultural Staff to Work with Multicultural Students," co-presented at the 2001 WVASPA Conference

"Yesterday's People on Today's College Campus: Understanding and Assisting Appalachian Students," presented at the 1997 NASPA/ACPA joint conference

Contributing writer for Metro Valley, Marshall Magazine, The Leading Edge, Virginia Bar Association, West Virginia Lawyer, and Huntington Quarterly magazines (2006-Present)

Published "The Young Ambassadors," an article about Saudi and Muslim college students in America, in Metro Valley Magazine (2006)

AFFILIATIONS

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages – College Reading and Learning Association – National Association of Developmental Education—International Literacy Association—Appalachian Studies Association

HONORS

Recipient of TESOL Professional Development Scholarship, 2013

Approval Notice
Initial Review (Response to Modifications)

October 13, 2015

Molly McClennen
Curriculum and Instruction
909 9th Avenue, Apt 6
Huntington, WV 25701
Phone: (304) 208-7316

RE: **Protocol # 2015-0784**
"Alignment of Literacy Tasks in College and University Developmental and Gateway Classes"

Dear Ms. McClennen:

Your Initial Review application (Response to Modifications) was reviewed and approved by the Expedited review process on October 12, 2015. You may now begin your research.

Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

> **Please remember to submit translations of all data collection instruments and recruitment/consent documents that will be used with subjects whose primary language is not English. Translations must be accompanied by an Amendment form and a statement attesting to the qualifications of the translator when submitted to the UIC IRB.**

> **Please remember to submit the second interview instrument prior to its administration in the field. The instrument must be accompanied by an Amendment form when submitted to the UIC IRB.**

Protocol Approval Period: October 12, 2015 - October 11, 2016
Approved Subject Enrollment #: 40
Additional Determinations for Research Involving Minors: These determinations have not been made for this study since it has not been approved for enrollment of minors.
Performance Sites: UIC, Bridge Valley Community and Technical College - WV, Marshall University - WV
Sponsor: None
Research Protocol:

a) Alignment of Literacy Tasks in College and University Developmental and Gateway Classes (no footer)

Recruitment Materials:
   a) Script for Telephone and Personal Contact Professors; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   b) Recruitment Script for Administrators; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   c) Recruitment Text for Students; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   d) Recruitment Email Text for Faculty; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   e) Recruitment Email for Administrators; Version 2; 09/28/2015

Informed Consents:
   a) Consent Administrators Bridge Valley; Version 2; 08/19/2015
   b) Consent Administrators Marshall; Version 2; 08/19/2015
   c) Consent Students Marshall; Version 3; 09/28/2015
   d) Consent Students Bridge Valley; Version 3; 09/28/2015
   e) Faculty Consent Bridge Valley; Version 3; 09/28/2015
   f) MU Faculty Consent; Version 3; 09/28/2015

Your research meets the criteria for expedited review as defined in 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) under the following specific categories:

(5) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected, or will be collected solely for non-research purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis),
(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.,
(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including but not limited to research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Please note the Review History of this submission:

Receipt Date	Submission Type	Review Process	Review Date	Review Action
07/22/2015	Initial Review	Expedited	07/23/2015	Modifications Required
08/31/2015	Response To Modifications	Expedited	09/08/2015	Modifications Required
10/07/2015	Response To Modifications	Expedited	10/12/2015	Approved

Please remember to:

→ Use your **research protocol number** (2015-0784) on any documents or correspondence with the IRB concerning your research protocol.

→ Review and comply with all requirements on the OPRS website under:
   "UIC Investigator Responsibilities, Protection of Human Research Subjects"
   (http://tigger.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/research/protocolreview/irb/policies/0924.pdf)

Please note that the UIC IRB has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Please be aware that if the scope of work in the grant/project changes, the protocol must be amended and approved by the UIC IRB before the initiation of the change.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further help, please contact OPRS at (312) 996-1711 or me at (312) 996-2014. Please send any correspondence about this protocol to OPRS at 203 AOB, M/C 672.

Sincerely,

Sandra L Costello

Sandra Costello
Assistant Director, IRB # 2
Office for the Protection of Research Subjects

Enclosures:

1. **Informed Consent Documents:**
   a) Consent Administrators Bridge Valley; Version 2; 08/19/2015
   b) Consent Administrators Marshall; Version 2; 08/19/2015
   c) Consent Students Marshall; Version 3; 09/28/2015
   d) Consent Students Bridge Valley; Version 3; 09/28/2015
   e) Faculty Consent Bridge Valley; Version 3; 09/28/2015
   f) MU Faculty Consent; Version 3; 09/28/2015
2. **Recruiting Materials:**
   a) Script for Telephone and Personal Contact Professors; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   b) Recruitment Script for Administrators; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   c) Recruitment Text for Students; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   d) Recruitment Email Text for Faculty; Version 2; 09/28/2015
   e) Recruitment Email for Administrators; Version 2; 09/28/2015

cc: Danny B. Martin, Curriculum and Instruction, M/C 147
  Timothy Shanahan (faculty advisor), Curriculum and Instruction, M/C 147