English Theses & Dissertations   English

Spring 2019

Collaboration and Community in Undergraduate Writing Synchronous Video Courses (SVCs)

Kimberly Fahle
Old Dominion University

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY IN UNDERGRADUATE WRITING SYNCHRONOUS VIDEO COURSES (SVCs)

by

Kimberly Fahle
B.A. May 2010, Virginia Wesleyan College
M.A. May 2012, University of Delaware

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ENGLISH

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
May 2019

Approved by:

Kevin DePew (Director)

Julia Romberger (Member)

Staci Defibaugh (Member)

Scott Warnock (Member)

ABSTRACT

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY IN UNDERGRADUATE WRITING SYNCHRONOUS
VIDEO COURSES (SVCs)

Kimberly Fahle
Old Dominion University, 2019
Director: Dr. Kevin DePew

From the 2013 *Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI)*, OWI Principle 11 suggests, "Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student success." Previous discussions of synchronous modalities have suggested interpersonal benefits of this mode could aid in creating these communities and could minimize the isolation and transactional distance students can experience in asynchronous instruction, which in turn can impact their persistence and learning. However, with little research on this modality, it is difficult to corroborate this assumption or design synchronous courses to best exploit these potential benefits. This study examined a particular type of synchronous online writing course, synchronous video courses (SVCs), exploring how and why students participated and interacted in certain ways in these courses and how their experiences influenced their sense of community and learning. A triangulated methodology of discourse analysis of class interactions and thematic analysis of interviews with students and instructors from the observed courses was used to present the prevalent discourse patterns within these courses and to contextualize these patterns within students' and instructors' experiences. Challenges for verbal interaction, the role of textual interaction, the value of small group interaction, and the impact of interfaces on learning emerged as key findings to understand this modality. The findings suggest there is value in this instructional modality, but it requires unique pedagogical strategies and specific training for students and instructors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could not have completed this dissertation without the help and support of many people. I have to start by sincerely thanking my chair, Dr. Kevin DePew. I've had enough conversations with people to know not everyone is lucky enough to have a chair they work so well with and who provides the indefatigable support and clear, comprehensive feedback I received throughout this process. I was also lucky in my other committee members, Dr. Julia Romberger, Dr. Staci Defibaugh, and Dr. Scott Warnock, who each lent their unique expertise, helping me complete different parts of my project, and who were willing to take a look at works in progress and offer great feedback that helped this project take shape. I'm also so grateful for my study participants, particularly the instructors I spoke with, for being so generous with their time and being willing to invite me in to view their class sessions.

My fellow graduate students and colleagues have also been instrumental to the completion of this project. Participating in the Dissertation Bootcamp group was such a wonderful connection with the ODU community and a reminder that I was not the only one who found myself struggling at times with how to approach a large, sprawling project. Special thanks to Megan Mize for her time and effort keeping this group going. I'm also appreciative of being involved in the York College faculty writing group during the final stage of the project. This group not only helped me remain accountable for finishing this project while acclimating to a new job, it also modeled what maintaining a writing habit can look like post dissertation.

And finally, I could not have undertaken this project without the support of my family. Mike not only is a constant support in my life, but his belief that I could do this, as expressed on our very first date when without thinking he said, "Dr. Peck has a nice ring to it," was a great crutch when I doubted myself. I'm also forever thankful to my parents, whose unconditional support has enabled me to push myself and find out what I want and to go after it. Every week

when we spoke on the phone, my dad would ask me, "How's your thesis coming?" This constant refrain, though at times hard to hear when I hadn't made the progress I thought I should have, functioned like a motivational mantra, propelling me to keep writing, even when I didn't want to, so I would have something to update you on when you called. And I have to thank my mom for being my closest confidant. Whether I called to share good news or to vent my frustrations or get advice on a situation I'm facing, you are always there and speaking to you never fails to make me feel better, whatever I'm facing. These wonderful people in my life provided the support and stability to devote the time and energy necessary to write a dissertation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

It's two minutes before the first class in my PhD program is about to begin. Instead of finding myself sitting in a seminar room surrounded by my fellow graduate students, I am sitting in my office at work located at another academic institution putting on a headset. On this day in 2014, I joined the millions of students who have taken a course online (Online Learning Consortium, 2015). Like many students who turn to online education, I was attracted to this option because it allowed me to balance my full-time professional life and my pursuit of further education. However, I was certainly nervous about embarking on this educational journey in a new modality having only ever experienced face-to-face (f2f) education before.

This first course was a synchronous online course delivered via a videoconferencing program. Though never in the same room with them, I felt that I learned with and from my instructor and peers in the online course in a deep and meaningful way. Yet, it was definitely a transition. I had to adjust to the mediated nature of the course and how that changed how I participated in the course and interacted with my classmates and the instructor. I had to learn how this new technology worked as well as how I could work with the technology. In this particular course there were robust conversations happening both verbally and through text-chat. I found this both invigorating and, at times, overwhelming because essentially there were two conversations that I had to attend to. These conversations were not distinct, but instead were interrelated; they played off and intersected each other. It took a few classes to get used to this model of interaction, but once I did, I did not feel like I was missing anything by not being physically present with my classmates. Right at the start of my journey as a PhD student, I had stumbled into an area that intrigued me and that I wanted to further explore.

I took several more synchronous video classes throughout my graduate career, some more successful than others. But through all of them I was always fascinated with how this modality and the technology impacted what we were able to do as a class. I found myself wondering what factors led to a successful synchronous video course. I knew the answer to this was complicated and involved a complex ecology of instructor, student, technology, pedagogy, and environment. Thus, when I heard that Old Dominion University (ODU) was offering undergraduate synchronous online writing courses, I was further intrigued. Would undergraduates' experiences in synchronous online classes mirror my own as a graduate student? What factors would shape their experiences within a synchronous online course? How did this modality help or hinder students' and instructors' goals for writing instruction? I had the opportunity to teach a synchronous online section of first-year composition at ODU in fall 2016 and thus began to answer these questions for myself. As with all teaching experiences, I had successes and failures, and as the semester came to a close, I had more first-hand knowledge to inform the ways I answered these questions, but I knew there was still more I wanted and needed to know. However, I quickly learned that there were very few resources available related to this modality of instruction.

Statement of the Problem

Generally speaking, online writing instruction (OWI) is a relatively new subfield of composition. Yet, it has also become incredibly ubiquitous across higher education. St. Amant (2017) highlighted this ubiquity in his foreword to the *Bedford Bibliography of Research in Online Writing Instruction*, suggesting that sometimes ubiquity can lead to passivity:

> Ubiquity can foster passivity. Essentially, the more common something is in our daily lives, the less attention we give it. This means we generally spend little time critically thinking about and reflecting on that which seems to be a common part of our regular routines…
> And over the last two plus decades, members of a range of writing studies areas have explored the uses of the online in different educational contexts. As such, the teaching of writing online has become increasingly ubiquitous in modern society.

(Consider, for example, how quick individuals are to assume an online version of a writing course/curriculum/program exists or—better yet—how quickly such courses/curricula/programs can be put online.) Yet, in some ways, this perspective of teaching writing online has also brought with it a blurring of our memories in terms of reflecting on questions such as "How did we get here?" or "How did this practice emerge and evolve over time?"... [T]he answers to such questions are essential both to re-thinking current practices associated with teaching writing online and to guiding the evolution of this area over time. After all, if we don't know where we've been, how can we accurately determine where we are (and if we're even in the right place) or where we should go -- or can go -- next?

St. Amant highlights that despite how prominent online writing instruction is across the country, there is still much to learn, and still much we don't know.

First it is helpful to outline, as St. Amant says "where we are," and the nature of the typical experience of OWI. Most online writing courses rely primarily on asynchronous instruction and interaction (Hewett, 2015a; Mick and Middlebrook, 2015). In these classes instructors often communicate with students textually through a Learning Management System (LMS). Instructors post readings and assignments. Students respond to the instructor and other classmates through both informal and formal writing. Instructors often make use of discussion boards for class interaction. Thus, Warnock (2009) posits that not only are online writing classes (OWCs) distinct from f2f classes in which most instruction and interaction takes place orally, this distinction is actually an advantage. He claims:

Online writing instruction provides the opportunity for not just a *different* approach, but a *progressive* approach to the way teachers writing… [due to] the sheer amount of writing exchanged among students and the teacher in an OW course; few onsite courses offer the chance for this amount of writing... the online format--*by its very nature*--requires students to learn to use writing to interact with others. (Warnock, 2009, p. xi).

Similarly Barker and Kemp (1990) have called the ongoing reading and writing practices of OWCs "*textualizing* the class" (p. 20). While it certainly can be seen why engaging a class *about* writing *through* writing would be advantageous, this modality is not without its challenges. "Textualizing" a class not only puts more emphasis on writing, but also on reading; students must learn through reading the writing from their instructor and their peers. Hewett (2015b)

explored in *Reading to Learn and Writing to Teach: Literacy Strategies for Online Writing Instruction* the challenges arising from almost all learning and communication happening via written text in online writing courses, particularly asynchronous courses. Courses delivered in this manner can present difficulties for students, particularly those with literacy challenges resulting from insufficient literacy preparation, a multilingual background, or a disability. Hewett advocates explicit instruction in reading to prepare students for a pedagogy with a high literacy load while others in the field have advocated multimodal pedagogy to mitigate the higher literacy load through strategies such as welcome or instructional videos or audio feedback on assignments. However, when considering St. Amant's question of "where we should go--or can go--next," another possibility is further exploration of the synchronous modalities like those I have experienced as a PhD student.

Hewett (2015b) notes that some instructors have begun to experiment with synchronous video to recapture the "body/face/voice intervention" present in f2f instruction (p. 3). There are many programs these days that facilitate videoconferencing such as Skype, Zoom, GoToMeeting, Adobe Connect, and WebEx. Some of these are free programs while others require an individual or institutional subscription. With these synchronous videoconferencing programs, all participants meet virtually on set days and times, but they can be located anywhere with a strong enough internet connection since they participate via their own computers or mobile devices. Though each program is slightly different, the typical affordances of these programs include video of participants through a webcam or external camera, audio communication, screen sharing capabilities, and text-chat functions. ODU currently uses the online program WebEx to conduct synchronous online classes. WebEx has the typical affordances of synchronous videoconferencing software, and can be used on a computer or laptop, as well as on tablets and mobile devices, but with more limited functionality. This new modality needs to be further studied to explore its effectiveness and to consider whether this

modality for teaching is somewhere the field, as St. Amant says, "should go." Additionally the need for more information into this area fits into the larger call for OWI research that has been made by the field.

In 2013, the CCCC Executive Committee adopted *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI)*.[1] This document presents 15 principles for effective online writing instruction with accompanying rationale for each principle and example practices that support each principle. OWI Principle 15 states, "OWI/OWL administrators and teachers/tutors should be committed to ongoing research into their programs and courses as well as the very principles in this document" (p. 31). Thus, the committee concludes the OWI principle statement with a call for more research into OWI, recognizing that there is a dearth of research in OWI, especially on certain issues. The committee explains in the rationale for this principle, "Empirical, repeatable, and longitudinal research that addresses questions regarding the phenomena of OWI and OWLs will drive a deeper understanding of OWI and OWLs, ultimately benefiting students and the teaching and learning of writing in online contexts" (p. 31). Hewett (2015a) in her chapter in *Foundational Practices in Online Writing Instruction*, an edited collection designed to demonstrate how to apply the OWI Principles, offered further explanation of the rationale for Principle 15:

> Furthermore, most OWI research tends not to be replicable, aggregable, and data-supported (RAD) (Haswell, 2005). As such, the literature provides great ideas to try out in individual course settings and some thoughts about strategies to avoid, but it fails to provide theory-based or theory-generating guidance that can be applied more broadly to OWI and writing studies' needs. Thus, there remains too much practitioner lore surrounding OWI (North, 1987), and the writing studies field passes on much of that lore along in scholarship, conferences, and online chats.

---

[1] Recently, the Global Society for Online Literacy Educators (GSOLE) has begun work on revising these principles, reframing them from a strict focus on writing to a broader focus on online literacy instruction (OLI). Until this updated document is made public, however, the OWI Principles remain the public document presenting effective practices for online writing instruction. The CCCC has also begun to move away from this document as it seems more an explanation of effective practices than a position statement.

The contrast between RAD research and lore is important because knowledge based on lore is often localized or is difficult to use to make arguments to practitioners or administrators about best practices. Additionally, new technologies or new iterations of technology are constantly changing the nature of OWI work, so it is important to continually explore pedagogical approaches and strategies that purport to support learning and student development in online environments. New iterations sometimes improve the product and support better learning, but the adage "new isn't always better" applies to OWI. Also, sometimes improvements are not consistent for the various people they affect. The need for critical attention to technological evolution and its role in OWI is part of what drives the need for continued and substantial research in OWI; we need to continually interrogate our assumptions, our methods, and our pedagogies to avoid the passivity that St. Amant warned of and continue to strive for the promotion of best practices in any modality. Additionally we must conduct these explorations in a way that leads to a data-driven body of knowledge for the field. Thus, broadly one problem that my dissertation is responding to is simply the need for more OWI specific research, particularly RAD research.

The creation of the *Bedford Bibliography of Research in Online Writing Instruction*, demonstrates the current landscapes of OWI research, and also highlights gaps within it. One current gap is the examination of synchronous online writing instruction. Most OWI research focuses on asynchronous instruction, and even the *Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI)* is based on assumptions of course delivery for online writing courses that are asynchronous or at the very least rely on written text for interaction. For example, in the rationale for OWI Principle 3, "Appropriate composition teaching/learning strategies should be developed for the unique features of the online instructional environment," the position statement claims, "Some changes in traditional composition pedagogy are necessary for teaching writing in the OWI setting, an environment

that is by nature *text-centric* and *reading-heavy* and that requires *intensive written communication*" (p. 12, emphasis mine). This focus on asynchronous textual communication is not surprising considering the ubiquity of asynchronous OWI. However, experimentations with synchronous instruction demand further research into this area.

In their chapter on asynchronous and synchronous modalities in *Foundational Practices in Online Writing Instruction*, Mick and Middlebrook (2015) highlighted that asynchronous modalities are much more widely used because the barriers for implementation are lower; however, they point to the possibility for synchronous modalities to better create immediacy and social presence: "Synchronous media's primary advantage typically is identified as interpersonal rather than cognitive, ostensibly owing to participants' feelings of intimacy and real-time engagement, which tend to be associated with student satisfaction, student learning, and lower rates of attrition" (p. 131). Mick and Middlebrook's claim aligns well with Moore's (1993) articulation of the theory of transactional distance. Moore defined transactional distance as "a concept describing the universe of teacher-learner relationships that exist when learners and instructors are separated by space and/or by time" (p.22). Essentially, it is the perception of closeness or isolation felt by and between students in distance education courses. He highlighted two key factors that influence the increase or decrease in transactional distance. The first is dialogue, which he defines as:

> [A]n interaction or series of interactions having positive qualities that other interactions might not have. A dialogue is purposeful, constructive, and valued by each party. Each party in a dialogue is a respectful and active listener; each is a contributor, and builds on the contributions of the other party or parties. (p. 24)

This theory posits that an increase in dialogue leads to a decrease in transactional distance. The other factor is learner autonomy, or students' ability to use "teaching materials and teaching programs to achieve goals of their own, in their own ways, under their own control" (p. 31). Moore's theory posits an increase in learner autonomy increases transactional distance. Moore notes that some students are better suited to courses with more dialogue while others with more

autonomy. In unpacking this theory, Moore highlighted teleconferencing as modality that supports an increase in dialogue and thus a decrease in transactional distance: "highly interactive electronic teleconference media, especially personal computers and audioconference media, permit a more intensive, more personal, more individual, more dynamic dialogue than can be achieved in using a recorded medium" (p. 25). Yet little research has explored these claims of intimacy and engagement and its relationship to the synchronicity of tele- or videoconferencing that Moore (1993) and Mick and Middlebrook (2015) posited.

When examining the entries in the *Bedford Bibliography of Research in Online Writing Instruction*, only a small number examine synchronous interaction, and the research that does look at synchronous interaction typically examines one-on-one interaction through online writing tutoring or conferencing, graduate education, or only text-chat based synchronous interaction. Only a handful of the scholarship included in the bibliography examines synchronous video classes (SVCs) like those being taught at ODU currently. So if, generally, synchronous interaction and instruction is very under-researched in OWI scholarship, then SVCs are even more unexplored. With evolutions in videoconferencing software making it more accessible for lower costs, institutions, administrators, and instructors may be interested in exploring its potential; thus SVC's popularity as a modality for OWI might expand. This will be particularly true if SVCs do support students' feeling of intimacy and engagement as suggested by Moore (1993) and Mick and Middlebrook (2015), because this responds to one of the main challenges in the field of distance education broadly: concerns over students' feelings of isolation due to technology mediated instruction—typically asynchronous text-based mediation—and how this impacts student persistence in online classes.

Swan and Shih (2005) noted of distance education generally, "A common concern among some educators...is that the mediated nature of online learning might prevent students from developing a sense of belonging with other students, instructors, programs of study and

educational institutions" (p. 115).The fear is that these feelings of isolation and disconnection from their classes will negatively impact both their persistence in the course and their learning, as exemplified by the traditionally lower retention rates for online courses (Bawa, 2016). Perhaps it is because of this fear that much of the foundational literature of distance education focuses on the benefit of social interaction within an online learning environment (LaPointe & Gunawardena, 2004). The Community of Inquiry framework developed by D. Randy Garrison, Terry Anderson, and Walter Archer (1999) suggested three components necessary for successful distance education courses: cognitive presence, teacher presence, and social presence. Of social presence they claimed:

> [It is] the ability of participants in the Community of Inquiry to project their personal characteristics into the community, thereby presenting themselves to the other participants as "real people." The primary importance of this element is its function as a support for cognitive presence, indirectly facilitating the process of critical thinking carried on by the community of learners. However, when there are affective goals for the educational process, as well as purely cognitive ones, (i.e., where it is important that participants find the interaction in the group enjoyable and personally fulfilling so that they will remain in the cohort of learners for the duration of the program), then social presence is a direct contributor to the success of the educational experience. (p.89)

This model hypothesized that peer interaction will impact student persistence and learning in online courses. Empirical evidence supports this notion, with LaPointe and Gunawardena (2004) finding a correlation between increased peer interaction and increased self-reported learning among students in online classes. Thus, questions of presence, interaction and community are key topics in distance education literature related to student success both in terms of persistence as well as learning within online courses. And as writing scholars study their own online instructional practices more, they will also want to understand the answer to these questions in their own context.

What this dissertation speaks to, then, is the need for more research into a current practice at ODU, which fits generally with the call for more research in OWI, and more specifically, to a recognizable gap within the field specifically looking at synchronous instruction.

In focusing specifically on SVCs for writing instruction, this dissertation is empirically investigating claims of synchronicity's role in promoting student engagement and thus exploring whether and how SVC responds to the identified problem of students' feelings of isolation or disengagement in distance education and OWI, and the desire to foster community in online writing classes to combat these feelings.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to add to the body of knowledge about synchronous online instruction empirically by examining Mick and Middlebrook's (2015) claims of synchronous instruction that it promotes "feelings of intimacy and real-time engagement" (p. 131), but also that it has a higher barrier of implementation than asynchronous instruction (p. 132). Therefore, while responding to the call for more OWI research in OWI Principle 15, this project is specifically rooted in two other OWI Principles: "OWI Principle 11: Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student success" and "OWI Principle 1: Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible." This project is primarily interested in questions of community, so Principle 11 is the touchstone; however, issues of inclusivity are crucial to attend to when considering community, exploring who has access to community and how they have access, so Principle 1 will also be considered in its relationship to community in SVCs at ODU.

The rationale for principle 11 contends:

Students' motivation as learners often is improved by a sense of interpersonal connectedness to others within a course. Composition teachers long have practiced pedagogy of collaboration and individualization in which students are encouraged to see themselves as connected to their peers while being unique writers. (p. 23)

The rationale for the principle thus frames creating community to support interpersonal connectedness and collaboration as a key feature of all composition courses, both f2f and

online.[2] The challenge for online writing instructors is to find ways to establish "interpersonal connectedness" and build community when students are physically distant from both the instructor and other students. The *Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI)* advocates several example effective practices for instructors to follow Principle 11. For example, Effective Practice 11.2 states: "OWC teachers should develop course community early by employing "icebreakers" and other activities that make use of the LMS and that engage student writing" (p.23). Additionally Effective Practice 11.7 begins with the suggestion that "Teachers should develop forums, threads, and assessments in which students can have open discussions, either with or without teacher involvement, about course dynamics" (p. 24). While both of these suggested practices highlight opportunities for student interaction, both of them assume that this interaction will take place through writing.

Effective Practices 11.2 and 11.7 suggest actions that help students get to know each other and offer opportunities for dialogue. Might the use of synchronous videoconferencing, like WebEx which ODU currently uses, also promote these goals? On Cisco's web page about WebEx and education, it states: "With Cisco WebEx technologies, colleges and universities can and [*sic*] provide rich online environments for learning and collaboration that engage students beyond the boundaries of the traditional brick-and-mortar campus" (Education WebEx, n.d.). While Cisco here situates videoconferencing as an exciting opportunity to transcend the limitations of f2f instruction, the company also highlights how this technology replicates the intimacy and engagement of f2f interaction: "Your meetings have that 'live and in person' feeling that helps get ideas across and cement relationships" (FAQs, n.d.). Cisco promotes videoconferencing on their platform as a way to establish community, but does it promote the types of community instructors are hoping to create in an online writing class? My dissertation

---

[2] In the next chapter I will examine further what "community" means for OWI since this terms, both within the subfield of OWI and composition generally, is often undefined or under-theorized.

will explore how well this particular modality, with its complex ecology of affordances and constraints for participation and communication, supports collaboration and community building in the writing classroom. I studied these synchronous video-mediated undergraduate writing courses to find out how this modality and medium shape student interaction and their experience of their learning. I wanted to know what influences the choices students make in how they participate in course meetings and interact with each other inside and outside of the classroom, and how these choices impact classroom discourse and the sense of community within the classroom. I wanted to understand whether and how this modality can be used effectively to support writing instruction grounded in the social constructivist foundations of OWI.

In order to consider whether and how SVCs support community building and collaborative pedagogy in online writing courses, it is also important to consider the broader issue of access. OWI Principle 1, which is the umbrella principle in which the rest of the OWI Principles are subsumed, states, "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible." This principle considers three types of accessibility: 1) learners with physical or learning disabilities, 2) learners with multilingual backgrounds, and 3) learning challenges related to socioeconomic issues. These three areas of access need to be considered carefully when assessing community building in SVCs because if these courses are not accessible, community and collaboration, as well as learning in general, cannot happen for all students in the same ways or to the same degree, often excluding those most vulnerable to exclusion in the academy and in society generally. OWI Principles 11 and 1 are thus connected, but sometimes they are odds with each other, setting up a dichotomy between presence versus flexibility, or to use the language from Moore's (1993) theory of transactional distance, autonomy versus dialogue. Some students may value one of these concepts over another, making concerns of community or access higher concerns for them, which could determine whether SVCs are the best course modality for them. Thus, it is important to explore Mick and Middlebrook's (2015)

suggestion that synchronous instruction has a higher barrier of implementation in light of these three areas. This dissertation will consider not only collaboration and community building in SVCs but will examine how questions of access and student preferences are uniquely embedded within these concepts in this modality.

Research Questions

This project will examine the following research questions:

- How do undergraduate students participate and interact in WebEx mediated writing classes?
- How do the affordances and constraints of WebEx shape how undergraduate students participate and interact in writing classes?
- How do undergraduate students want to and how do their instructors want them to participate and interact in synchronous writing classes, and how do students and instructors feel the WebEx technology supported or hindered these goals?
- How do the choices students make about how they participate and interact in WebEx classes affect their sense of collaboration and community within the course?

The first set of research questions focus on what can be observed and analyzed of student participation and interaction in SVCs. The second set of questions focus on student and instructor perceptions of these classes, particularly focused around participation and interaction.

Significance of Study

This focus on synchronous online writing instruction fills an important gap within the field because as technologies supporting synchronous communication become more available and accessible, more institutions and instructors may experiment with this modality for online writing instruction because of its promise as a modality to support student engagement, collaboration, and community building, and because it more closely resembles the paradigm of education that many students and faculty are most familiar with. However, right now there is a scant body of research for institutions to draw on to make decisions about whether and how to incorporate SVCs into their curriculum and what types of training instructors might need to effectively teach in this modality. Thus, it is important to have data-driven research that can inform this mode of instruction. This study is important because it not only has local ramifications—for example

tackling questions of whether or how ODU should continue to offer online undergraduate courses using this modality and how ODU instructors should be trained to teach in this modality—but also has broader implications for the field of OWI because exploring synchronous online undergraduate writing courses, a relatively rare approach to OWI at this time, could offer indication of evidence of whether this modality should be explored more widely across the field.

Summary

This chapter identified my object of study, undergraduate writing synchronous video courses (SVCs), identifying assumptions made about synchronous online classes, namely that they support interpersonal aspects of learning through "real-time engagement," but that they have a higher barrier of implementation. I then noted that the lack of scholarship explicitly examining this particular modality makes it difficult to substantiate these claims. Drawing on the OWI Principles statement, I contextualized my project in light of OWI Principle 15, "OWI/OWL administrators and teachers/tutors should be committed to ongoing research into their programs and courses as well as the very principles in this document," OWI Principle 11, "Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student success," and OWI Principle 1: "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible." I outlined that my project empirically explored issues of community and access within SVCs and considered both the ways students participated and interacted in these courses as well as their perceptions, and those of their instructors, of these courses. I then demonstrated the significance of this study, both within my local context of ODU, but also for the broader OWI field.

Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters, including this introduction (Chapter 1).

Chapter 2 focuses on a key concept of this project, community, suggesting that in order to consider community empirically, I first need a working definition of the term to draw upon. To

create this definition, I provide an overview of six different theories of or relating to community, assessing their usefulness for considering community in OWI as outlined in Principle 11. I then synthesize these models, presenting a model of community specifically for OWI, offering a heuristic for systematically considering community in online writing courses.

Chapter 3 considers the video technology aspect of SVCs. First, I provide a literature review of scholarship related to video, both asynchronous and synchronous, in distance education generally, within OWI, and specifically within SVCs. I then introduce the specific technology platform used in the SVCs I studied for this project, WebEx. I next provide a detailed interface analysis as a foundation to better understand and contextualize the data I collect from the participants in classes using this technology.

Chapter 4 presents and describes the methodology and methods used in this study. After considering OWI Principle 15's call for research into both "actual exchanges" in OWI, as well as that which focuses on "participant perceptions" of learning in these modalities, I argue that triangulation of methods is the best way to capture both of these aspects of SVCs and to collect both etic and emic data. I then outline the specific methods I plan to employ, including discourse analysis of recorded and transcribed verbal and public text-chat interactions in SVCs, as well as thematic analysis of interview data from students and instructors in SVCs.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the discourse analysis of class sessions from the three classes I observed: ENGL 110C, English Composition; ENGL 327W, Advanced Composition; and ENGL 307T, Digital Writing. The chapter is organized around these three classes. Each section first offers background on each class context including the format of the course, the experience level of the instructor, an overview of the topics covered in the two sessions observed, and information regarding the number of participants in the session. Then I present and discuss patterns observed for verbal interaction and then text-chat interaction. After

examining each class individually, I provide a synthesis that considers how the data I collected answer my first two research questions.

Chapter 6 presents the results of the thematic analysis of interview data from students and instructors. After establishing that in coding this data, I revised my coding schema from the heuristic presented in Chapter 2 to focus on three major categorical themes: access and autonomy, relationships, and interaction. I then mirror the structure from the previous chapter, organizing the chapter around each of the three classes studied, and within each class section, organizing my discussion around the three categorical themes mentioned above that emerged in my reiterative coding process. Within my discussion of these themes, I make reference back to the results of the discourse analysis data when appropriate, and at the end of each class section I present a conclusion that synthesizes what emerges when looking at the discourse and interview data from that class together. After examining each class individually, I provide a synthesis that considers how the data I collected answer my second two research questions.

Chapter 7 reviews the significant findings of my study, offering a conclusion about what I learned about collaboration and community in the SVCs I studied. I then consider the limitations of my study as context for these conclusions. I conclude with recommendations for future scholarship in this area as well as for pedagogical and technological considerations, both for the OWI community generally and for ODU specifically.

CHAPTER 2

TOWARDS A WORKABLE DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY FOR OWI

Introduction

This chapter provides both an overview of the major conversations my dissertation is joining regarding community and writing instruction, especially OWI, and a synthesis of relevant definitions, models, and theories of community in order to develop a framework for understanding and assessing community both specifically for this project, but also hopefully for use in the field of OWI. This chapter will first consider OWI Principle 11, which specifically calls for community building as part of effective online writing instruction, and contextualize this call within the social constructivist roots of OWI. Next it will review and analyze six different definitions and models of or related to community to consider their usefulness in examining community in OWI. This analysis will be followed by a discussion of access and inclusivity and their importance to any understanding of community in OWI. The chapter will end with a proposed framework built from current definitions and models of community along with access and inclusivity considerations that will be used as the foundation for my analysis of synchronous video courses (SVCs) at Old Dominion University.

OWI Principle 11

OWI Principle 11 states, "Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student success." Thus, developing community is positioned as one of the key actions instructors and institutions can do for effective online writing instruction. One of the challenges in approaching this Principle, though, is that "student success" is left undefined. Is success defined by student engagement, student achievement, or student learning, and how can or should those outcomes be measured? In the rationale for OWI principle 11, the CCCC OWI Committee for Effective Practices in Online Writing Instruction (2013) wrote:

> Students' motivation as learners often is improved by a sense of interpersonal connectedness to others within a course. Composition teachers long have practiced pedagogy of collaboration and individualization in which students are encouraged to see themselves as connected to their peers while being unique writers.... student investment is thought to be fostered when [online writing courses (OWCs)] create community among teachers and students. (p. 23)

The OWI Committee thus frames creating community to support interpersonal connectedness and collaboration as a key feature of all composition courses, both face-to-face (f2f) and online to promote "student investment." Therefore motivation and engagement are positioned as the intended results of community building. Currently, the Principles Statement does not explicitly link community building with student learning. Additionally, while this rationale does begin to define community as a "pedagogy of collaboration and individualization," it fails to make clear what collaboration should look like in online writing courses, what the outcome of this collaboration would be, and what types of interactions between faculty and students need to occur for the creation of the collaborative communities it calls for. The rationale also says little of peer-to-peer interaction. Without a clear sense of what we mean by *collaboration* and *community*, it is difficult for instructors and researchers to measure whether or not community has been developed in an online writing course and what the consequences are of it having been or not having been established. In her article explicitly investigating Principle 11, Stewart (2018) claimed, "Without a more explicit definition of the intended outcomes of community, it is difficult to use the principle as a foundation for research." Since this project is interested in exploring *community* in SVCs, I am working to articulate an explicit definition of this term on which to ground my research by looking at definitions of community from both inside and from outside of the field of writing studies.

The Role of Community in Composition and OWI

As evidenced by its inclusion in the 2015 collection, *Keywords in Writing Studies*, *community* is a key concept in the field of writing instruction. In his entry on community, Prior

(2015) notes that the word "community" is "something fluid, adaptable, and robust enough to weave together different discourses and worlds." Prior highlights that while it might be a keyword, *community* often does not have clear definitions in the field. Making a similar point, in "The Idea of Community in the Study of Writing," Harris (1989) invoked Williams' (1976) exploration of the term *community*:

> *Community* can be the warmly persuasive word to describe an existing set of relationships, or the warmly persuasive word to describe an alternative set of relationships. What is most important, perhaps, is that unlike all other terms of social organization (state, nation, society, etc.) it seems never to be used unfavourably, and never to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term. (p. 66)

Because it has no opposite, Harris suggested community is often "an empty and sentimental word" (p. 13). To avoid the calls for community in the OWI Principles being "empty and sentimental," instructors and researchers need a clearer sense of exactly what these concepts mean in OWI. In his examination, Harris drew on Williams' methodology in *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, of not trying "to define and fix the meanings of the words he discusses, to clear up the many ambiguities involved with them," but "instead attempt[ed] to sketch 'a history and complexity of meanings'" (p. 12). In this chapter I will follow the lead of both Harris and Williams, tracing the various notions and definitions of community and what they mean in relation to OWI.

To start, it is helpful to consider how the focus on collaboration[3] and community in online writing classes is rooted in broader concerns with these issues in the fields of education and writing studies specifically. In their book, *Preparing Educators for Online Writing Instruction*,

---

[3] Often community and collaboration are used synonymously or in tandem. For example the rationale for OWI Principle 11 quoted above suggests "Composition teachers long have practiced pedagogy of *collaboration* and individualization in which students are encouraged to see themselves as connected to their peers while being unique writers" (emphasis mine). Thus community is equated with collaboration. Yet not all communities may be collaborative. The tendency to equate or connect collaboration and community both demonstrates the positive sentimentality associated with the concept of community noted by Williams and Harris, but also connects to the field's development of theories of community that were built on social constructivist theories which emphasize collaboration. In this project I will move to decouple these concepts, focusing first on community and what it means for or looks like in OWI, and then considering how and where collaboration might fit into community in OWI.

Hewett and Ehmann (2004) suggested the epistemological roots of OWI lie in social constructivism, particularly highlighting scholars such as Lev Vygotsky and Kenneth Bruffee and their championing of the role of community and collaboration for learning. Vygotsky (1986) in *Thought and Language* theorized that language use develops through social relationships. His theory contends that the evolution from inner speech to talking to writing all require appropriate social situations. Many writing instructors have drawn on Vygotsky's ideas in developing their pedagogies.

Bruffee is one of the scholars who is generally credited with the development and promotion of social constructivist pedagogy within the field of composition itself. In his article, "Collaborative Learning and the 'Conversation of Mankind," Bruffee (1984) advocated peer-to-peer learning in the writing classroom. Bruffee claimed:

> ...any effort to understand how we think requires us to understand the nature of conversation; and any effort to understand conversation requires us to understand the nature of community life that generates and maintains conversation. Furthermore, any effort to understand and cultivate in ourselves the kind of thought we value most requires us to understand and cultivate the kinds of community life that establish and maintain conversation that is the origin of that kind of thought. (p. 640)

Bruffee here highlighted not only the social aspect of language use, but puts forward the importance of community and conversation for learning and communicating. Importantly, Bruffee equates conversation with the creation and maintenance of community and points to this conversation-community relationship as the root of learning. OWI scholars, such as Scott Warnock (2009), have explicitly invoked Bruffee when discussing the value of collective thinking and conversation in all writing classes, including those online. Warnock claimed:

> For me, regardless of whether I am teaching online, hybrid, or onsite, I want my students talking to each other because, following the work of social constructivists like Bruffee, I feel that dialogue between myself and my students builds the knowledge of my writing courses most effectively. I can't accomplish this by just talking *at* my students. (p. 68, emphasis original)

Warnock, drawing on Bruffee, highlighted the value of interaction for thinking and learning. Bruffee further cemented the relationship of conversation and community with his claim:

> [O]ur task must involve engaging students in conversation among themselves at as many points in both the writing and the reading process as possible, and that we should contrive to ensure that students' conversation about what they read and write is similar in as many ways as possible to the way we would like them eventually to read and write. The way they talk with each other determines the way they will think and the way they will write (p. 642)

Bruffee's call here suggests the value of creating communities within the classroom to prepare for the communities students will join in the future. The task for online instructors is to consider how they might translate Bruffee's vision into the online context, and to do that, they need to have an understanding of what community means in the online writing classroom. The next section will examine six different definitions or models of or related to community to explore what they are and can be, as well as assess each model's usefulness for better understanding and enacting Principle 11's call for community in OWI.

Definitions and Models of Community

Principle 11 does not point to a specific definition or model of community for OWI, yet instructors and researchers need to have a specific definition or model of community in mind to implement and assess community building efforts. In discussing Principle 11, Hewett (2015a) asked, "Are students genuinely interested in developing 'community' in the sense that composition instructors may desire?" (p. 74). As context for her question, she draws on the work of anthropologist Nathan (2005), who suggested that in higher education "students construct their primary networks among smallish, ego-based groups of 'two to six friends who formed their core university community'" (qtd in Hewett, 2015a, p. 74). These groups typically are organized around dorms or social clubs. Hewett suggested that these types of communities are different than what we are trying to cultivate in the online classroom and thus "[c]ourse-based 'community' may need a different definition to make the work of OWI Principle 11 realistic" (p. 74). As a student in an online graduate program, I have experienced first-hand a robust course-based community with my fellow students that provides me with a personal reference for what community can look like in online classes. However, the difference between graduate students

and undergraduate students potentially undermines this experience as a reference for considering community in OWI in undergraduate courses, which is what the OWI Principles are most interested in.

So where can OWI teachers, researchers, and theorists begin to determine a useful definition of course-based community for OWI? Harris (1989) and Prior (2015) in their examinations of community focus most of their attention specifically on discourse communities. This is unsurprising because it is a definition of community that springs from the field of composition itself. Therefore, as a model of community coming from the field of composition, the concept of discourse community is a helpful place to begin an exploration of what community means in OWI.

Discourse Communities

In his discussion of the concept of community in writing studies, Prior (2015) focuses most of his examination on the specific concept of discourse communities, positioning it as the primary definition of community used in the field. In tracing this concept's history within the field, Prior suggested that it was Patricia Bizzell who coined the term "discourse community" in her essay "Cognition, Convention, and Certainty: What We Need to Know about Writing." While not offering a precise definition, Bizzell (1982/1992), spoke of "discourse conventions," "habits of language use," and "shared ways of understanding experience" as features of discourse communities (p.79). Several years later, Herzberg (1986) discussed the uptake of this concept in the field:

> Use of the term 'discourse community' testifies to the increasingly common assumption that discourse operates within conventions defined by communities, be they academic disciplines or social groups. The pedagogies associated with writing across the curriculum and academic English now use the notion of 'discourse communities' to signify a cluster of ideas: that language use in a group is a form of social behavior, that discourse is a means of maintaining and extending the group's knowledge and of initiating new members into the group, and that discourse is epistemic or constitutive of the group's knowledge. (qtd. in Swales, 1990, p. 21)

Herzberg's discussion of discourse communities echoes Bruffee's (1984) notion of the value of social interaction and collaboration to help students join a community of writers and thinkers.

However, Herzberg (1986) went on to suggest, "The idea of 'discourse community' is not well defined as yet, but like many imperfectly defined terms, it is suggestive, the center of a set of ideas rather than the sign of a settled notion" (qtd. in Swales, 1990, p. 22). Harris (1989) similarly pointed to the lack of an authoritative definition of the term *discourse community* and traces the foundations of this concept:

> ...the notion of "discourse community" has come into the study of writing-drawing on one hand from the literary-philosophical idea of "interpretive community," and on the other from the sociolinguistic concept of "speech community," but without fully taking into account the differences between the two. "Interpretive community," as used by Stanley Fish and others, is a term in a theoretical debate; it refers not so much to specific physical groupings of people as to a kind of loose dispersed network of individuals who share certain habits of mind. "Speech community," however, is usually meant to describe an actual group of speakers living in a particular place and time. Thus while "interpretive community" can usually be taken to describe something like a worldview, discipline, or profession, "speech community" is generally used to refer more specifically to groupings like neighborhoods, settlements, or classrooms. (p. 14)

Harris positioned discourse community as a hybrid concept of community and suggests its hybrid nature is what makes it a nebulous concept.

In an attempt to nail down a definition of discourse community, Swales (1990) strived to distinguish discourse communities and speech communities, explicitly exploring whether discourse community was a distinct concept from speech community or just field jargon for the same concept. He ultimately argued that they are distinct concepts, claiming:

> ...'speech' just will not do as an exclusive modifier of communities that are often heavily engaged in writing, but rather in terms of what that literary activity implies. Literacy takes away locality and parochiality, for members are more likely to communicate with other members in distant places, and are more likely to react and respond to writings rather than speech from the past. (p. 24)

Swales distinguished discourse communities as describing communities whose communication is not space and time bound the way speech is. Swales adds additional distinguishing features between the concept of discourse communities from speech communities:

A second reason for separating the two concepts derives from the need to distinguish a sociolinguistic grouping from a sociorhetorical one. In a sociolinguistic speech community, the communicative needs of the group, such as socialization or group solidarity, tend to predominate in the development and maintenance of its discoursal characteristics. The primary determinants of linguistic behavior are social. However, in a sociorhetorical discourse community, the primary determinants of linguistic behavior are functional, since a discourse community consists of a group of people who link up in order to pursue objectives that are prior to those of socialization and solidarity, even if these latter should consequently occur. In a discourse community, the communicative needs of the goals tend to predominate in the development and maintenance of its discoursal characteristics. (p.24)

Swales distinguished speech communities and discourse communities between those that are merely social, the former, and those that are objective driven, the latter.

Finally, Swales distinguished speech communities and discourse communities by how membership is developed: "A speech community typically inherits its members by birth, accident, or adoption; a discourse community recruits its members by persuasion, training or relevant qualification" (p. 24). This is an interesting distinction when we consider course-based community. Upper-level and graduate courses could fall under the later definition as students often opt to take those courses based on their interests or goals; however, lower-level, general education courses, particularly first-year composition (FYC), seem better aligned with the former categorization as these are often required courses with many sections offered and the group of students who find themselves sharing a section have been brought together by a myriad of factors including chance.

Swales offered six criteria to specifically define discourse communities:

1. A discourse community has a broadly agreed set of common public goals.
2. A discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members.
3. A discourse community uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback.
4. A discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims.
5. In addition to owning genres, a discourse community has acquired some specific lexis.
6. A discourse community has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal expertise. (p. 24-27)

In Swales' conception, discourse communities are shaped by shared goals, stable mechanisms

for interaction, specific genres and vocabulary used for this interaction, and a finite number of

members[4]. So are these criteria useful for considering community in OWI? First we need to

consider whether these criteria are relevant to class-based community generally.

Drawing on his stated criteria, Swales detailed what he believes does and does not

qualify as a discourse community, and explicitly considered whether an academic class could

qualify. He claimed:

> Except in exceptional cases of well-knit groups of advanced students already familiar
> with the material, an academic class is unlikely to be a discourse community from the
> outset. However, the hoped-for outcome is that it will form a discourse community…
> Somewhere down the line, broad agreement on goals will be established, a full range of
> participatory mechanisms will be created, information exchange and feedback will
> flourish by peer-review and instructor commentary, understanding the rationale of and
> facility with appropriate genres will develop, control of the technical vocabulary in both
> oral and written context will emerge, and a level of expertise that permits critical thinking
> be made manifest. (p. 32)

The course-based communities I have participated in as a graduate student could be

considered discourse communities based on Swales' definition because they meet his six

criteria. We are a group of people who have been brought together by our interests in English

studies and are working towards the goals of developing our research and pedagogy. We read

and write following the norms of our field and subfields and thus share a common vocabulary.

However undergraduate students rarely have this shared grounding. Particularly in a general

education course like FYC, students may be coming from wildly different backgrounds, have

---

[4] OWI Practice 11.1 explicitly discusses issues of finite numbers for community:
> OWCs should have no more than 20 registered students (see OWI Principle 9). Online
> environments have built-in community meeting spaces. However, classes larger than 20 make it
> difficult for students to know each other and each other's writing, which often requires written
> personal attention to a large number of peer discourse opportunities. Furthermore, larger classes
> make personalized connections between teacher and students and among students and peers
> difficult.

While OWI Principle 9 frames issues of class caps in terms of workload, Practice 11.1 explicitly points to
its role in community building, suggesting that this quality of discourse communities is applicable to OWI.

different goals as part of the course, or are simply there because it is required. This points to

why it is difficult for these types of classes to be a discourse community "from the outset" as

Swales suggests. Thus, when Swales suggests a class is not inherently a discourse community,

this makes sense when we consider general education courses like FYC. Interestingly though,

Swales' claims that while these classes may not start out as discourse communities, the goal is

to create a discourse community by the end of the course. This goal might be even more difficult

in an online course when students are separated from each other or perhaps are even resistant

to community development, having chosen online learning based on a preference for

autonomous learning. Additionally, even when students are interested in developing community

in online classes, their interest may be rooted in the goal of course satisfaction as opposed to

collaborative learning or collaborative goal accomplishment (Stewart, 2018).

Yet, the notion of working towards a discourse community in academic courses aligns

with earlier work in composition that while not explicitly invoking the term discourse community,

espoused the idea that writing courses, particularly FYC should build community to help

students join the larger academic community. For example, in his landmark essay, "Inventing

the University," Bartholomae (1986) claimed:

> Every time a student sits down to write for us, he has to invent the university for the occasion—invent the university, that is, or a branch of it, like history or anthropology or economics or English. The student has to learn to speak our language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community. (p. 134)

The "our community" Bartholomae refers to is the academy or a specific discipline. Bartholomae

does not point to classrooms specifically as communities here, but instead points to the

classroom as a place to initiate students into an academic community. This is interesting when

we consider this goal in the OWI context because in the face-to-face (f2f) classroom there are

two primary ways discourse is produced: first through assignments and formal activities, and

second through verbal interaction. Yet, in OWI, particularly asynchronous models, almost all of

this discourse takes place through writing, thereby in some ways conflating these two types of

discourse. This can be particularly seen in assignments like discussion forums where students'

posts and responses serve as both course assignment and interaction. Even with this discourse

conflation, though, the goal still seems to be to integrate students into an academic community

by helping them recognize the expectations of the academic community. Harris (1989) critiqued

this notion of an "academic community," though, suggesting:

> ...most of the "communities" to which other current theorists refer exist at a vague remove from actual experience: The University, The Profession, The Discipline, The Academic Discourse Community. They are all quite literally utopias—nowheres, meta-communities—tied to no particular time or place, and thus oddly free of many of the tensions, discontinuities, and conflicts in the sorts of talk and writing that go on every day in the classrooms and departments of an actual university. For all the scrutiny it has drawn, the idea of community thus still remains little more than a notion—hypothetical and suggestive, powerful yet ill-defined. (p. 14)

Harris also suggests that the notion that there is an academic discourse community that is

wholly distinct and separate from the communities students are already are part of when they

join the classroom is a fiction:

> The "languages" that our students bring to us cannot but have been shaped, at least in part, by their experiences in school, and thus must, in some ways, already be "academic." Similarly, our teaching will and should always be affected by a host of beliefs and values that we hold regardless of our roles as academics. What we see in the classroom, then, are not two coherent and competing discourses but many overlapping and conflicting ones. (p. 19)

These critiques have been echoed by scholars such as Russell (1995) and Wardle and Downs

(2007), and Wardle (2009), who have questioned the existence of a generic academic

discourse. However, if we return to Bruffee's (1984) notion of community and conversation in

the writing classroom, we can see him advocating the classroom as a type of practice discourse

community. Bruffee claimed:

> To think well as individuals we must learn to think well collectively—that is, we must learn to converse well. The first steps to learning to think better, therefore, are learning to converse better and learning to establish and maintain the sorts of social context, the sorts of community life, that foster the sorts of conversation members of the community value. (p. 640)

Bruffee positioned classroom conversations and the community established by them as a way to help students practice interacting in a community in ways they will do in future academic discourse communities. Like Swales (1990) who suggested that a hoped-for outcome of academic courses is the creation of a discourse community, Bruffee is articulating the goal of creating a community in the writing classroom which helps students understand the skills needed for and expectations of the academic community(ies) they will join in the future. This is why the idea of discourse communities is often taught as *content* in writing courses including FYC, particularly those drawing on writing-about-writing (WAW) approaches.[5]

Thus while discourse community as a concept is relevant to the content of an online writing class as instructors strive to help students recognize the social nature of writing, and as Herzberg (1986) suggested "that discourse operates within conventions defined by communities" (qtd. In Swales, 1990, p. 22), it is less helpful in considering the creation and assessment of community within an online course itself. OWI Principle 11, while certainly invoking the need for community in online writing classes, does so not based on the goal of creating discourse communities nor even the more general social constructivist view of role of community for learning. Instead it frames community as playing a key role in student motivation. The rationale for Principle 11 states, "Students' motivation as learners often is improved by a sense of interpersonal connectedness to others within a course...student investment is thought to be fostered when OWCs create community among teachers and students." Thus, when determining an appropriate model of community for OWI, we need one that accounts for these motivational aspects as well as other defining characteristics of a classroom, including differing participant roles and power, as well as a student's arbitrary "membership" in a given class.

---

[5] WAW approaches to writing instruction position writing studies as the content for first-year writing courses, reframing them from courses about how to write to an introduction to writing studies. Wardle and Down's (2014) textbook *Writing About Writing* has a whole section devoted to communities, and texts includes an excerpt from Swales (1990).

Discourse community does not seem to be the right model of community for understanding community in the online classroom as articulated in Principle 11, not only because academic classes, particularly general education courses, do not often meet the criteria of a discourse community, at least as outlined by Swales (1990), but also because this model does not address issues of engagement and motivation highlighted by the Principle. But what about speech community? In his attempt to trace discourse community as a hybrid concept between interpretive communities and speech communities, Harris (1989) claimed, "'speech community' is generally used to refer more specifically to groupings like neighborhoods, settlements, or *classrooms* (p. 14, emphasis mine). Thus Harris suggested speech community as a potential framework for classroom community. The next section will examine speech community in its own right as a potential model for approaching community in OWI.

Speech Communities

Swales (1990) distinguished discourse communities from speech communities both by the importance of verbal speech as the main discourse mode in the latter, as well as the distinction between goal-oriented versus social-oriented communities. However, linguists' definition of the concept of speech communities often begin more generally. In her book *Speech Communities*, Morgan (2014) sought to define the concept of speech communities, and in her first chapter, traces the history of the concept in the field of linguistics. She credits the first definition to Bloomfield (1933), who wrote, "A group of people who use the same set of speech signals is a speech-community" (p. 29). Morgan suggested, "This definition reflects a common belief of the time, that monolingualism—one language, one nation-state—is the canonical example of speech community" (p. 3). Chomsky (1965) would go on to challenge this view, critiquing purely descriptive and structural analyses of language and brought linguistics' focus to humans' ability to produce language rather than just language as a social construct. Morgan

(2014) suggested that Chomsky's critique of Bloomfield's monolinguistic cultural definition of speech communities paved the way for two scholars who, in her words, retrieved and revived the concept of speech communities: John Gumperz and Dell Hymes.

Gumperz (1968) explored the concept of the speech community as a social construct, suggesting verbal interaction within a speech community was "a social process in which utterances are selected in accordance with socially recognized norms and expectations" (p. 219). Similarly, Hymes (1974) claimed, "A speech community is defined . . . as a community sharing knowledge of rules of conduct and interpretation of speech. Such sharing comprises knowledge of at least one form of speech, and knowledge also of its patterns of use" (p. 50–51). This community knowledge could consist of slang or jargon used as well as specific expectations for interaction patterns shared by the group. These definitions of a speech community could support Harris's (1989) suggestion that a classroom could be a speech community when we consider another area of research in linguistics: classroom talk.

Early educational linguists interested in talk occurring in classrooms found typical observable patterns of interaction between teachers and students. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) coded talk into four categories: soliciting, responding, structuring, and reacting. They suggested that classroom discourse often followed a pattern of a teacher structuring the conversation or soliciting information or answers from students, a student responding, and then the teacher reacting to the response. Similarly, Mehan (1979) presented what he labeled the IRE discourse pattern of classrooms: the teacher initiates, the student responds, and the teacher evaluates. Wells (1986) would modify this to the IRF pattern[6], replacing *evaluating* with offering *feedback*. Wells favored the category of feedback versus evaluation because it was more encompassing of the types of responses teachers might give to a student response to their solicitation. For instance, evaluation assumes indicating whether a response is correct or incorrect, while

---

[6] I will use the abbreviation IRF for the duration of my project unless a source I reference uses IRE specifically.

feedback could encompass noting that an answer is interesting or suggesting the student should continue to develop an idea. Here is a hypothetical exchange that demonstrates the IRF pattern:

> Teacher: Why is it ironic when Malcolm X says in his literacy narrative, "I never had been so truly free in my life"?[7]
> Student: He was in prison.
> Teacher: Yes, exactly…

Likely this exchange would precede a follow-up question which would be answered by that or another student and the teacher would respond to that answer and the pattern would repeat. Thus classroom talk has been found to follow observable patterns based on the roles and the authority inherent in the student and teacher roles.

While some instructors try to move beyond this pattern, encouraging discussion and conversation in their classes as advocated by Bruffee and other social constructivists, all classes do have norms for communication and discourse specific to the course itself that students must learn and navigate. This is true of online classes as well, including expectations for formality or depth in discussion posts or responding respectfully to the posts of others.[8] In fact, OWI Principle 10, "Students should be prepared by the institution and their teachers for the unique technological and pedagogical components of OWI," touches on this idea. The rationale for OWI Principle 10 suggests:

> Neither institutional/unit administrators nor teachers should assume that because many students are frequent technology users, they will be successful with OWI. Indeed, the kind of online communicating that tech-savvy students do in their personal lives often is fast, frequent, and informal, which typically is not the kind of communicating they will need to do regularly to be successful in OWCs. (p. 22)

---

[7] Quotation is from "Learning to Read" excerpt from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, but the exchange is a hypothetical exchange I developed. I have taught this text many times, however, and I'm sure I have engaged in versions of this IRF exchange many times.

[8] Many early essays on OWI and networked communication in the writing classroom explored issues of and best practices for "netiquette." For example, see Carbone (1997), Woodland (1999), Wilson (1999), Love (2000), and Knutson (2001).

Similarly, Effective Practice 10.3 advocates "Institutions offering OWCs should create resources for students...to help students gain an understanding of the differences between writing in a traditional setting and in their specific online learning setting (p. 22). What both the rationale and the effective practice suggest is that students need to be oriented to the communication expectations and norms of the online writing class. Therefore, speech community as a concept does appear to be relevant to OWI, but like the concept of discourse community, this specific understanding of community does not speak to the particular concerns of social relationships and their role in motivation as called for in Principle 11. Additionally, the communication patterns of a community do not necessarily have to be collaborative; yet researchers using speech communities as the primarily model to approach Principle 11 could run the risk of conflating community and collaboration in unhelpful ways because of its social focus. Though Principle 11 does not explicitly present social learning as the key goal of community construction, instead focusing on motivation, OWI's roots in social constructivism points to its importance for any understanding of community. This grounding is why Stewart (2018) argued for approaching Principle 11 in terms of both satisfaction and collaboration. Perhaps it is helpful, then, to consider the interconnection of OWI Principle 10 and Principle 11 for understanding community. The preparation students should receive to understand the communication norms of their online writing classes is a precondition of their ability to participate successfully in the "personalized and interpersonal online communities" being called for in Principle 11.

Another factor when considering the usefulness of this model of community for OWI is the role of proximity within it. In providing his understanding of speech communities Hymes' (1974) claimed, "For our purposes it appears most useful to reserve the notion of community for a local unit, characterized for its members by common locality and primary interaction, and to admit exceptions cautiously" (p. 51). Of course, the lack of a "common locality" is the defining feature of distance education, which brings up the question of whether "speech community" as

defined this way is relevant to understanding community in online courses. More recent examinations of speech communities, like from Morgan (2014), seem more comfortable expanding this aspect of community. Morgan (2014) claimed, "Speech communities cannot be defined solely through linguistic analysis and description *or by static physical location*, since membership can be experienced as part of a nation-state, neighborhood, village, club, compound, *online chat room*, religious institution and so on" (p. 7, emphasis mine). However, the issue still remains that this model of community is concerned most with the shared discourse of the community as opposed to relationships within and the motivation received from communities. Therefore I will next turn to sociological theories of virtual communities to explore the calls for communities that build relationships and motivations for engagement which are highlighted in Principle 11.

Virtual Communities

Rheingold (1993) was one of the first to give extended examination to the notion of virtual communities, offering this definition: "*Virtual communities* are social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace." Writing at the early stages of the internet, Rheingold's work embodies an optimism of the possibilities of the internet and presents an idealized view of virtual communities. His focus on "sufficient human feeling" and "personal relationships" aligns with the goals of "interpersonal connectedness" articulated in Principle 11. His definition spotlights the need for "public discussions" that go on "long enough" to form these relationships. A more recent definition of virtual communities also indicated the central role of interaction in virtual communities. Delanty (2003) claimed, "Virtual community is one of the best examples we have of communication communities, since the exclusive aim of the virtual community is the sharing of information in a communicative context outside of which does not always exist" (p. 171). Delanty argued that it is the focus on

communication that makes virtual communities distinct from other types of communities: "Perhaps what is distinctive about virtual community is the enhanced role it gives to communication. Virtual communities are communication communities—they have made belonging more communicative" (p. 185). In this way, the model of virtual communities brings together discourse and relationships, suggesting that relationships are formed through the shared discourse.

This focus on communication aligns well with Bruffee's (1984) focus on the role of conversation in the writing classroom and Warnock's (2009) echo of Bruffee highlighting the importance in online writing classes that "students [are] talking to each other" (p. 68). However, it is important to note the differences between the virtual communities explored by Rheingold and Delanty and the online writing classroom. Rheingold's definition noted that these social aggregations "emerge" as opposed to being externally created and this emergence creates a community coalescing around the goal simply of communicating about a shared interest. The larger goal of any educational experience is learning, and many instructors believe the creation of community should be done to facilitate this primary goal. Thus, while virtual communities exist solely to facilitate communication around a common interest and are generally formed organically around this common interests, participants in an online writing class are joined together by the goal of learning, or in the case of general education courses like FYC, perhaps simply to complete a graduation requirement, with communication and relationship building used as tools to promote this goal. Additionally, students in online writing classes have been brought together simply by virtue of having signed up or having been assigned to the same course, which is what Swales pointed to when claiming classes usually do not qualify as discourse communities. Again, just as Hewett (2015a) suggested, classroom communities, especially those online, are different than other types of communities like those formed in dormitories, teams, or in campus organizations like those that Nathan (2005) explored, or the

virtual communities that Rheingold (1993) and Delanty (2003) discussed, which are often formed based on shared interests. Therefore, in considering Principle 11 we need to explore notions of community that explore communities of people who have been brought together by other forces. One such model is Communities of Practice.

Communities of Practice

After discussing discourse communities in his definition of the concept of community, Prior (2015) then presents the concept of Communities of Practice (CoPs), highlighting its relevance and uptake within writing studies. The concept of CoPs was first articulated by educational theorists Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) in their book *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. This framework examines the social aspect of learning, specifically contrasting against conceptions of learning focusing on individual achievement and cognition. Wenger (1998) went on to further define and explain CoPs and identified "[t]hree dimensions of the relation by which practice is the source of coherence of a community...

1) mutual engagement
2) a joint enterprise
3) a shared repertoire" (p.72-73)

These dimensions resemble the characteristics of discourse communities as articulated by Swales (1990). Wenger's first dimension seems to align with Swales second criteria that "[a] discourse community has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members" (p.25). Additionally, just as a discourse community has "a broadly agreed set of common public goals" (Swales, 1990, p. 24), a community of practice has "a joint enterprise" (Wenger, 1998, p. 73). Of the third dimension of communities of practice, Wenger noted, "The repertoire of a community of practice includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice" (p. 83). This notion of shared repertoire sounds similar to definitions of discourse communities as sharing specific genres and lexis.

However, it is the role of discourse within each model that distinguished discourse communities from communities of practice. For discourse communities, as the name suggests, shared discourse is the primary cohering factor of the community, whereas in communities of practice, shared discourse becomes more of a byproduct of being engaged with the same practice.

One similarity they do share, though, is scholars' attempts to use these frameworks to consider classroom community. Yet just as Swales suggested that classes usually do not qualify as discourse communities, we need to consider whether the classroom and specifically the online classroom can qualify as a community of practice. The primary examples Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) used to exemplify communities of practice, including Vai and Gola tailors, Yucatec midwives, meat cutters, naval quartermasters, and claims processors, provide a range of contexts in which inquiry occurs. The learning occurring in these communities is happening in non-school settings, contains little explicit teaching, and fosters newcomers assuming more responsibilities over time. Thus, this learning is quite different from what we might expect in the classroom.

There has been some discussion of communities of practice in relation to OWI. Often this discussion is in the form of calls for the development of communities of practice for instructors or tutors engaged in online instruction. For example, Rodrigo (2015) in her chapter on OWI and mobile technologies notes the difficulty for faculty of keeping up with the constantly changing technology landscape of their students' lives and suggested, "institutions might develop faculty and staff learning communities that continuously explore pedagogical affordances as well as other topics, issues, and policies related to mobile learning" (p. 507). She went on to argue that her suggestion for the creation of communities of practice of online faculty "suggest[s] a twist of OWI Principle 11: *Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student **and faculty** success*" (p. 508). Rodrigo's revision of Principle 11 shows the importance of community more

broadly for OWI beyond just the online classroom. Similarly, Meloncon and Arduser (2013) called for the development of communities of practice of online instructors to support online course development. So while Communities of Practice is obviously a helpful framework for OWI, particularly for online instructors, we still need to consider its usefulness for understanding community within the online writing classroom, which is what Principle 11 currently focuses on.

> Wenger (1998) discussed where and in what types of interaction these CoPs develop:

> Students go to school and, as they come together to deal *in their own fashion* with the agenda of the imposing institution and the unsettling mysteries of youth, communities of practice sprout everywhere--in the classroom as well as on the playground, officially or *in the cracks.* (p. 6, emphases mine)

While much of the work on CoPs centers on learning outside of school, particularly in the workplace, nonetheless, the framework provides helpful ground for examining community in OWI, particularly informal community occurring outside the bounds of official class communication, thus "in the cracks," that students develop "in their own fashion." In their chapter on preparing students for OWI, Meloncon and Harris (2015) suggest instructors "[p]rovide students with an area where they can answer each other's questions and/or share information in their own community of practice" (p. 427). Yet is this community they describe, truly a CoP? Wenger's (1998) characterization of communities of practice presents a distinctly different power dynamic than that of the typical classroom. In expanding on his criteria for communities of practice of a shared enterprise, Wenger claimed, "The enterprise is never fully determined by an outside mandate, by a prescription, or by any individual participant" (p. 80). Thus power seems evenly distributed which is distinctly different from the power structure of the classroom where the instructor always holds power in a way that students do not, even in classrooms in which instructors *try to* share power with their students. To return to Melancon and Harris's (2015) advocacy of these strategies to create students' "own community of practice" through a forum just for them, we could argue that since the instructor is not present, the equity of power that is part of a community of practice could be established. However, we

then have to question if a definition or model for understanding community is one where the instructor has to be excluded is sufficient for understanding classroom community. Additionally, it is worth considering if "being a student" as the shared characteristic that brings people together counts as a *practice*.

In my graduate program, I believe the students could be considered to be part of community of practice because many of us are teachers or administrators and are engaging in scholarship in various fields of English studies. We often communicate about these practices, asking questions or offering suggestions to each other based on our experiences. However, as I have articulated through my examinations of other models of community, undergraduate students and undergraduate classes, particularly general education classes, are different from graduate students and graduate courses. Undergraduate students have been brought together in general education courses by curriculum requirements. Does signing up for a required class makes students connect over a joint enterprise through mutual engagement? I would argue that an undergraduate general education course generally cannot constitute a practice in the way Wenger articulates practice, particularly when some students may still be determining whether they want to be part of an academic community period, let alone a specific community of practice within the academy[9]. Yet, the concept of informal learning and interaction that happens "in the cracks" from this model does appear to be relevant and important for considering the types of communities called for in Principle 11. We need to look then at theories that capture this idea but that better fit the classroom context, such as student underlife.

---

[9] Communities of Practice may develop in upper-level classes within students' majors as these students are attempting to or considering joining the community of the field they are pursuing training in. Wenger's (1998) three dimensions of CoPs, mutual engagement, shared enterprise, and shared repertoire, better align with the goals and experiences of upper level discipline specific courses than they do in general education courses. Therefore, scholars interested in community in online writing classes within a specific discipline may find CoP to be a workable model for their investigation.

Student Underlife

It is important to first note that the sociological concept of underlife, unlike the other theories that have been explored thus far, is not explicitly a theory of community. Brooke (1987) discussed the sociological concept of underlife in the context of writing instruction, defining underlife as "behaviors which undercut the roles expected of participants in a situation—the ways an employee, for example, shows she is not just an employee, but has a more complex personality outside that role" (p. 141). Some of these behaviors may be done independently; however, in Brooke's definitional framework of student life, many of these behaviors are communal in nature. Brooke described student underlife behaviors as "*the private conversations students have with one another*, the notes they write to themselves and then scratch out, the things they're writing when the teacher thinks they are taking notes, and other such activities" (p. 144, emphasis mine). Thus, while the concept of underlife is not strictly related to community, it does provide a helpful framework for considering the informal, external, and/or private activities that students engage in which can support or detract from community building.

While not invoking this concept of underlife specifically, Guglielmo (2005) touched on these kind of interactions that happen in the traditional "class*room*" (p. 105, emphasis original) which help build class community and what this means for OWI. She suggested community is more difficult to foster in online composition courses because what she calls the "spontaneous community" (p. 105) that frequently occurs in traditional classes is lacking in the online environment. She claimed:

> In traditional courses, the majority of class activities center around the room. Students may engage in casual conversation while they wait for the instructor, they may greet one another as they enter, they may turn to their peers and ask them for a pen, consult them about course assignments, or even reflect on the weekend's activities. (p. 105)

The types of interactions she describes here qualify as examples of students demonstrating they have "a more complex personality outside [the] role [of student]" as Brooke described. Guglielmo suggested these opportunities for informal speech create a "prior existence of

community" (p. 105) in traditional classes, therefore highlighting the role this informal communication that occurs by virtue of shared proximity has in relationship building. She suggested, "In online courses, therefore, we must work... to 'replicate' that room and to attempt to foster the spontaneous community that develops in traditional classroom settings" (p. 105). While Guglielmo does not delve deeply into the notion of the "spontaneous community" of f2f classroom, I feel it is important to note that physical proximity alone will not automatically always help create class community. Anyone who has taught a f2f class that did not "click" can attest to the fact that class community is not guaranteed for every class, so the idea of "spontaneous community" occurring in f2f classes may be overly optimistic. Additionally, a community could exist but not be conducive to learning. For example, students could cohere around a mutual dislike of an instructor, which could create a sense of social connection, but not lead to productive interactions that will lead to course investment or learning. Physical proximity alone does not guarantee community or collaboration; however, it does appear that the habituated interaction of underlife that physical proximity affords does seem to be one piece of what can help community relationships develop.

However, I have witnessed this underlife interaction translated to an online setting in my own graduate program where students participate in informal conversation and backchannel communications through Facebook groups for the PhD program and for individual courses. These are student-only spaces where students ask questions and share thoughts related to the program or course, but they also share information and seek advice about other aspects of their lives. Since students participate in this graduate program from all over the country, these backchannels become one of the key ways that students get to know each other.[10] However, based upon anecdotes, undergraduates show little interest in creating these online spaces,

---

[10] For more information about building online communities in graduate programs, see Rhodes' (2014) dissertation *Microblogging as a facilitator of online community in graduate education* that specifically examines the online backchannel communications used by ODU English PhD students.

even when they are suggested by the instructor. So the question then becomes how this notion

of underlife can also be used in undergraduate online instruction to support the goals of OWI

Principle 11.

From his study as a participant-observer in a composition class, Brooke (1987) identified

four categories of student underlife displays. One category involves interactions in which

students evaluate the class, which Brooke suggested "allow[s] individual students to claim

explicitly whether or not they accept the activity going on around them" (p. 147). Another

category involves students commenting on their roles and goals as individuals in the classroom.

Brooke (1987) notes that "students frequently engaged in conversations about how to 'get by'

effectively in the classroom" (p. 146). Both of these types of underlife activity actually align with

one of the effective practices presented with OWI Principle 11. Effective Practice 11.7 states:

> Teachers should develop forums, threads, and assessments in which students can have open discussions, either with or without teacher involvement, about course dynamics. Not only does the OWC provide a place for course-specific self-reflection, it can also provide an ideal setting for more broadly evaluating the nature of student learning such as online modalities for writing, the effectiveness of the LMS, and the like. If students are given opportunities to express their experiences and to vent their frustrations, perhaps in threads like "Lounge" or "Comments about our learning platform" or in an anonymous midterm course evaluation, that might engender a greater willingness to persevere in a new or different learning setting.

Manning (2007) highlighted this practice in her contribution to the *PraxisWiki* of *Kairos* about

how to build presence and community in online courses. She suggested, "Create a discussion

thread in the small groups that only the students read and use to ask questions, interact, vent or

otherwise communicate. Allow students to self-police this forum." Similarly, Meloncon and

Harris's (2015) suggestion that instructors "Provide students with an area where they can

answer each other's questions and/or share information in their own community of practice"

(p.427), actually might better align with the concept of underlife than communities of practice as

articulated by Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) that they specifically invoke. What

practice 11.7, Manning (2007), and Meloncon and Harris (2015) point to is the creation of a

somewhat "unofficial" channel of communication for students to interact through in order to

create community. What makes this distinct from what Brooke describes is that though this

might be unofficial communication, the creation of this space by instructors does sanction this

communication. The creation of a mechanism for students to engage in underlife in online

classes becomes necessary because of students' relative lack of familiarity with learning in

online spaces versus f2f ones. Many students have spent the majority of their educational

careers in f2f contexts and have instinctively learned when, where, and how they can engage in

underlife. Returning to Guglielmo's (2005) point about the class*room*, simply sharing physical

space allows students to interact informally both in the classroom and in the halls. In the online

context, students may not know if underlife activities like the first two categories described by

Brooke can or should appear in the online classroom. Thus instructors have to create a space

for this type of interaction if they want to encourage it.

Why instructors might want to encourage these informal interactions is highlighted by

Brooke's category in which students repurpose classroom activities or materials. His example is

a pair of students who were telling jokes privately, but these jokes related to class concepts.

Brooke claimed:

> This retreat from class participation was a retreat which took a class concept with it, and
> which applied that concept in a highly creative and accurate way...no matter how
> jokingly, students are actively connecting ideas in the classroom to their own lives
> outside of the classroom, and are discovering ways in which classroom knowledge
> seems useful even when (or specifically when) it isn't used for classroom purposes. (p.
> 145)

This outcome of this type of underlife interaction signals a third reason for community building in

online writing classes beyond the concept of motivation as currently articulated in OWI Principle

11 and the opportunity to practice engaging in a discourse community as articulated by Bruffee.

Brooke suggested that through the underlife activities of students who have come together in a

communal way, these students can more deeply engage with and recontextualize what they are

learning in the classroom, which aligns with social constructivism.

Yet not all underlife activities are communal and therefore support community building efforts. Brooke's final category of underlife is private activities, "whereby an individual divides her attention between the class activity and something else" (p. 148). Brooke suggests that the "something else" might be reading something not class related or doodling. Today, though, technology has created an almost endless supply of "something elses" that students could be engaged in, from texting, to checking email, to online shopping to fantasy sports. In the online classroom especially this becomes a concern because the instructor has virtually no control over what students engage in while supposedly doing course work. Students' engagement in private activities in online classes has just as much chance of causing distraction as in f2f contexts. Thus, while instructors might want to foster and encourage other types of communal underlife activities with the hope of building relationships and therefore community, they may want to discourage this final category. Of course instructors have no mechanism to control or monitor this activity, particularly in the asynchronous classroom when students are working on their own time, but instructors can at least explicitly endorse some kinds of underlife activities while warning of the challenges of others and encouraging strategies like closing email or other applications when engaging in coursework.

What the concept of student underlife helps clarify is the way both private and communal actions of students take place in a distinct power structure. Student underlife as described by Brooke are activities undertaken in opposition to or instead of the stated objectives of the instructor. This is why underlife helps us consider power in classroom community in ways that other frameworks might not. Yet, because it only focuses on the informal and unofficial activities and communication of students, underlife alone is not sufficient as a model for understanding how to implement or how to measure community in OWI. To build on this concept then, I will finally turn to a theory of community developed specifically for the online classroom: community of inquiry.

Community of Inquiry

   The concept of a Community of Inquiry (CoI) was established by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (1999). This framework currently has received only minor uptake in the field of OWI; a search of "community of inquiry" on CompPile, a clearinghouse of writing studies related scholarship, yields one result (Swartz, 2003), and the *Bedford Bibliography of Research in Online Writing Instruction* contains four entries on sources that explicitly draw on this framework (Cox, Black, Heney, & Keith, 2015; Cunningham, 2015; Hubbard, n.d.; Wyatt, 2013). Additionally, Stewart (2017) presented it as a heuristic for considering the use of technology to support interactive activities, and Stewart (2018) suggested its usefulness for differentiating the goals of satisfaction and collaboration when approaching Principle 11. Despite this modest uptake within the field of OWI, CoI has become a widely utilized framework in distance education broadly. The CoI framework is comprised of three core elements: cognitive presence, social presence, and teacher presence. Garrison et al. (1999) suggested that these core elements "are crucial prerequisites for a successful higher educational experience" (p. 87). Figure 1 shows the three elements of this framework and how they overlap.
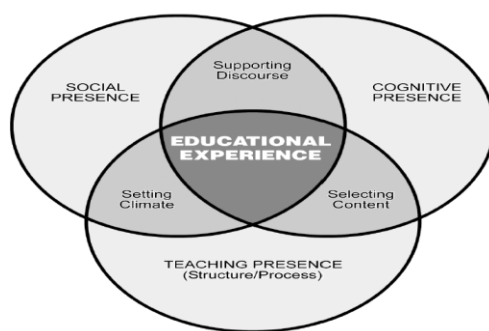
Figure 1. Community of Inquiry Framework[11]

---

[11] Reprinted from *The Internet and Higher Education*, 2(2-3), D.Randy Garrison,Terry Anderson,Walter Archer, Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education, 87-105, 1999, with permission from Elsevier. See Appendix B for Copyright License.

Cognitive presence describes whether members of the community are able to construct meaning and gain understanding through intercommunication. In this way, cognitive presence has a lot in common with discourse communities and virtual communities and the notion of the importance of interaction towards a unified goal in defining a community. Cognitive presence essentially points to the learning and co-creation of knowledge that can occur through interaction. Garrison et al. (1999) suggested that while cognitive presence is the most important element for learning, other types of presence within the community are often necessary to promote and maximize learning, thus squarely situating this model of community in a social constructivist framework. The social focus of this model when considering learning has led some to suggest that it works better with some subject matter than others, and is better suited to "applied disciplines" as opposed to "the cumulative, instructor-oriented approaches particularly associated with hard, pure disciplines" (Arbaugh, Bangert & Cleveland-Innes, 2010, p. 43). Jennifer Cunningham (2015) argued "that writing is an applied subject, and, unlike lecture-based courses, includes peer workshops and instructor feedback, which all reinforce a CoI" (p. 45). Thus this category aligns well with the field's interest and calls for collaboration as part of writing instruction.

The second element of the CoI framework is social presence, which is "the ability of participants in the Community of Inquiry to project their personal characteristics into the community, thereby presenting themselves to the other participants as 'real people'" (p. 89). Garrison et al. suggest that social presence can be created through expressions of emotions through the use of humor or self-disclosure, open communication through displays of mutual awareness or recognition, and through group cohesion (p. 99-101). Thus, Garrison et al.'s (1999) notion of social presence aligns with Brooke's (1987) notion of student underlife. Similarly to Brooke, Garrison et al. (1999) suggested that these types of behaviors support learning, claiming, "The primary importance of this element is its function as a support for

cognitive presence, indirectly facilitating the process of critical thinking carried on by the community of learners" (p. 89). Garrison et al. suggested that not only does social presence support students' motivation and persistence in a course, but that this in turn can impact their learning. It is important to note though that this consequence is not always assured. Garrison and Cleveland-Innes (2005) warned, "An interactive community of learners is generally considered the sine qua non of higher education. However, interaction is not a guarantee that students are cognitively engaged in an educationally meaningful manner" (p. 135). Thus, interaction has to be purposely designed to support learning and cognitive presence. This design leads to the final category of the model: teaching presence.

Teaching presence is created through instructional methods, building understanding, and direct instruction (Garrison et al., 1999, p. 101). Cox et al. (2015) considered teaching presence by situating various feedback methods online writing instructors might employ and how they align and support social and cognitive presence. However, this examination focuses on teacher presence for the individual, thereby focusing more on "personalized" as opposed to "interpersonal" aspect of the community called for in Principle 11. However this category also helps us consider a teacher's role is establishing a framework in which an interpersonal community can develop and helping students successfully navigate this framework. Garrison et al. (1999) suggested, "Through active intervention, the teacher draws in less active participants, acknowledges individual contributions, reinforces appropriate contributions, focuses discussion, and generally facilitates an educational transaction" (p. 101). The language of an "educational transaction" may seem in direct opposition to social constructivist pedagogy because of its seeming alignment with what Freire (1970) described as the "banking theory of education," which metaphorically describes educational models that treat students as containers to be filled with knowledge from the instructor. However, I would argue that Garrison et al. are instead pointing to the instructor's distinct and powerful position within a classroom community, an

aspect of these types of community that other theories or categories of community previously explored have not accounted for.

Garrison et al. (1999) also explicitly address the challenges teachers face in developing and supporting all three types of presence in online settings. As noted earlier, Guglielmo (2005) suggested that the lack of physical proximity makes community more difficult to establish as compared to the "spontaneous community" of the f2f classroom. While I maintain that Guglielmo provides an overly optimistic view of the f2f classroom, her point that establishing and maintaining community in online classes is different than in the f2f classroom is sound. Garrison et al. (1999) claimed, "Social presence, in the form of socio-emotional communication is possible in [computer-mediated communication], but not automatic" (p. 95). Therefore, online instructors must engage in explicit community maintenance. Yet, community maintenance is necessary in f2f communities as well. Wenger (1998) suggested community maintenance was a key component to communities of practice: "The kind of coherence that transforms mutual engagement into a community of practice requires work. The work of 'community maintenance' is thus an intrinsic part of any practice" (p. 74). So the question becomes how can community be created and maintained in online writing classes as part of teaching presence?

Since the inception of OWI, many online writing instructors have searched for ways to translate the student conversations Bruffee advocated for creating a community of writers to the online environment. Many instructors utilize discussion boards, writing groups, and other opportunities for interaction. Warnock (2009) celebrated the migration of conversation to these mediums, suggesting, "they have a significant advantage for the online writing teacher: they are often written. So we don't have to think of our virtual conversations as just as good as our onsite conversations—they can be better" (p. 68). In "Thinking Outside the (Classroom) Box: The Transition from Traditional to On-Line Learning Communities," a presentation given at NCTE, Dial-Driver and Sesso (2000) pointed to the value of online conversations in promoting

community: "Sharing, in peer critiquing, teacher critiquing, authoring, and editing, means the

creation of a community of writers/readers/ editors/critics. The building of community generally

means the creation of stronger, better realized writing" (p. 2). They went on to argue, "With all of

the tools available, it is possible to create an on-line writing community in which the

teaching/learning community develops and interacts much as that community would function on-

site" (p. 24). Rodrigo (2015) specifically noted the potential for mobile tools, especially social

media tools, to support community in OWI:

> Many of the social media applications readily available for mobile devices promote
> community building per OWI Principle 11...as well as sharing and providing feedback on
> specific texts. There are a multitude of mobile applications that promote sharing and
> communicating about texts; these applications easily could support both peer and
> instructor reviews and comments of works in progress as well as final drafts. (p. 506)

With the exciting possibility of constantly appearing new technologies, specifically Web 2.0

applications, there are many tools available for instructors to utilize to support community in

online courses. These tools also suggest that perhaps spatial proximity may not be the only

aspect that influences communal interaction as suggested by Guglielmo (2005), but that

temporal access might also facilitate this community-building interaction.

However, some scholarship has questioned whether the use of tools alone that allow

students to interact will necessary lead to the creation of community. Rovai (2002a) promoted

the role of instructors in not only establishing but in maintaining community, claiming:

> Some instructors feel that once they design their course and place it online their job is
> mostly done, that the community of learners will take care of itself and thrive, and learning
> will occur. What is likely to happen in such situations is that sense of community will
> wither unless the community is nurtured and support is provided in the form of heightened
> awareness of social presence. (p. 8)

DePew, Spangler, and Spiegel's (2014) study of student blogs in a graduate pedagogy course

supports Rovai's assertion. Despite the highly motivated graduate students in this study, DePew

et al. found through an assignment that asked graduate students to analyze the community

created within the given class that without explicit mandates to interact, the affordance of

interaction and community building provided by the blogs did not ensure that students would take advantage of these affordances. From their results they suggested:

> ...potential power differentials should be considered when designing pedagogical strategies towards community building through networking technologies. One crucial question instructors need to address is to what degree they will *require* students to actively participate in the [networked knowledge community] they seek to facilitate during a given term versus the latitude they might give to students in choosing to take advantage of the affordances of the networked technology adopted for the instructor-student and peer-to-peer community" (p. 124).

The results of their study indicated the need for instructors to design interaction opportunities and requirements. Similarly Stewart (2017), who examined students work and response to activities with different levels of media "leanness" or "richness"[12], found that just because an environment was more media rich and afforded more interaction did not lead to it being more effective or collaborative. She uses the example of using synchronous video meetings for group work, a media rich environment that while affording interaction, does not guarantee it. The student she interviewed discussed her discomfort with this practice, suggesting that it was a "weird" environment because students did not really know each other and thus felt uncomfortable having to talk to each other. Stewart suggested her results implied that "social presence must be designed for, and it is not something that automatically occurs in any environment, regardless of the media richness" (p. 77). What this student's response from Stewart's article highlights is the interconnection between a sense of community, or at least relationship building, and collaboration. The student didn't feel like she had really "met" her classmates, and since the students did not feel like they knew each other, they were not willing or able to have conversations like those advocated by Bruffee (1984) and Warnock (2009), even if the technology afforded it. While the effective practices outlined in principle 11 clearly indicate online writing instructors' responsibilities to foster positive relationships between themselves

---

[12] See Huang, Kahai, and Justice (2010) for a discussion on the idea of media richness or leanness and how it impacts interaction.

and students, they must also be involved in the cultivation of peer interaction. This notion aligns with Garrison et al.'s (1999) notion of teacher presence and the role of teachers as facilitators who promote and model social presence in the classroom.

As a framework for understanding community, CoI is a robust one for OWI. The category of social presence accounts for the interpersonal relationships called for in Principle 11, that of teaching presence for the responsibility the Principle places on instructors and institutions for community fostering, and that of cognitive presence for the ultimate goal of learning that is ostensibly at the center of courses. However, I argue that in articulating a framework for community for OWI, the CoI framework can be enriched by the other models and theories of community previously discussed. The next section will review these models and consider how they can be synthesized for an understanding of community in OWI.

Community Definitions and Models Summary and Synthesis

The previous sections have explored six definitions, frameworks, or theories of community to determine their suitableness for approaching OWI Principle 11. Table 1 provides an overview of these six models.

When examining many of these models, the unique environment of an academic class— particularly an undergraduate general education course that brings together a group of people by an assortment of factors as well as chance as opposed to shared expertise or employment— means that many theories the field generally draws on to consider community, namely discourse communities and communities of practice, are not appropriate in and of themselves for approaching OWI Principle 11. This Principle is specifically contextualizing community in primarily undergraduate online writing courses (OWCs), not fields of study or practice. Similarly, the sociological concept of virtual communities does not apply because most students in OWCs are brought together by the need to complete a requirement as opposed to being organically brought together by mutual, shared interests and by sharing the same technological "space."

While the theory of speech communities captures groups brought together through shared space and happenstance whose connection is forged through habituated communication and the patterns this habituated communication yields, it fails to account for power dynamic issues and the stated goals of student learning present in an online course. It does, however, in its focus on discourse patterns provide a framework for considering discourse patterns in OWCs. Student underlife as a theory helps us consider student activity within the power system of the classroom, particularly the role informal communication can play in both relationship building and learning. However, since it is not a theory of community as much as a way to consider the actions of individual students and an endorsed practice to support learning as opposed to an academic goal within itself, it doesn't provide a complete framework for considering community in OWI.

Table 1

Overview of Six Definitions/Models of Community

Definition/ Model of Community	Members	Goals	Knowledge & Authority	Role of Language	Role of proximity/ distance & temporality
Discourse Community	Members share a content or discoursal expertise	Members have mutual goals which are defined by the community	Community is based on shared knowledge, there is no discussion of authority within this model	Language is the primary way the community coheres through specific genres, lexis, and communication mechanisms	Can exist in both f2f and distance contexts, especially if communication takes place through writing
Speech Community	Members brought together by circumstance/ physical proximity that affords habitual interaction	Community not defined by specific or mutual goals	Members share knowledge created by shared proximity/ habitual communication as opposed to specialized knowledge	Language, generally spoken dialogue, is what makes the community cohere	Proximity is an important factor for the creation of this type of community; though some have drawn on this theory for online communication
Communities of Practice	Members brought together by a shared practice, which is often job or hobby related	Members have a shared enterprise that they define	Goals/ enterprise is not defined by outside sources; newer members are initiated by members with more experience and therefore knowledge of the practice	"Shared repertoire" is key feature of the community	Can exist in both face-to-face and distance contexts
Student Underlife	Not a model of community, but instead focuses on the actions of individuals	Demonstration of individuality beyond specified role--in this case, that of student	Individuals act in ways that subtly or not subtly undermines the stated objective or directive of a superior	Language is used to show that the individual is more than just their current role, e.g. student	Can exist in both face-to-face and distance contexts, though graduate students seem more apt to create virtual underlife channels on their own

Table 1 Continued

Definition/ Model of Community	Members	Goals	Knowledge & Authority	Role of Language	Role of proximity/ distance & temporality
Virtual Community	Members brought together by shared interest	The objective is to communicate about the shared interest to build and share knowledge	Power could reside in the person who initiates or moderates community, but there is no inherent power structure	Method of intercommunication is primarily written discourse	Exists when members are distanced from each other and who interact virtually through digital technologies
Community of Inquiry	Members are students in the same online class	The objective is student persistence in the course as well as student learning.	Students gain knowledge of subject matter and participation rules and expectation from instructor who is in a position of authority in the community	Language is used to demonstrate or facilitate three types of presence: cognitive, social, and teaching	Exists when members are distanced from each other and who interact virtually, though some have suggested this framework could also be used for f2f instruction[13]

---

[13] For example, see suggestions for future research in Stewart (2017).

The Community of Inquiry model, as a model developed specifically for online education, seems to provide the most applicable and complete model for considering Principle 11 since its three categories account for the distinct features to consider for online courses. Teaching presence considers the actions and responsibilities instructors have that defines their role in these communities. Social presence describes the "interpersonal connectedness" called for in Principle 11 (p. 23). Finally, cognitive presence considers the role of learning in this community framework. However, while the Community of Inquiry framework is a robust framework, I argue that it can be enhanced by aspects of the other definitions and models of community that I have explored.

While social presence as a category of the CoI model focuses on students' sense of realness to each other, it does not differentiate between formal versus informal, or public versus private interaction. In terms of formal and sanctioned communication, the idea of patterned communication created within speech communities is helpful. Classroom discourse patterns such as IRF, while common in education, are likely antithetical to community building since the focus is on demonstration of knowledge versus co-creating knowledge through dialogue. Instead instructors may be striving for collaborative conversations like those advocated by Bruffee (1984) and Warnock (2009). Instructors need to look at discourse patterns in formal and/or public interactions in OWCs and see if and how students are talking to each other.

Additionally, our understanding of the role of informal or private communication is supported by the concept of student underlife. Brooke (1987) demonstrated the value underlife activities can play in the writing classroom. Guglielmo (2005) suggested that relationships between students are often built through these underlife conversations about other aspects of their lives. Without naming it underlife specifically, Practice 11.7's suggestion that "Teachers should develop forums, threads, and assessments in which students can have open

discussions, either with or without teacher involvement, about course dynamics" (p. 24), points to the value of students communicating informally.

Thus, I believe our focus on social presence should consider both formal, sanctioned interaction and the discourse patterns present there as well as the informal and private interaction taking place between students. Of course it is important to note that there might not always be a divisible line between these types of communication and interaction, particularly in asynchronous environments in which most communication occurs via writing[14]. The interaction on a message board or blog might vacillate between the formal and informal. In suggesting the need to consider both formal and informal, public and private communication, I am not arguing that these types need to be necessarily distinguished between, but instead that an understanding of classroom discourse patterns and underlife enriches an approach to social presence and provides concrete ways to analyze it.

Cognitive presence as a category of the CoI model is predicated on the notion that learning is supported through interaction. However, not all students want or believe interaction with their peers is necessary or helpful for writing instruction (Rendahl and Breuch, 2013). In fact some students might be resistant to activities or assignments that require collaboration, wishing instead just to learn and complete activities individually on their own time since this might be why they elected to take an online course in the first place. Examining the concept(s) of discourse communities, virtual communities, and/or discourse communities in students' lives as part of the content of an OWC could help students understand the value of community for learning in other aspects of their lives and make more transparent the role the instructor hopes that community can fulfill in the course to support students' learning. Framing community as a key concept for the course that is explicitly examined could be an example of teaching presence

---

[14] Additionally, researchers relying primarily on textual analysis of this communication as their methodology for research, a common methodology for exploring online learning, means that the field's understanding of this discourse is based upon researchers' interpretations and taxonomies as opposed to students' own understanding of them.

in the sense of choosing appropriate content to support students' cognitive presence; through a discussion of different types of community as part of the course, online writing instructors can help students value its role in writing instruction and in a writing course.

I also believe that in addition to these aspects from the models of community that have been explored, a complete framework of community for OWI must also engage more explicitly with OWI Principle 1 and concerns over access and inclusivity in OWI. The next section explores the interconnection of community with access and inclusivity.

Considering Access and Inclusivity

OWI Principle 1 states, "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible." This is considered to be the overarching principle, and the rationale for this principle suggests, "OWI Principle 1 supersedes and connects to every principle in this document" (p.7). Thus the Principle Statement implicitly links Principle 1 and Principle 11, thereby connecting access and inclusivity with community; however, this connection is never explicitly laid out or discussed in the document. I believe that a failure to explicitly address concerns of access and inclusivity not only prevents some students from joining any community created within the class but may also prevent community creation and maintenance at all.

In *Foundational Practices of OWI*, Part 3 is titled "Practicing Inclusivity in OWI" and contains chapters seeking to unpack OWI Principle 1 with a focus on physical and learning disability and OWI, multilingual writers and OWI, and nontraditional students in OWI. In his chapter on disability and OWI, Oswal (2015) suggested, "In this digital era with promises of seamless, ubiquitous, and virtual technologies, more often than not we teach online courses that do not reach our students who have visual, hearing, physical, learning, and dozens of other disabilities" (p. 253). While Oswal's chapter does not focus specifically on community, if students do not have access to aspects of the course, whether content, or official or unofficial channels for communication, they cannot be fully integrated into any community that is created

as part of the course. Additionally, even students without access issues then are denied a

robust community full of students with different experiences and knowledge to share when some

students do not have full access because of access issues related to a disability.

How students connect and participate in an online course could also create issues of

access that impact community. What devices students are using could impact their access to

aspects of the course. Rodrigo (2015) pointed to the often limited functionality of Learning

Management Systems' (LMS) mobile applications compared to their desktop version:

> ...just because the LMS has a mobile application does not mean that the application includes all of the functionality required to complete an OWC course. Many first attempts at LMS mobile applications result in functionality that only allows the students to access and consume course material… [but not necessarily] to use the various interactive functionalities like posting and responding in discussion boards" (p. 499-500)

Instructors need to consider access issues that particular technologies can create that would

prevent students from participating in the class community. Instructors need to know the tools

their students are using to participate in online classes and consider how this might impact

access, particularly aspects of the course focusing on interaction.

In addition to issues of access, inclusivity considers the learning needs of different

students. Some scholars have explored traditional ways of promoting community advocated in

the field and even in the Principles Statement with particular populations in mind. For example,

Effective Practice 11.2 states, "OWC teachers should develop course community early by

employing "icebreakers" and other activities that make use of the LMS and that engage student

writing" (p. 23). Yet in her examination of multilingual writers in OWI, Miller-Cochran (2015)

considered the challenge of this practice for these students:

> While icebreakers can be quite effective, many such activities ask students to reveal personal information or be more familiar with colleagues in a class than some multilingual writers are used to or comfortable with. While it is certainly desirable to help acclimate students to expectations in an American academic setting, sensitivity to the students' familiarity with such activities, especially early in the semester, might help instructors choose activities that will not draw on expected common cultural knowledge or put students in an unnecessarily uncomfortable situation. Explaining the purpose of

the activities and the importance of building a strong community in a writing course can also help foster multilingual student success. (p. 301)

Miller-Cochran astutely reminded us that while icebreakers are a regular practice in American education, students from different educational contexts unfamiliar with them might not experience this activity as a community building activity but instead as an isolating one. Her point about common cultural knowledge extends beyond just icebreakers as well to other actions meant to support social presence. Garrison et al. (1999) pointed to the use of humor as a tool that promoted social presence. However, understanding humor is often based on common cultural knowledge, so those without that knowledge could feel isolated or deliberately excluded instead of drawn into the class community when humor is utilized.

Miller-Cochran (2015) also considered Effective Practice 11.7, which suggests the creation of informal forums for students to communicate, in light of multilingual students. She notes, "Depending on the language backgrounds of the students in the course, instructors might consider whether or not they want to offer a space where students may converse in languages other than English to seek clarification or additional help" (p. 301). This creates an interesting access and inclusivity consideration because students who share language backgrounds might be able to forge relationships through this tactic and its support of multilingual inclusivity. While this might exclude domestic students, multilingual students may be more likely to feel excluded in the first place so privileging their inclusion and community building opportunities may best follow OWI Principle 1. This conundrum highlights a central issue not currently explored in Principle 11—when we call for community are we looking for a single community with all members of the class or does fostering community through the creation of small groups also support this goal?

Additionally, we might need to consider when our views of the value of community in the classroom contrast with those of some of our students. As mentioned earlier, some students might be resistant to community and collaboration in an OWC. In his chapter on nontraditional

students in OWI, Gos (2015) considered several different categories of students who would be considered nontraditional. His discussions of military students and older adult students touched on the challenges associated with community with these groups. Regarding military students, Gos claimed they "often see themselves as outsiders in the college writing classroom" who are often heavily invested in military communities and are less interested in being part of a class community. He went on to suggest, though, that "because military learners are comfortable with collaborative efforts from their occupational experiences, community-building activities in online courses, when they do not require group projects with group grades, are not only comfortable for military learners but may increase student motivation and reduce attrition" (p. 336). Gos also considered the practice of group projects with older adult students, suggesting that work and family obligations that these students have in greater proportion than traditionally-aged students makes scheduling difficult for this kind of work for them. Gos's work reminds us that all students, but particularly nontraditional students, are already part of several communities and these communities may conflict with community building efforts in OWCs. Instructors need to consider then how to balance community building in the classroom with students' outside commitments that could make collaboration more difficult.

Blair and Hoy (2006) similarly focused on the needs of adult students in online writing classes. They challenge the usefulness of the virtual community metaphor with its focus on communal and public notions of community with these students, pointing to the impact they saw in their classes of one-to-one relationships and interaction, much of which happened privately as opposed to publically, and suggest the metaphor of neighbors as a potentially helpful one for considering teaching online classes for this population. They suggest, "it is important to complicate the concept of community to allow for a significant amount of private opportunities for students to express concerns about their writing in a nonthreatening space or simply to get the additional attention they need from the instructor" (p. 42). Specifically considering OWI

Principle 1 with community not only highlights the importance of access and inclusivity to community building, but also challenges us to determine what we mean by community at all. Who has to be involved? Is it public or private? Formal or informal? We have to begin to answer these questions as we begin to determine how we might assess if community is or is not developed in an OWC.

Community in OWCs Heuristic

Building off the various models of community examined throughout this chapter with an additional explicit focus on access and inclusivity concerns, I have developed a heuristic for considering community in OWCs. This heuristic seeks to draw together ideas from the various models of community examined within the broad framework of the categories of the Community of Inquiry Model. This heuristic also serves to explicitly link OWI Principle 11's call for community with OWI Principle 1's focus on accessibility and inclusivity and OWI Principle 10's focus on student orientation to the online learning environment. I believe no understanding of community is complete without interweaving these principles. Table 2 presents the heuristic framework.

This heuristic will be used specifically for this project to develop coding themes for my data analysis; however, these heuristics, and the codes developed from them are based primarily on the literature. While these heuristics and codes will be used to approach the data I collect as part of this project, the data I collect will also be used to confirm, challenge, add to or augment this heuristic so it can be a productive tool for future OWI researchers interested in exploring community.

Table 2

Community in OWCs Heuristic

Teaching Presence	Social Presence	Cognitive Presence
- How are students oriented to the technology of the class? - How are students oriented to the communication and community expectations of the course? - How does the instructor convey she/he is a real person who is willing/able to help students? - How have access and inclusivity been considered/designed for?	- How are students able to get to know each other within the class? - What are the communication or discourse norms within the class? - Is there any conversation backchannels or private communication occurring between students, and how was it initiated and/or developed? - Are there accessibility/inclusivity issues impacting students ability to interact in the course?	- How is the connection between communication, collaboration and learning presented to students? - How are students making connections between course discourse and/or collaboration and their learning? - What is the content of the course and how does it support or challenge the importance of community and/or collaboration in the course? - Are there accessibility/inclusivity issues impacting students' access to content or ability to complete activities/ assignments?

Summary

This chapter first explored the specific wording of Principle 11, noting the lack of a clear or coherent definition of community within it. Next, the role of community in the field of composition broadly and OWI specifically was reviewed. In order to move towards a workable definition of community for OWI, and one specifically to use for this project, six definitions or models of community were explored, including discourse communities, speech communities, virtual communities, communities of practice (CoP), student underlife, and community of inquiry (CoI). Each model was examined for its usefulness for understanding or researching community in OWI. Next, I demonstrated why access and inclusivity need to be considered with any exploration of community. Finally, drawing on the CoI as the primary framework, but integrating

elements from other models and questions related to accessibility, I presented a heuristic that synthesized relevant ideas from the various models of communities explored as a tool that will be used to develop coding categories to explore the data collected for this project.

The next chapter reviews the major literature related to the use of video in distance education and OWI, considering its role in establishing community in an online writing class. It also introduces and provides an initial analysis of WebEx, the videoconferencing platform used in the SVCs explored in this project. This analysis is grounded in both the literature related to community discussed in Chapter 2 and the literature specifically examining video discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

VIDEO IN OWI AND WEBEX INTERFACE ANALYSIS

Introduction

Ragan and White (2001) in "What We Have Here is a Failure to Communicate: The Criticality of Writing in Online Instruction" noted, "Traditional classroom instruction relies on the spoken word and visual information and print. A face-to face context provides content but also facial expression, voice tonality, and subvocal auditory cues. In other words, tone of voice and body language contribute greatly to what is being said" (p. 400). While they do not elaborate on what or how these factors contribute to classroom discourse, Ragan and White highlighted the multiple channels of communication used in the face-to-face (f2f) classroom and offer suggestions for strategies to make up for their absence in a text-based, asynchronous environment. In fact, much research on communication and community in online courses focuses on these environments. The Community of Inquiry framework discussed in the previous chapter was specifically developed to consider text-based environments. Though much distance education and OWI scholarship focuses on textual communication strategies, recent technology that allows for the easy creation of one-way asynchronous video or the facilitation of two-way synchronous video creates the opportunity to recapture some of the multichannel aspects of f2f communication Ragan and White highlighted with the goal of increasing the sense of presence and interaction. This chapter will first examine explorations of the use of video in distance education, and OWI specifically, to support presence and community building. After this literature review, I will then discuss the specific videoconferencing tool used at Old Dominion University (ODU) for synchronous video courses (SVCs), WebEx, providing an analysis of this interface both to consider it in light of the scholarship reviewed on video in OWI, and to familiarize readers with the tool being examined in this project as a foundation for my later

analysis of classroom discourse patterns and student and instructor interviews about their experiences taking or teaching a writing course through synchronous videoconferencing.

Scholarship on Video in OWI

OWI Principle 3 states, "Appropriate composition teaching/learning strategies should be developed for the unique features of the online instructional environment." (p. 12). The use of video is specifically highlighted as one of these strategies that could be developed in Effective Practice 3.2, which advocates that "Text-based instruction should be supplemented with oral and/or video instruction in keeping with the need for presenting instruction in different and redundant modalities" (p. 12). The Principles document, though, does not provide much detail about the use of video in OWI. However, a growing body of OWI scholarship is beginning to examine its use for various aspects of instruction. The *Bedford Bibliography of Research in Online Writing Instruction* includes over a dozen entries on research and resources related to the use of video in OWI. Many of these sources examine either one-way asynchronous video or two-way synchronous videoconferencing, both of which present different benefits and challenges for OWI.

One-way Video in OWI

Some instructors have begun creating one-way asynchronous videos in the forms of virtual introductions, instructional videos, recorded lectures, and screencast feedback as a way to support teaching presence. In an open resource posted on the NCTE website, Snart (2013) discusses his use of a "Welcome" video for students in online courses that introduces him and goes over course content and due dates as a way to address OWI Principle 11. He states:

> I use video as a medium for being "present" for online students...they can see and hear me. Because many teachers and students affectively feel a distance in asynchronous courses particularly, seeing my face and hearing my voice can remind them that I am human, aware of them as people, and generally there for them.

Jones, Naugle, and Kollof's (2008) study of the use of instructor introduction videos in graduate

education courses[15] supports Snart's assertion. They found "students appreciate having the

opportunity to meet the instructor 'virtually' using introductory videos before the course begins,

regardless of whether the course is offered fully online, or if only a portion of the class meetings

will be 'online.'"

Bourelle et al. (2013) in their discussion of a redesigned FYC course developed as an

online Writers' Studio course highlighted an additional rationale for the use of a Welcome Video,

suggesting, "Students are given a video tour and hyperlinks to become familiar with the course

shell. Instructors also produce self-introduction videos, providing students opportunities to

"meet" their teachers and hear advice about how to succeed in the course." Thus, like Snart

(2013), Bourelle et al. (2013) suggest these videos support a sense of instructor presence, but

also suggest they serve a more direct purpose of orienting students to the online environment,

which supports teaching presence as part of the CoI framework. Borgman (n.d.) positions

Welcome Videos as an example of OWI Principle 4, "Appropriate onsite composition theories,

pedagogies, and strategies should be migrated and adapted to the online instructional

environment." She suggested that in a f2f class an instructor would introduce themselves and

present an overview of the course, so the creation of a video similarly helps orient students to

the instructor and course. Snart (2013), Bourelle et al. (2013) and Borgman (n.d.)[16] all include

examples of their own Welcome Videos as models for other online instructors.

Bourelle et al. (2013) also position the "Welcome Video" as an introduction to a teaching

strategy that will be used throughout the course: "Throughout the course, students encounter

videos from teachers and advanced students on rhetorical concepts." Thus asynchronous

---

[15] In the last chapter I highlighted the difference between graduate students and undergraduate students, so Jones et al.'s study may not map on perfectly to the experience of undergraduate students. In the absence of any studies particularly focusing on undergraduate students' attitudes towards these videos, though, I have chosen to assume that in this instance, with the idea that students want to feel their instructor is a real is also applicable to this population.

[16] The link to Borgman's example Welcome Video is currently broken.

videos are also used for lecture and overview of assignments. Rankins-Robertson et al. (2014) similarly advocate this practice and provide an example of a video with an overview of an assignment. Hoven and Palalas (2011) found that students responded favorably to the use of instructional videos that they could download and watch at their own convenience.

Other scholars have focused on the use of video for providing feedback on students' writing. Some have advocated this practice to promote teaching presence. Moore and Filling (2012) suggested that video feedback helps humanize the instructor. Similarly, Grigoryan (2017) claimed that audio-visual feedback in the form of feedback videos supported teacher presence, suggesting "Audio-visual feedback may play a role in social presence because the teacher's voice and tone can add a personal touch to the nature of communication with her student" (p. 105). Many studies have suggested that students respond positively to the use of video feedback and feel it is effective, and potentially even more effective than written feedback alone (Warnock, 2008[17]; Thompson & Lee, 2012; Vincelette, 2013; Vincelette & Bostic, 2013). Due to the growing popularity of this feedback method, Whitehurst's (n.d.) open resource for OWI presented instructions for online writing instructors to implement this practice in their own classes. While none of the effective practices presented with OWI Principle 11 specifically mention the use of video, online instructors and researchers have found the use of one-way, asynchronous video to support presence, particularly teaching presence in OWCs.

However, some have questioned whether asynchronous video will necessarily promote presence and community. Dockter (2016) explored transactional distance theory to discuss how one-way videos can often be perceived as "talking head" videos which can actually increase as opposed to decrease transactional distance, or the sense of separation between instructor and student. Dockter reflected on his own experience using one-way instructional videos within his course and the failures both of students meeting the expectations of assignments but also

---

[17] Warnock (2008) found that while students preferred video feedback over traditional written comments, they still preferred f2f conferencing over video feedback.

connecting to or engaging with him as an instructor. Dockter drew on Moore's (1993) definition

of transactional distance, which includes three aspects that determine whether transactional

distance is high or low: dialogue, structure, and learner autonomy (p. 23). Dockter noted that

one-way video does not create space for dialogue, which can increase transactional distance.

Dockter does not condemn or dismiss one-way video, suggesting that its benefits for creating

teacher presence in an online class are obvious; however, he highlights that there are risks

involved as well, pointing out that video itself does not necessarily promote interaction,

collaboration, or community. One-way video then, while potentially increasing the teaching

presence of instructor, does not necessarily support social presence between students or goals

of collaboration and community in the online writing classroom.

Synchronous Video

Ward, Peters, and Shelley (2010) suggested, "Relatively little literature exists on

instruction via synchronous online technologies" and almost ten years later, the situation has not

changed very much. However, there is a small but growing body of scholarship examining

synchronous videoconferencing for education. One area where this research has been taken up

is the field of writing centers. Yergeau, Wozniak, and Vandenberg (2008) examined the use of

audio-visual conferencing software in writing centers, claiming:

> Our larger aim is to recover our potential within the framework of conversation. We aim
> to do so by exploiting synchronous technologies that sustain the attributes of dialogue,
> the only mode of teaching writing that consistently works, according to surveys of
> students and teachers… We have explored the use of audio-video-textual conferencing
> (AVT) in an effort to recover the multimodal potential of the f2f tutorial in circumstances
> where f2f is not possible.

Yergeau, Wozniak, and Vandenberg's statement highlights several important things to consider.

First, they position synchronous technologies as a way to allow peer conversation like that

advocated by Bruffee (1984) to take place. Interestingly, when they discuss the potential for

dialogue, they do not promote it simply as being important for establishing presence or lowering

transactional distance, but because it is "the only mode of teaching writing that consistently

works." Here, they highlighted social constructivism and dialogue as foundational to the field of composition. Additionally, their statement points to the multimodal potential of synchronous AVT to capture the multichannel communication of f2f interaction. Though some scholars such as Hewett and Ehman (2004) have questioned the goal of simply trying to replicate f2f instruction, reflections from writing center scholars point to videoconferencing software's potential for one-to-one writing instruction. The question then becomes how this technology might work with whole class writing instruction.

Understanding of the use of videoconferencing for classroom interaction is much murkier than one-on-one interaction, and there is little research on it. Some have suggested videoconferencing simulates the f2f classroom (Acosta-Tello, 2015, Wang & Hsu, 2008). Acosta-Tello (2015) suggested:

> The energy of the instructor is easily transmitted through the synchronous platform, engaging students, approximating more closely the ambiance of a traditional classroom, which is still for most instructors their most familiar environment and, for students, a place for immediate feedback and learning. (p.2)

Thus, she positions synchronous video as ideal for creating teaching presence. However, others have highlighted the distinct or unique challenges of teaching and learning in this environment. Cornelius (2014) interviewed instructors experienced in teaching online classes via the webconferencing system Elluminate. One instructor who made use of webcams and videoconferencing in her class noted that while synchronous video does reclaim some of the visual cues of the f2f classroom, "body language is different and you have to read it differently because you're not actually looking at the web cam...eye contact is different" (p. 268). Another participant demonstrated the complex ecology of instruction via webconferencing:

> There is so much going on . . . obviously you have the verbal communication, you have the written communication of the text chat . . . we're monitoring who's in the session, some people come in and out, some people come in late, some go out early . . . . sometimes they lose connection because something goes wrong . . . monitoring who's got good connections and who's not, if it's very interactive monitoring who's speaking, when they're speaking, . . . the order in which things happen and just trying to manage [that] . . . Then of course you've got the slides. Sometimes they're writing on

there, you're writing on there . . . monitoring the discussion board, so there's so much, and obviously you're moving between windows—it's not just Elluminate you're working with, you're working on . . . word documents to get information . . . So in terms of levels of concentration, in terms of the things you've got to pay attention to, it's . . . extremely demanding, for me and everyone else. (p. 265)

While this quote highlights the complexity of the technology for instructors, the point is also potentially applicable to consider students' experience with this instructional mode; they may also find its multichannel communication affordances overwhelming.

The unique environment of a synchronous video conference may produce distinct interaction and discourse patterns. Bower and Hedberg (2010) examined the types of interactions and participation in a synchronous video computer science course and found that it is not just the technology but the course design which impacts the types of discourses present; this finding echoes DePew, Spangler, and Spiegel's (2014) and Stewart's (2017) arguments about community maintenance. Bower and Hedberg (2010) also found that student-centered course design, which they define as courses that allow for and promote frequent interaction and collaboration, resulted in six times more student discourse than teacher-centered designs, which they define as courses that relied more heavily on the archetypal IRF discourse pattern in which the instructor initiates interaction—usually through a question—the student responds, and then the instructor provides feedback on that response. Thus, it's important to remember that while the mode or tool used can impact the discourse patterns in a learning environment, this discourse is also impacted by course design and instructor actions.

The field of language learning[18] also has a growing body of research on synchronous video for one-on-one and class instruction. Wang (2004a; 2004b) investigated the usefulness of different multimodal communication software systems for language learning and examined the affordances and limitations of these programs. He developed five categories to evaluate the

---

[18] Language learning here refers both to spoken and written language and encompasses holistic learning of a language beyond a student's first language.

program *NetMeeting* for use in distance language learning: 1) acceptable video and audio quality, 2) reliability, 3) user friendliness, 4) other features of pedagogical value (such as a whiteboard), and 5) low cost (Wang, 2004a). Though this program only supported one-to-one conferencing, Wang suggests it meets the other criteria and supports oral-visual interaction between participants, which he maintained is crucial for language learning. Hampel and Stickler (2012) coded communication in the videoconferencing software *Flashmeeting*, noting whether teachers and students used verbal channels or text-based channels via text-chat. Hampel and Stickler found that teachers contributed much more frequently than students, particularly verbally, and one student noted in a survey given after the class that "the FlashMeeting sessions were 'rather hard [...]. The meetings did not seem to inspire any of us to contribute freely'" (p. 122). Hampel and Stickler's findings suggest that videoconferencing may not always promote student participation, interaction, or collaboration. These findings align with OWI specific scholarship on synchronous video.

Stewart's (2017) exploration of CoI as a heuristic for exploring technology in OWI discussed in the previous chapter specifically looked at three different environments in which students in an online FYC course interacted, including a synchronous video meeting. Despite this being an environment that afforded interaction and discussion, Stewart found that its use in the class she observed had not been effective at promoting discussion and collaborative learning, suggesting its use does not inherently promote social and cognitive presence. Stewart includes excerpts from an interview with a student from the class that point to two issues that made this modality ineffective: students' apprehension to speak and a lack of intimacy created from the mediated nature of the technology. The student noted the first issue when she acknowledged that her group would have been able to have a discussion in Adobe Connect, the videoconferencing interface used for the course, which like many videoconferecing interfaces allows participants to see each other through webcam feeds, hear each other verbally, and to

communicate via synchronous text-chat: "[discussion] can totally be accomplished in the

Connect room...but it's just a matter of actually, like talking and stuff. I feel like in that

discussion, no one was really [talking]" (p. 77). Stewart includes the student's speculation that

the lack of talking might have been because her fellow group members were "nervous" and

didn't "want to sound wrong or anything" (p. 77). This response suggested that students are

reticent to speak up in this environment. The student's comment also illustrates the particular

challenges of conversation and community in synchronous video conferencing due to mediation:

> I feel like if we all had a chance to meet each other, that would really [help], like, because it's weird. It's actually, like, really weird when she puts us in breakout rooms, and you're just sitting there, like, in silence, like, looking at someone on your screen. . . . So if I had known the person, I'm like, hi, how are you? Or something…. [I was in a group with] the same girl twice and we, like, kind of know each other. But it's never just like, oh, hi Karla. It's like, I recognize you. That's it. (p. 78)

Thus "meeting" someone through a screen, even if you can see their face does not seem, for

this student at least, to be equivalent to meeting face-to-face.

DePew and Lettner-Rust's (2009) exploration of whole class use of synchronous video in

teletechnet courses offers some explanation for this distinction. The courses they examined

were taught at ODU through the TELETECHNET system[19] which used audio-visual technology

to deliver courses to industry locations and community colleges in Virginia and across the

nation. These courses had an on-campus location as well as opportunities to participate at

satellite locations. Explaining the setup of the course they analyzed, DePew and Lettner-Rust

stated:

> In these classes video interaction is one way—the students see the instructor, but the instructor only sees the students in the studio classroom—and audio is two-way... The instructor, therefore, will often engage in dialogue with a disembodied voice by talking to a camera at the back of the classroom. For the V-tel interface, both video and audio mediation are two-way, a result of the courses only broadcasting to the institution's few higher education centers. As long as students at these sites sit in the line of a camera— which some deliberately do not—instructors can interact synchronously with students

---

[19] This system is no longer in official use by the university and has mostly been replaced by the use of WebEx video conferencing, though some individual instructors continue to use Adobe Connect or use programs like Google hangouts.

through the television. Though this mediation facilitates interaction, the mediation never becomes transparent for either the instructors or the students." (182)

While DePew and Lettner-Rust were interested in questions of power more than community[20], this description highlights some of the constraints of the audio-visual technology that could inhibit dialogic learning and student interaction. Though some of the constraints of the system described by DePew and Lettner-Rust are different from those in the current program being used at ODU, WebEx, particularly instances where TELETECHNET video interaction was only one-way versus the two-way capabilities of WebEx, the "disembodied voice" phenomenon can still occur on WebEx if students cannot or chose not to use their webcams, which often happens if they are using a device rather than a computer. Though the technology may have changed, DePew and Lettner-Rust's article reminds us of the role of mediation within audio-visual technology and its impact on transparency and interaction.

Whithaus and Neff (2006) also examined synchronous online classes taught at ODU using the same TELETECHNET system; however, their study explicitly explored the relationship of social constructivist pedagogy and a video-delivered writing course. They found tension between their social constructivist pedagogy and students' expectations of online environments and their tendencies to fall back into Freire's banking model of education. Whithaus and Neff claimed, "The data in our study suggest that students believe a presence (the teacher's—not theirs or other students') is necessary for learning. As teachers, we may value 'a gallery of student work and criticism,' but students do not always share these values" (p. 441). Thus, they suggest that teaching presence is prized above social presence for students in supporting cognitive presence. These views could be seen in the interaction patterns that the researchers witnessed:

---

[20] Power and community are not mutually exclusive, and in the previous chapter I specifically considered the role of power and authority within communities. However, I make a distinction here in discussing DePew and Lettner-Rust's article because they do not position their argument as one focused on community building in this modality.

> In the July 6 transcript of the recorded class discussion, we see video environments enabling real-time collaboration and making the social construction of knowledge explicit. Yet they also create talking-head delivery systems that for many students invoke the passive roles of TV watcher and consumer. (p. 446)

Whithaus and Neff suggest that it is not only one-way video that can create a "talking-head" ethos as Dockter (2016) discussed, but that the problem can also occur in two-way video systems, potentially because students bring their experiences and expectations of the affordances of one-way video to the modality. This begs the question of whether students bring expectations of passivity with them when encountering education that is mediated through video.

An excerpt from Neff's teaching journal from this day included in the article gives further information about student interaction: "There's good give and take (with the usually long wait time) and many students participate. HOWEVER, THEY PARTICIPATE WITH SHORT ANSWERS and the wait time for response slows down the 'freewheeling' aspects of a discussion" (p. 446). Neff highlighted the difficulty in sustaining engaged and lengthy discussions in this environment. Some of these difficulties resulted from technology challenges such as the delay with broadcast communication which may be producing the wait time. However, others resulted from student expectations about how to interact with broadcast education and the assumed passivity associated with this medium. Whithaus and Neff (2006), DePew and Lettner-Rust (2009), and Stewart (2017) demonstrated that synchronous video itself and the affordances for interaction it brings do not guarantee collaborative learning nor community building between students, often because of the expectations students bring with them about video and education.

Steffen (2017) did a follow-up study to Whithaus and Neff (2006) also at ODU to examine whether students' attitudes towards interactive televised (ITV) courses had changed and to see if similar patterns emerged in how students interacted within these classes. She found similar discourse patterns, with much of the verbal interaction following an IRE—instructor

initiates, student responds, instructor evaluates—pattern, but that text-chat conversations were much livelier, often because they were student led. She also found a distinction in verbal participation based on where students were participating from, with students in the same site as the teacher participating more than those participating from off-site. She also specifically compared her results to students within asynchronous courses. She found that a higher percentage of students in ITV courses reported feeling as though they had authority in the classroom compared to students in asynchronous courses, and that the students in the asynchronous course described a desire for some synchronous components of the course.

Thus as a media rich medium, there do appear to be real benefits to the use synchronous video for distance courses, but the research also suggests that there are distinct differences in the videoconferencing modality for whole classes from both f2f and asynchronous online courses and these differences impact interaction within these spaces which could impact collaboration and community building in these courses. This research points to the need for more exploration into interaction patterns in SVCs to determine best practices for exploiting affordances for interaction in this modality to support the community development called for in OWI Principle 11 and the social presence and cognitive presence aspects of CoI.

WebEx Interface Analysis

This next section will provide an overview and initial analysis of the video technology interface that my object of study is mediated through, WebEx. The goal of this analysis is to not only provide an introduction to the technology through which later data analysis will be founded, but also to explicitly connect the affordances and constraints of the technology to conversations explored in the previous section exploring literature on the use of video in OWI and its role in community building.

Carnegie (2009) offered a definition for interface that is a helpful starting place for this discussion:

> Basically, the interface is a place of interaction whether the interactions are between user and computer, user and software, user and content, software and content, user and culture, and the user and other users. In fact, it would be impossible to separate out the various interactions as they layer over each other: a user communicating with another user requires interaction with the computer, the software, the graphics, and a set of cultural norms. The interface is the common meeting point and place of interaction for the technological, human, social, and cultural aspects which make up computer-mediated communication and, more specifically, new media. (p. 165)

I am conducting a functional rather than cultural analysis of the WebEx interface that considers how participants can and cannot interact with WebEx in order to interact with each other. In this way, my initial analysis is grounded in Gibson's (1977) ecological theory of affordances. Gibson claimed, "the affordance of anything is a specific combination of the properties of its substance and its surfaces taken with reference to an animal" (p. 67). In discussing affordances in relation to ecology, he suggested, "The affordances of the environment are what it offers animals, what it provides or furnishes, for good or ill" (p. 68). While Gibson's theory highlights a networked relationship between the environment and an animal, he also notes that an "affordance is not bestowed upon an object by a need of an observer and by his act of perceiving it" (p. 78). Thus, while affordances are related to the relationship of a thing and a being, what is actually provided or furnished by the thing to the being is fixed and not dependent on the being's perception of all possibilities. Drawing on Gibson's theory, Norman (1999) differentiates between real and perceived affordances in design, noting that for Gibson "affordances are relationships. They exist naturally: they do not have to be visible, known, or desirable" (p.39). However, Norman suggested that perceived affordances are more important for interface designers: "[t]he designer cares more about what actions the user perceives to be possible" (p. 39). Norman explained, "Affordances specify the range of possible activities, but affordances are of little use if they are not visible to the users" (p. 41). In introducing WebEx, I am exploring the various perceived affordances of the program for students and instructors to interact and participate in writing instruction.

Norman (1999) also distinguishes affordances from constraints or conventions, presenting three types of constraints: physical, logical, and cultural. Physical constraints relate to what users literally can or cannot do within the interface, logical constraints on what a user intuits is and is not possible, and cultural constraints relate to how people have been conditioned to what can or cannot be accomplished in the interface based on the conventions of their community(ies). Focusing more on the latter two, Laurel (2013) discussed constraints in terms of design: "Constraints—limitations on people's actions—may be expressed as anything from gentle suggestions to stringent rules, or they may only be subconsciously sensed as intrinsic aspects of the thing that one is trying to do or be or create." Yet while some constraints are part of design, they can also be externally produced. In examining the WebEx interface, I will note both constraints by design in the program as well as limitations created by outside forces dictated by individual participants' contexts when using the program to consider issues of accessibility and inclusivity that could impact community building and learning among students.

My analysis of the interface for education will also draw on the interface of the f2f classroom for comparison. DePew and Lettner-Rust (2009) offered this description of the interface of the f2f classroom:

> The traditional classroom interface places an instructor at the front of the room disseminating information through a combination of various media, such as delivering a lecture, writing on a board, writing on an overhead, or presenting digital slides... With the instructors positioned as the sole arbiter of knowledge, the faculty becomes the primary, if not only, participant invested with the responsibility and privilege to communicate the course's information. Even though many instructors across the disciplines encourage students to pose questions and make comments about the information presented, they position themselves as the sole authority in the class—both in how knowledge is generated (that is, from what they present) and how the class is managed. In such a classroom design, instructors are the only participants in the classroom with power, a tacit agreement between the students and them. (p. 176).

They also go on to discuss the arrangement of space in this interface and its impact on power within the interface:

> With the interface of the modern face-to-face classroom, we see these instruments of discipline carried out both literally and metaphorically. Most classrooms that instructors teach in are filled with desks, in rows, facing the front of the room; with this arrangement it is easy for instructors to see their students with a glance and visually judge whether they are behaving appropriately—whether they are disciplining themselves...With the traditional classroom interface, instructors who choose to use the power inherent in their position can try to control as many aspects of the students' education experiences as possible. The knowledge that students have access to, how the students will access this knowledge, and how they will be assessed about this knowledge are all defined by the instructor-centeredness of this interface. (p. 178)

Drawing on Foucault's (1975/1995) notion of panopticism, DePew and Lettner-Rust suggest the traditional f2f classroom interface is one that seeks to limit the perceived affordances for students through positioning the instructor as authority. By virtue of the traditional classroom arrangement, the instructor can observe, and to some extent control, what students are doing. DePew and Lettner-Rust note that what they describe is not universal of the f2f classroom and that instructors can change this interface through the use of different pedagogical activities like discussions or games, or rearranging the furniture, for example, putting the desks in a circle. However, the model they described is the traditional "standard" idea of classroom that most conjure up. Even in more collaborative arrangements, it is still ultimately the instructor who has the power and authority to put that arrangement in place in the first place.

However, the interface of the online classroom is more individually experienced and thus is not as easy to control by instructors. This individualization is described in Kazmer's (2005) call to understand the online classroom as a hybrid space. Drawing on Harrison and Dourish's (1996) definition of hybrid space as "one which comprises both physical and virtual space" (p. 72), Kazmer suggested that we must consider both the virtual and physical space student learning occurs in and how these environments mutually impact each other:

> Viewing the online classroom as a "hybrid space" including both physical and online space shows something more complex than a consistent, seamless learning environment. Each student and instructor is involved in a shared learning experience, but all students and instructors are also lodged in idiosyncratic local environments that shape their experiences and indirectly shape the experience of everyone else in the virtual classroom.

Within this interface, students have more control to shape their experience, yet they also experience external constraints that shape these experiences based on the material and cultural makeup of the local environments from which they are participating. Kazmer goes on to argue that students "shape this technological virtual space [of the online classroom] as a hybrid space precisely because they are doing school tasks while they are also at home or work." This concept is important because my consideration of the interface needs to account for the impact local environments can have upon it. In Kazmer's analysis, she was looking at this concept in online classroom spaces which did not include multi-user live video. WebEx as an interface does have this affordance which brings this local environment even more into play since participants can literally see aspects of each participant's local environment if their webcam is activated. Thus my analysis will focus on both the interface itself, students' ability to interact with the interface to shape their own experiences, and the ways the interface can be impacted, or conversely, impact the local environments of participants.

Interface Description

Romberger (2011) suggested "Interfaces are highly complex organizations of visual and verbal metaphors, lexical items, interactivity, and nested menus or palettes" (p. 119). In considering WebEx, it is helpful to first start with the central metaphor driving the interface and then consider individual aspects within the program. WebEx[21], like many videoconferencing programs, situates itself as a virtual meeting "room." WebEx prompts meeting hosts to invite participants to their "Personal Room" where participants can communicate verbally with accompanying video from a webcam, to interact via a synchronous text-chat, and share their desktop or a particular application to let other participants view what is on their screen. Because

---

[21] According to ODU's website, ODU has access to three WebEx products. WebEx Meeting Center, WebEx Training Center, and WebEx Event Center. WebEx Meeting Center is the default program used and is automatically available for faculty use for synchronous meetings or classes. Use of the other WebEx versions requires special permission from Information Technology Services. All discussion of WebEx in this dissertation are specific to WebEx Meeting Center.

of its synchronous modality, all participants in the WebEx seminar meet virtually on set days

and times, but they can be physically located anywhere since they participate via their own

computers or mobile devices. Each meeting has a distinct URL which can be shared with

participants so they can access the virtual meeting at a designated time. Despite disparate

physical locations and the use of various devices through which to access the meeting, the

WebEx interface presents a shared virtual "room" for participants to be present together. Figure

2[22] shows the standard view of this shared virtual meeting place on a desktop from a student's

perspective, including the framing of the interface as "room."
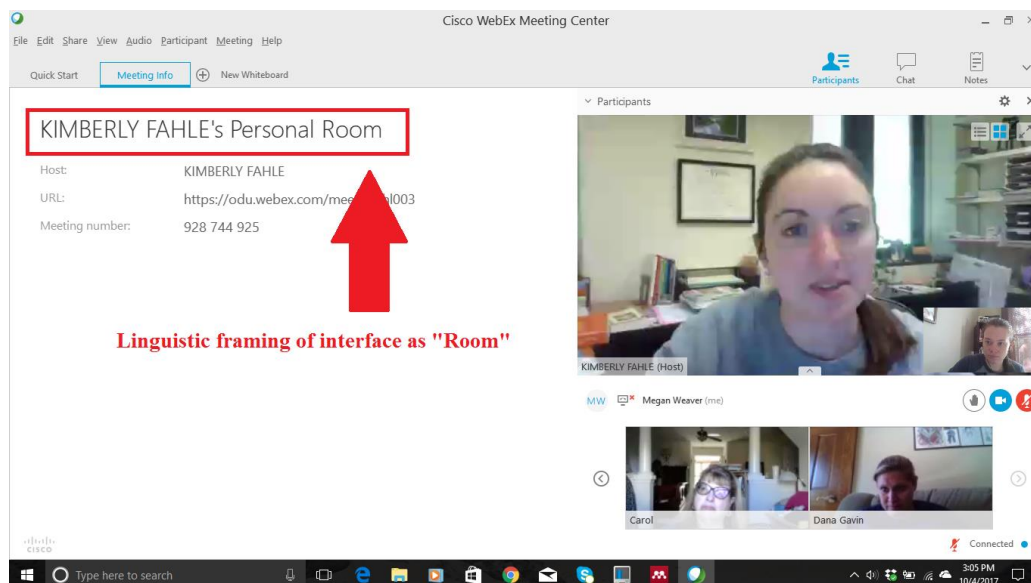
Figure 2. WebEx Meeting from Student Perspective Framing Interface as "Room"

---

[22] All screenshots included are from mock meetings, and participants are some of my fellow graduate students who agreed to participate in WebEx meetings with the express purpose of taking screen shots of this application. This mock meeting was set up with IRB approval and all participants consented to having their likeness used as part of this project. Screenshots included have been taken by me or one of the participants who have expressly given me permission to include the screenshots that they took for my project.

On Cisco's web page about WebEx and education, it states: "With Cisco WebEx technologies, colleges and universities can and [sic] provide rich online environments for learning and collaboration that engage students beyond the boundaries of the traditional brick-and-mortar campus" ("Education WebEx," n.d.). Though "rich online environments" is not specifically defined, Cisco may be drawing on media richness theory developed by Daft and Lengel (1986) which describes the extent to which a communication medium can replicate f2f interaction. The more elements of f2f interaction can be replicated, for example, synchronicity, voice, body language, gaze, etc., the more "rich" that medium is considered. Interestingly, Cisco pushes beyond this idea of replication, suggesting that they are offering an experience "beyond the boundaries" of traditional education. Yet, while Cisco highlights the elimination of "brick-and-mortar" physical boundaries as a benefit of the program, the interface also relies on the f2f notion of a conference *room* or a class*room* and creates a shared virtual space for this communication and collaboration. Carnegie (2009) suggested this is the creation of spatial presence, which she refers to as a "user's sense of being present in a 'place' or a mediated environment distinct from the place in which the user physically exists" (p. 170). Steffen's (2017) study of ITV courses at ODU found that 75.95% of students in these courses reported feeling "as if they shared a sense of space with their teacher and classmates when participating in the ITV sessions" (p. 144), suggesting that this sense of spatial presence is created for many through the interface. Thus this metaphor of a room for the WebEx interface supports the goal of creating a shared space among participants where they feel they are mutually present together, thus supporting social presence in the CoI framework.

Beyond this broad room metaphor, WebEx also has various aspects and features meant to promote a sense of presence and provide opportunities for collaboration. Carnegie (2009) argued for understanding interface as *exordium* drawing on Cicero's definition of exordium as that which prepares the audience by making them "well-disposed, attentive, and receptive"

(Cicero, 1960, p. 41). I would argue that the WebEx interface strives to make users "well-

disposed, attentive, and receptive" to user-to-user communication. In a product overview for

using WebEx for education, Cisco supports this idea by highlighting not only the affordance but

supposed ease for user-to-user communication:

> Cisco WebEx Training Center[23] helps keep learners focused and interested with high-definition video of the presenter in the main session, or select full-screen mode to view the active speaker in the main video panel with up to six other participants' video displayed as thumbnails. The video experience includes Active Speaker, which switches the video automatically to focus on the current speaker. All participants also get clear and reliable audio through a telephone bridge or voice over IP (VoIP) and can join through callback or call in using a toll or toll-free number. ("Take Online Education to a New Level," n.d.)

Cisco positions their product as one that keeps students "focused and engaged" and easily

allows them to join in.

The next section digs into this idea of WebEx as exordium for user-to-user

communication by considering aspects and features of WebEx, exploring how each affords or

constrains user interaction with the interface as well as other users, and discusses how these

affordances or constraints might impact online writing instruction.

Interface Aspects

Veeramoothoo (2017) provided an overview of WebEx for the Sweetland Digital Rhetoric

Collaborative. She highlights six features of WebEx, including:

- High quality video and audio
- Screen sharing
- Whiteboard space
- Chat options
- Notes options
- Recording options

My analysis starts with these features, but will also explore more general aspects of the

interface including manipulability and accessibility.

---

[23] While ODU uses WebEx Meeting Center versus WebEx Training Center specifically referenced here, the features mentioned in this quotation are shared across these two versions of the application.

Video and Audio Aspects. As a meeting software program, WebEx's key features are its video and audio capabilities. When signed in, participants will see the current speaker's video in a large portion in the top right side of the application as well as video thumbnails from their own video feed and video thumbnails of other participants. These webcam video feeds let each person see other participants which could lead to a sense of social presence; however some students may be reluctant to appear on camera. Steffen (2017) noted an example of a student in a studio classroom who declined to speak using the microphone because she did not want to appear on camera. Steffen suggested, "Both the microphone and the camera are eliciting something akin to stage fright for some students, discouraging them from participating even when they want to" (p. 145). Thus the affordance of video, while obviously having enormous possibilities for creating a sense of presence between students, may also be intimidating for some students, particularly if they are not used to communicating in this modality.[24] Moreover, these students may be less confident about what they want to say or may not fully understand the value of contributing to and carrying on a conversation, which is often the case for new undergraduates.

In addition to individual participants, the video feeds also show a snapshot of the environments each participant is signing on from. In Figure 3 we can see glimpses of the various environments the participants are participating from, whether it's an office or a space in their home. Yet these environments could be a variety of locations including a participant's place of employment, their[25] car, or outside—wherever they have chosen to participate from that has internet access.

---

[24] This may be particularly true for some older students. Traditionally aged college students may be less intimidated by the technology itself due to their use of other forms of video communication through applications such as Snapchat or Facetime.

[25] Although the APA Style Guide does not promote the use of singular they, I am choosing to follow the guidelines set out in NCTE's Guidelines for Gender Fair-Use of Language which does recognize the use of the singular they as a viable option for gender-fair language use that is gaining increasing acceptance.
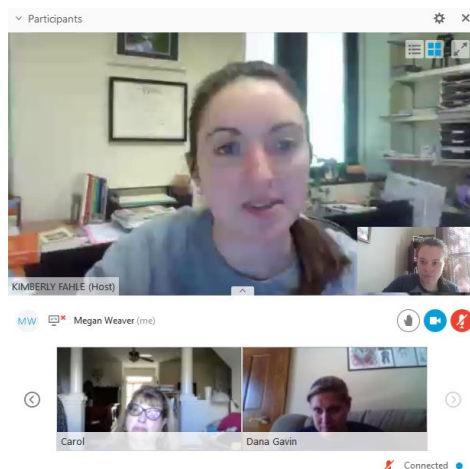
Figure 3. Close Up of Participants' Video Feeds

Thus the virtual classroom is made up of a patchwork of distinct, individual environments. Kazmer (2005) argued that "Professors and students make individual and collaborative contributions to create the environment in an online classroom. These contributions include the clothes they wear, food they bring, media they use, [and] interaction they engage in…." Steffen (2017) echoed this idea, suggesting, "It is not uncommon to see students lying in bed or wrestling with their dog while participating in class" (p. 143). ODU's guide on connecting and using your webcam for WebEx classes implicitly touches on this idea, suggesting to students, "Please be sure you are dressed appropriately and have a good light source" ("Connect Your WebCam," n.d.).[26] The video capabilities of WebEx make the hybrid space of the online classroom even more visible, which could be viewed both positively and negatively. The window into each participant's local environment provided by webcam video feeds could support social presence, helping participants see each other as real people who live distinct lives. The environments students choose to participate from might reveal aspects of their personality or their lives that help others get to know them better. It also clearly presents

---

[26] Some professors include more detailed suggestions on where to participate; for example, suggesting students sit at a desk.

them as real people who can be interacted with (i.e. developing social presence), thus supporting the perceived affordance of participant interaction.

Conversely, though, this view into an individual's space could be distracting for others or seen as invasive for some individuals. The title of Kazmer's (2005) article, "Cats in the classroom" refers to the phenomenon of cats walking on keyboards, creating errant messages in synchronous text-chat. In a videoconference, a cat's presence could literally be seen on screen[27]. While its presence could be endearing or result in relationship building among participants, it could also distract from the lesson at hand. When local environments are visible, that means all objects, animals, and people that inhabit that environment can come into view. A viral video from a 2017 BBC telecast[28] depicting a North Korea expert's live interview from his own home office interrupted by his young children is the perfect example of this potential distraction. Again, infrequent occurrences like this could be positive for community building in an online class, providing levity and humor which Garrison et al. (1999) suggested was a contributing factor to a sense of social presence. However, habitual outside distractions could negatively affect a class and interrupt learning.

Additionally some students may not want to invite or may not have considered the extent to which they are inviting the class into their private spaces and worlds. Kazmer (2005) noted that the participants in her study participated only textually in the online classroom and indicated they did not want "multi-user live video to recreate the shared space" of the classroom, but instead were "accustomed to presenting themselves via text and reluctant to give up the *freedom* that comes with not being seen" (emphasis mine). DePew and Lettner-Rust (2009) discussed the panoptic gaze of a synchronous video interface, suggesting "Once the student dials in, their image is present for the instructor's gaze and the gaze of other students" (p. 184).

---

[27] My own cat has made many appearances in my synchronous class meetings as part of my graduate program.
[28] This video can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mh4f9AYRCZY

However, they suggested that through the mediation of the gaze through the camera, students gained some control over the gaze, determining how and whether they could be seen: "It is the student who decides if and how he or she is seen and, in some cases perceived" (186). This is true in WebEx as well. Students ostensibly can decide where to participate from and how much of themselves and their environment they will reveal. However, it is important to note that some students' choices may be constrained by the technology they have available to use (e.g. they only have a desktop through which to sign on which is in a fixed location in their home) or other responsibilities that constrain their location (e.g. their children are home so they must choose a location in the home to be available in case of emergency, but also one that is not being used by the children). Additionally, WebEx itself has functions that allow participants to determine when they are seen or heard. Figure 4 shows the three buttons participants see under the thumbnail of their own video feed.[29]

Figure 4. Participant Options Buttons

The center button with the camera icon allows participants to turn their camera on or off. This action can be done at any time during the meeting and as many times as a participant wants. The ability to turn their webcams on and off allows participants to make the decision to allow or disallow the class's gaze on themselves and their surroundings. So, for example, if a student who is a mother is participating in a SVC meeting and her child suddenly comes in the room needing something, she could turn off her camera and prevent the class from witnessing her encounter with her child, either to preserve her own privacy or to prevent distraction for the

---

[29] These are the three buttons displayed in the desktop application, the web and mobile applications do not have this same function button display, which I discuss in detail later in this section.

class. These buttons also include audio controls. The button on the right controls participants' microphones, allowing them to have the microphone be live or muted. The button on the left with an icon of a hand serves as the virtual raising of one's hand. When a participant hits this button, a sound is made in the meeting and this hand symbol is present next to the participant's name in the host's view of the participant list. This action lets the host know that the participant would like to speak. WebEx, therefore, affords students the opportunity to decide when they want to be heard and to indicate when they have a desire to speak. An individual participant has sole control of their camera and hand raise button; however, the meeting host can control the audio icon, controlling whether a specific individual's microphone is muted or not. This affordance for the meeting host can mitigate any issues of microphones accidently left on or off; however, this capability also creates an interesting power dynamic in which the host can control when and whether a participant can be heard, which can override a participant's own desire. The ability of a meeting host, or instructor, to censor a participant, or student, seems particularly problematic. So in this interface compared to the f2f classroom interface, students have about the same control over indicating their willingness to speak, they are just using a button versus raising their physical hand, greater control over how and whether they are seen, but potentially have less control over being heard since instructors can literally silence them in a way not available in f2f interactions.

In terms of usability of these buttons, the specific icons used for each function button are likely to be relatively intuitively understood by participants. The camera and microphone button icons, though bearing little resemblance to the webcam and device or headset microphone that

participants are likely using[30], have been codified as almost universal symbols[31] for these

functions across various web conferencing and video-chat programs and smartphone apps,

including Skype, Google Hangouts, and Apple's Facetime, making it likely that participants have

encountered them before and will understand their function. The hand icon draws on the face-

to-face classroom practice of raising one's hand in order to speak. So in this case, the button's

icon draws less on a common symbol across interfaces, but instead a cultural convention or

discourse community practice to indicate this affordance to users (Norman, 1999; Romberger

2007; Romberger 2011).

　　These function buttons afford participants power and opportunity for whether and how

they interact with each other; however, there are constraints on their functionality as well.

Though participants can contribute audio and speak in the meeting through their microphone,

when everyone's microphone is live, any sound, from someone typing or coughing for example,

will be heard in the meeting. Additionally, multiple open microphones often result in sound

feedback issues. This issue is why the guide provided by ODU for using WebEx suggested

"don't forget to mute your microphone in class when you're not speaking" ("Connect your audio,"

n.d.). The need to keep one's microphone muted whenever one is not speaking can make an

easy flow of dialogue more difficult, which could connect to Hampel and Stickler's (2012)

findings that students found it difficult to contribute freely in the videoconferencing environment.

Additionally, the need to constantly mute the microphone can lead to instances of people

forgetting to unmute their microphones when trying to participate.

---

[30] The use of outdated icons is common in interfaces. Laurel (2013) claimed, "Interface design is initially fluidly variant and later rather sticky, or conservative." The use of the icon for a floppy disk to digital save a file comes to mind as another common example of this practice. Romberger (2011) provides an extended discussion of the use of icons in interfaces, differentiating between iconic, or those where the signifier resembles the signified (e.g. a picture), and indexical, or denotative icons (e.g. skull and crossbones for poison).

[31] Romberger (2011) categories this as exchanges between other programs, hardware or operating systems.

Additional constraints when considering the audio and video capabilities of this program include the technological requirements participants must have access to in order to fully participate. Students' computers or mobile devices which they participate from must obviously have a camera and microphone to fully participate in the technology. Additionally, this device must be equipped with certain configurations of operating systems, memory, browser versions, and internet speeds to be able to effectively run the technology. The internet speed required for this program is another potential barrier for its use. ODU suggests that 1.5mbps download and 786 kbps upload speeds are required to run WebEx but recommends 3mbps download and 3mbps upload speeds ("Getting Started," n.d.). High-speed internet is required because of the bandwidth necessary to display all of the video feeds. Because of this bandwidth usage, only six video feeds can be displayed at any time in the application. Thus the host or instructor can only view a few participants at a time, making it difficult to keep track of an entire class.[32] Additionally, when a participant has insufficient bandwidth, their video feed might buffer. Also, if the bandwidth is too low for a participant, all other video feeds will be disrupted and the participant will receive a message indicating the bandwidth issue. Some students may not have personal access to internet with the speeds required for full functionality of the audio and video capabilities of WebEx, so the use of this interface for instruction could create conflict with OWI Principle 1: "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible."

Synchronous Visual and Textual Communication. Effective Practice 1.9 suggests, "Teachers must become acquainted with multimodal means for distributing and accessing learning materials" (p. 10). The various features of the WebEx interface do support this practice as there are multiple channels in addition to the audio-video communication channel just discussed for communication that instructors can use to present information. Veeramoothoo's

---

[32] At one point ODU used Adobe Connect for videoconferencing, which did display all students' feeds, but this took an enormous amount of bandwidth and created a lag, especially in terms of audio. The design of WebEx, a newer program, may have been in response to issues of earlier programs like Connect, choosing to display a smaller number of participants at one time.

(2017) overview specifically noted WebEx's screen sharing capabilities. Participants have the

ability to share their screen, an individual application, or a file. The default setting is to allow any

participant to share materials, but the host can also change this setting so only they can

present. The presenter and other participants also have the ability to mark up what is being

shared with various editing tools including text boxes and line, shape and free-drawing tools

(though it is a challenging program to use, as can be seen in the free drawn underline shown in

Figure 5). These annotations can be saved as a screenshot within WebEx. The meeting host

can also change the settings so that participants cannot annotate; however, participants do

have this capability by default. Figure 5 shows screen sharing with annotation from a host's

perspective, and Figure 6 shows what participants see when the host shares his or her screen

or an application within the meeting; the material is shared on the left-side of the WebEx screen

where previously meeting details had been displayed.

Figure 5. Screen Sharing and Annotating from Host/Instructor Perspective
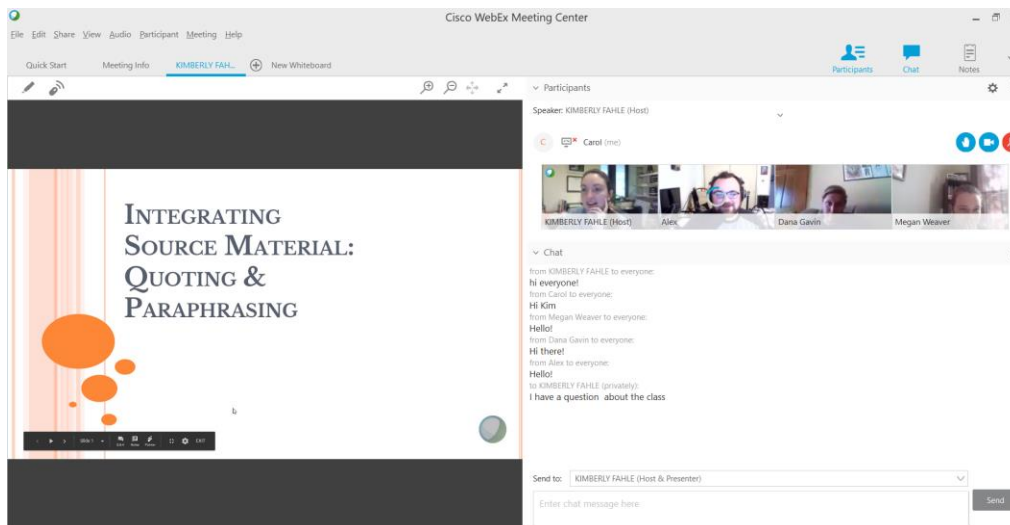
Figure 6. Screen Sharing from Participant/Student Perspective

Only one participant at a time has the capability to share their screen or application within the meeting. The host is the default presenter; however, the host can designate another participant the presenter and then they will have access to sharing controls. Additionally, if the meetings settings allow all participants to be the presenter, participants can elect to become the presenter themselves. The presenter is indicated with the WebEx favicon, or icon, which is displayed next to the participant's initials on the participant list and on his or her video thumbnail. Figure 7 shows the WebEx favicon next to a participant's initials. The host can designate a presenter simply by dragging and dropping the favicon from their own name to the name of the participant who would like to present. Additionally, any participant can elect to become the presenter by dragging the favicon to their own initials if meeting settings chosen set by the host allow it.

Figure 7. WebEx Favicon Indicating Who Has Presenter Capabilities

WebEx also has a whiteboard function where collaborative writing and drawing can occur. Multiple whiteboards can be created throughout the meetings and all whiteboards can be saved as a .UCF file. In addition to this collaborative note space, WebEx also has an individual Notes application where participants can take their own private notes within the application which can be saved as .txt files.

Synchronous communication is also afforded through a text-chat application which allows one-to-many messaging that is viewable to everyone on a public chat log and one-to-one private messaging to a specific individual that can only be seen by the selected individual. This communication backchannel could be used by students to facilitate underlife communication However, the meeting host can adjust the settings of attendee privileges and who they are able to send messages to, which could restrict them from being able to send messages to everyone or send private messages to individual participants. If default settings are used and all messaging privileges are enabled, individual participants will see both public and private messages, with an indication of whether the message was sent to everyone or to them individually, in the same chat log which is displayed chronologically. When they first sign in, participants' text-chat is automatically set to send private messages to the host. They can use the dropdown menu to choose to send a message to everyone or to a different specific participant. Figure 8 shows the dropdown menu to choose who to send a message to.

Figure 8. Drop Down Menu to Choose Who Should Receive Message

WebEx also recently added a polling feature which allows the meeting host to post a multiple choice or short answer question to participants, give them a time limitation to answer the question, and then display the results to the participants. Cisco suggests that this feature "can be useful for gathering feedback, taking votes, or testing knowledge" ("Start a Poll," 2017). Poll questions can be downloaded and saved for upload in future meetings, and poll results, including individual responses, can be saved as a .txt file. Through both text-chat and polling features, we see opportunities for engagement and conversation beyond the verbal channel, which could open up *more* opportunities for the types of conversations advocated by Bruffee than the traditional f2f classroom, particularly for those who may be reticent to participate verbally[33].

Recording and Archiving. Beyond synchronous communication, WebEx also allows the activity of the meeting to be preserved, archived, and distributed. Meeting hosts have the ability to record a meeting and share it on the WebEx video player. When the meeting is viewed on the WebEx video player, the video-feed of each current speaker, the public text-chat and anything shared in the meeting will all be included in the recording with a timestamp. Recordings are stored on a cloud via the institution's network which the host can access in their WebEx account. The host can share a link via email to view the recorded meeting via the WebEx player and settings can be set up like requiring a password to view the recording.[34] Only

---

[33] It is important to note that WebEx was initially developed as a product for business communication not for use in educational settings, meaning that academic institutions adopted a product not necessarily designed for their use to accommodate synchronous distance education. Cisco has since recognized the broader range of users of their products and have begun specifically marketing products for education, particularly WebEx Training Center ("Take online education to a new level," n.d.). However, recognizing the original intended audience for this product, businesses, can help consider some of the design choices of the interface that might not align with its pedagogical uses.

[34] Some institutions will also download the videos and create their own archive of recorded class sessions, which students can access for the classes they are enrolled in using their university username and password. ODU *Online* has these video archives available, which include just the video feed of the current speakers and any applications shared as part of the meeting and a computer generated transcript from the recording that can be used for video-searching purposes. The public text-chat is not available as part of this archive. The difference between what is available as part of the WebEx recording and the university archive will be discussed in a later chapter when discussing the different classes observed for my research.

the host has the ability to record a meeting, and if any part of the meeting is recorded,

participants will be notified when the recording begins with a pop-up message, and a red dot

indicating recording is in progress will be visible in the bottom corner of the interface for the

duration of the recording (see Figure 9). Thus, the software does not allow for covert recording

within the application, and all participants are always aware when the meeting is being

recorded. The transparency of whether or not the affordance of recording is in use allows all

participants to consider what or how they contribute in light of whether or not a meeting is being

recorded. Generally, though, the ability to record creates the ability to preserve an archive of the

meeting that participants can return to.

Figure 9. Message Indicating Host is Recording Meeting

Manipulability. One aspect of WebEx that Veeramoothoo (2017) does not touch on,

that I believe is important, is WebEx's flexibility of viewing and device usage options, or what

Carnegie (2009) calls manipulability. In the desktop version of the interface, while the default

setting when participants have their cameras activated is the video thumbnail view, another

option is to view other participants as a list. This can be helpful to get an overview of who is in a

session, but the list view also provides the hosts with other valuable pieces of information. In

this view, participant names are displayed next to their initials and an icon indicating whether the

participant is signed on from a computer or mobile device can be seen. This icon also includes a

small red X if the participant's microphone is muted. It is also in this view, for the host, that

raised hand icons can be viewed to see who would like to speak. Figure 10 is a close up of the

device icons displayed in the participant list indicating desktop or mobile sign on. These device

icons can be helpful for a host because they will indicate whether someone is participating from a mobile device, which as I will detail shortly, may have an impact on how participants are able to interact with the interface, so therefore could be valuable information for an instructor.
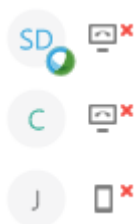
Figure 10. Device Indicator Icons in Participant List

Participants also have the option to choose a full screen view of the participants' video feeds which places the current speaker's video feed centered on the screen with up to six participant video feeds at the bottom. If there are more than six additional participants in the meeting, those video feeds can be seen by hitting a button that scrolls to the next set of six video feeds.[35] Participants can also choose to display their notes and the text-chat in this view and have access to their meeting controls from a taskbar at the top of the screen. Figure 11 shows this view.

---

[35] WebEx Meeting Center can accommodate up to 500 attendees in a meeting ("WebEx Conferencing Comparison," n.d.), though the amount of bandwidth required for effective use rises with more than 50 concurrent users ("Maximum System Capacity," n.d.).
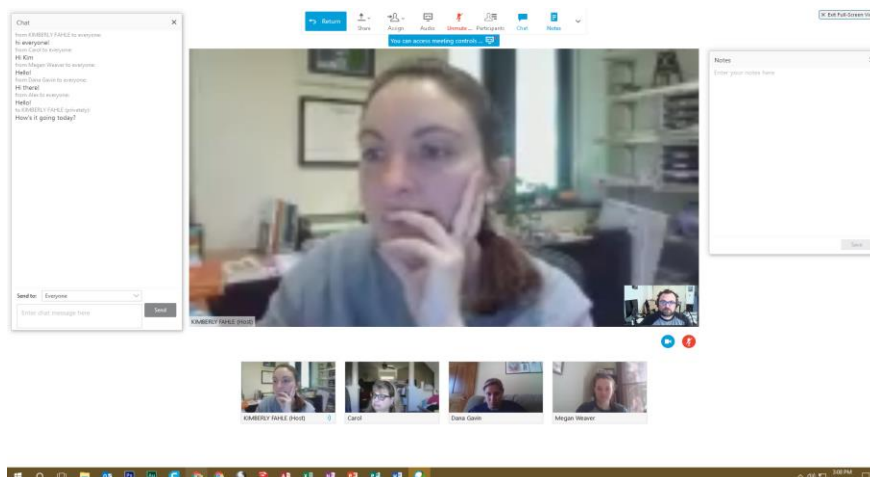
Figure 11. Full Screen View with Applications and Taskbar

The limitation of being able to view only six videos at a time, a limitation that exists in both the default and the full screen view, demonstrates one way this interface cannot replicate a common feature of the traditional f2f classroom, where according to DePew and Lettner-Rust (2009), "it is easy for instructors to see their students with a glance and visually judge whether they are behaving appropriately" (p. 178). Within this interface, meeting hosts can only monitor six participants at a time, and can only monitor them if the student has opted to turn on their camera. Additionally, it is not only instructors who are limited to viewing six participants. Students will also only be able to see up to six classmates at a time, which could impact social presence among students since they can only view a select number of their classmates at a time.

The flexibility to offer multiple ways for participants to view the interface and to interact with it and other participants also distinguishes it from the f2f interface, in which, as DePew and Letter-Rust (2009) suggested, "instructors who choose to use the power inherent in their position can try to control as many aspects of the students' education experience as possible" (p. 178). In WebEx, though, students have some control over how they want to orient their viewing of the interface. Control like this could account for findings such as Steffen (2017) which

found that more students in a synchronous video course felt they had more authority within the

class than those in asynchronous classes.

There is also flexibility in viewing options related to accessibility. Cisco specifically notes

the accessibilities features of the applications of WebEx, focusing specifically on visual

impairment concerns, noting the use of high contrast scheme, supporting the zoom functionality

of the operating system, the use of accessible icons with text alternatives, and the ability to use

the latest version of the JAWS screen reader on application menus and drop-down menus,

shared file titles and tab titles, buttons, and toolbars ("Web App Accessibility Features," 2018).

Yet, while there is some flexibility in how users can orient the interface within the

program, often they are only able to see one function of the program at a time. For instance, if a

participant is not in full-screen view, they can see the participants video feeds or a participant

list on the right side of the screen, or the text-chat, but not all simultaneously. In full-screen view

one sees the video feeds and the chat at the same time, but then not any applications that a

presenter is sharing. Essentially it is impossible to view all the functions possible of WebEx at

once, so a user must toggle between different view options and functions to observe all of them.

These design constraints bring to mind Carnegie's (2009) reminder about the limitations of

manipulability of interfaces:

> Although [customization] affords the user some power to manipulate the interface to
> match his or her interests...the user's choices remain contained...The user is given
> limited power to construct him- or herself as a user. If the user's interests and needs fall
> outside of those reflected in the options, the user's interaction becomes more limited. (p.
> 168)

WebEx meeting hosts and participants must work within the constraints of the interface to find a

way to view and interact with the content and features most relevant or helpful to them at any

given time. In this way, some of the many affordances for interaction within WebEx could

actually also be understood as a limitation for its use for writing instruction. The robustness of its

affordances coupled with flexible but not simultaneous viewing options brings to mind

Cornelius's (2014) findings about the demandingness of synchronous video technology for instruction because there is so much that one can and should pay attention to. While one could argue that this is also true in the f2f classroom where students could be listening to an instructor, viewing slides on a projector, writing down notes, and hearing side chatter from classmates, the integration of this multichannel communication is well practiced through years of f2f education. Not only do instructors have to balance their own attention when teaching in a multichannel environment, they also have to design the course considering how their utilization of the various affordances of the interface will impact students' experiences both in terms of social presence and cognitive presence. While WebEx does encourage user-to-user interaction through multiple means or channels, it does not really support *integrated* multichannel communication. Users must navigate back and forth between parts of the interface or other applications, as the interviewed instructor noted in Cornelius (2014)—this is what makes it a "demanding" environment. Because of its distinctness from the f2f interface, both instructors and students need to be fully oriented to this technology, its various affordances, and their own agency when using this technology for it to be effective for instruction.

Device Flexibility and Constraints. Beyond viewing flexibility, the WebEx program also supports device flexibility. The ability to access WebEx on a myriad of devices including Chromebooks or mobile devices provides more opportunities and ways for participants to join a meeting. WebEx recently made it possible to join a meeting through a browser and has mobile applications for Apple and Android products so students who may not have a desktop or laptop, but may have a less expensive device, or do not have internet access at home but have internet access through their phone's data plan, can still join a meeting. Figure 12 shows the interface on a mobile phone. It's important to note that the web and mobile applications do not have all the same features and affordances of the desktop app, which could limit users' ability to fully participate. Additionally, features available might even depend on the browser or the version of

the operating system being used. For example, audio functions on the web app purportedly only

work with Chrome or Firefox, but even with these browsers you need certain versions of them

("Cisco Web App Version 3.6," 2018). On their website, Cisco provides an in depth series of

tables outlining which features are and are not supported across different operating systems

and browser ("Cisco WebEx Web App Supported Operating Systems and Browsers," 2018),

and the variability across devices, platforms and browsers is pretty astounding. Keeping track of

all of this information to help students troubleshoot would be difficult for an instructor or

administrator.
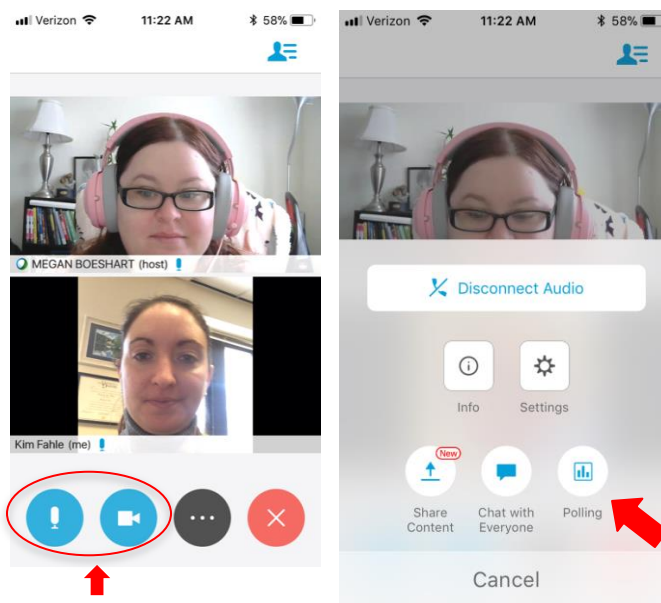
Figure 12. Mobile Device Views of WebEx

Additionally some features may not be available at all on some versions of the interface.

Neither the web app nor the mobile apps of the interface include the hand raise button. The lack

of this function, therefore, makes it hard for students on certain devices to signal they would like

to speak, and instead they have to either just begin to speak or indicate in the chat their desire

to speak. Web app and mobile app users also do not have the Notes function that allows

individual participants to take their own private notes within the interface, nor do mobile users have the ability to annotate shared screens or applications. Finally, materials such as the chat log cannot be downloaded from the web or mobile applications the way they can be through the desktop app. The differences of the interface across different devices, and the internet speeds required for full functionality, could create class-based barriers and create a situation in which some students have access to features of the interface and therefore the online classroom that others do not. This division could impact both social presence and student relationships since students may not have full or equal access to one another as well as cognitive presence since they may not have full or equal access to course materials or tools to help them engage with course materials.

Analysis Summary

As a videoconferencing program, the WebEx interface positions itself as an exordium for user-to-user communication and interaction, and it has a fair amount of manipulability so participants can customize their viewing experience. However, its (over)abundance of communication features coupled with restrictions in manipulability—for example, not being able to view or use several features at once—could actually challenge the stated goal of interaction. In analyzing the various features of this interface, I can see how this program might also suffer from criticisms of other video conferencing programs examined in scholarship such as the challenge of free conversation (Whithaus & Neff, 2006; Hample & Stickler, 2012) due to constraints such as only being able to view so many participants at once and the need for muted microphones when not speaking. Or that they are "demanding" environments (Cornelius, 2014) because participants must simultaneously pay attention to several channels of communication. Additionally, constraints due to user device or internet speeds mean that not all users may have the same experience with the interface and could experience limitations to their ability to interact or participate. Thus while this interface could certainly be seen to support the

goal of community and collaboration in the online classroom by supporting social presence and establishing participants as unique individuals, letting others see them and their environment and providing opportunities for backchannel and underlife communication, as well as the perceived affordance of multichannel communication to support interaction and collaboration between participants, there are very real constraints, both of the interface itself, and in its use in various contexts that could undermine these goals. The analysis of data discussed in subsequent chapters will specifically interrogate these affordance and constraints and consider their role in students' sense of community in SVCs.

Summary

This chapter first provided an overview of relevant literature on the use of video in OWI and distance education, looking first at one-way, asynchronous video and then at two-way, synchronous video. Though only a small body of research exists regarding SVCs, trends were discussed, including distinct discourse patterns of short student contributions or stilted discussion. Next, I described and analyzed the videoconferencing program WebEx, the technology used to deliver the SVCs I explored in this project. This analysis was grounded in a comparison of this interface to the f2f classroom as well as Kazmer's (2005) notion of the online classroom as a "hybrid space." To complete this comparison and consider the WebEx interface as a hybrid space, I drew on Gibson's (1977) notion of affordances, Norman's (1999) concept of perceived affordances, and Carnegie's (2009) framework of interface as exordium. My analysis concluded that WebEx is a robust interface; however, its very robustness coupled with interface diversity across devices and technological requirements for its full and effective use could inhibit its usefulness in ways that challenge the establishment and maintenance of community for OWI.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology and specific methods used for empirical research into specific SVCs using WebEx to deliver online writing classes to interrogate my interface analysis through direct observation of its use by students and instructors and to learn

from students and instructors themselves about their experience learning or teaching in this

environment.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In the introduction to this project, I invoked OWI Principle 15, "OWI/OWL administrators and teachers/tutors should be committed to ongoing research into their programs and courses as well as the very principles in this document," as the central grounding of this project. I aimed to investigate a specific modality, synchronous videoconferencing, for online instruction in light of these Principles, specifically Principle 11. To develop an understanding of this modality, I first defined specific research questions and then determined an appropriate methodology and specific methods that would help me address these questions. This chapter documents my thinking in making these determinations, as well as discusses the ways that my original research plan was adapted and finally carried out when I faced challenges that made my original design impractical.

This chapter is organized as follows. I first present my research questions, grounding them in the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3. I next acknowledge my role as a researcher and how this impacted my methodology. Subsequently, I outline the methodological framework of my study. I then describe my research protocol, including the research site, descriptions of the particular classes I observed, and data collection and analysis procedures I end the chapter with a discussion of the challenges faced during the study and its limitations.

Research Questions

In the previous chapters I noted the lack of a clear definition for community in OWI, explored various models of community to synthesize them into a workable model for OWI, reviewed the current literature on the use of video in OWI, and introduced the technology interface, WebEx, through which synchronous video classes are presented at Old Dominion University. These discussions led to the following research questions for this study:

- How do undergraduate students participate and interact in WebEx mediated writing classes?
- How do the affordances and constraints of WebEx shape how undergraduate students participate and interact in writing classes?
- How do undergraduate students want to and how do their instructors want them to participate and interact in synchronous writing classes, and how do students and instructors feel the WebEx technology supported or hindered these goals?
- How do the choices students make about how they participate and interact in WebEx classes affect their sense of collaboration and community within the course?

Once these questions were determined, I next set about determining my methodology and appropriate research methods to address them.

Role of the Researcher

In outlining the methodology of this project, it is first important to outline my role as researcher in relation to this project. As a graduate student who took most of my doctoral classes through WebEx and an instructor who has taught in this modality, my own biases and experiences have shaped the direction of this project. The concepts that I chose to examine and the questions that I asked were drawn from my own experiences as well as what has been discussed in scholarship related to synchronous online instruction and use of video in OWI. Many of the aspects of this project that I hoped to explore using the methods outlined below began as positive and negative experiences I had myself as a student or instructor in this modality.

Additionally my views on online writing instruction (OWI) and the roles of instructors and students in writing instruction generally impact the way I approach my data. I am a staunch supporter of OWI and choose not to approach it with a deficit model of what it lacks compared to face-to-face (f2f) instruction but as a unique teaching and learning modality with its own independent benefits and challenges. While comparisons to f2f instruction are almost inevitable because this pedagogical method has been the common teaching and learning experience for many in their life—this is certainly true for me since I did not encounter online classes until I

began my doctoral work—my intention when exploring and discussing OWI in my scholarship is to better understand it on its own terms as opposed to positioning it as a lesser option when f2f instruction is not possible. My pedagogical views are also shaped by own commitment to social constructivism, prizing teaching and learning that moves away from Freire's banking model of education to one that provides opportunity for dialogue and collaboration as the foundation for learning. These pedagogical biases inevitably shape the way I approached my research design and the analysis of the data that I collected.

Methodological Framework

In the following section I outline the methodological considerations driving the particular methods chosen to investigate my research questions. These decisions were grounded in OWI Principle 15 itself. Effective Practice 15.1 advocates:

> Qualitative studies that investigate the processes of asynchronous and/or synchronous OWI or OWL interactions should be designed and deployed. Such studies might explore student and teacher/tutor behaviors, actions, and relationships within the context of the actual exchanges. Studies might examine participant perceptions of OWI or OWLs (e.g., benefits, challenges, experiences) via interviews with students, teachers/tutors, and administrators.

Thus, the Principles document seems to call for two different types of research: that examining "actual exchanges" in OWI, as well as that which focuses on "participant perceptions" of learning in these modalities. However, in looking at synchronous video courses like those at ODU, I believe that *both* types of information collected *together* are crucial to understand this new modality, consider best teaching practices within it, and to interrogate its suitability for wider spread use. One of the challenges, though, in trying to examine both "actual exchanges" and "participant perceptions" of this OWI context is that a singular method is unable to uncover both. Effective practice 15.1 calls for qualitative studies to look at these aspects, but a single qualitative method alone cannot help me explore both exchanges within WebEx writing classes and students' perception of participation, interaction, collaboration, and community within these courses. Thus, triangulation of research methods is needed.

Triangulation as a methodology not only allows researchers to get a broader view of the context they are examining but also helps them avoid blind spots inherent in a single method. Denzin (1970) speaking of triangulation generally in a guide for sociological research claimed, "The flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies" (p. 308). Additionally, triangulation can help researchers move beyond their own blind spots created by their expectations for the results. Denzin (1970) suggested triangulation, as a "complex process of playing methods off against the other[,] maximizes the validity of the field efforts" (p. 310). Triangulation as a methodology will help me move beyond my own biases since I must examine different kinds of data, especially the perspectives of instructors and students, instead of simply relying on my interpretation of data derived from a single method.

Though not mentioning triangulation explicitly, Broad (1992) draws on this notion in his explanation for why he began integrating qualitative research methods for composition research:

> I felt a powerful attraction to integrate "live" conversations into what would otherwise be traditional textual research because I believed that distinctive and valuable kinds of knowledge were created in the *interplay* between the empirical and the textual spheres...that could be achieved within the realm of the strictly textual, and I fervently desired those additional dimensions of knowledge. (p. 203-204)

By "live conversations," Broad is specifically referring to interview data as opposed to textual analysis, which he suggests is the method those with a background in English studies are often more comfortable with. Broad encourages researchers to move beyond just relying on textual analysis, however, and goes on to explain that qualitative research methods allow researchers "to actively seek out interpretations contrary to what they might have hoped or expected to find, and to ensure that interpretations and findings are 'emic,' that is, that they are deeply rooted in the interpretive framework(s) of research participants" (p. 204). Broad here is drawing on Pike's (1967) notion of emic and etic research, with the former referring to research within a social

group (an insider view) and the latter referring to research from outside the group (an outsider view). This framework is ultimately helpful for considering the value of the triangulation because it aligns with Denzin's (1970) advocacy of triangulation as a way to move beyond blind spots and biases. Collecting data that provides both emic and etic perspectives provides a perspective that is not confined to the researcher's own perspective and offers a broader context for the object of study.

DePew (2007) makes a similar point when making the case for triangulation for digital writing research. He suggested of the current research on online digital texts "most researchers primarily use transcripts to illustrate how digital writers rhetorically respond to and within various online spaces" (p. 50). DePew went on to argue, "But, as rhetoricians, we should be examining more features of the communicative situation rather than merely an artifact it produces" (p. 52). He advocates the value of qualitative research such as interviewing writers of digital texts about their motivation and rhetorical choices. This emic data provides additional context through which to examine the textual artifact the author created and the etic interpretation of the researcher. Thus the researcher's interpretation is checked against the writer's own interpretation of the text or their intention for the text. This type of triangulation is valuable for some OWI research because a researcher can contextualize analysis of interactions in online writing courses with data reporting students' and instructors' perceptions of those interactions and their own motivations for the choices they made. It is worth noting, though, that the emic/etic framework may be less helpful for completely asynchronous, text-based classes in which the emic/etic divide gets blurred because one can observe all the textual artifacts produced for and by the class. I believe, however, that the emic/etic framework is particularly helpful for unpacking the online pedagogical ecology of synchronous online writing classes that I will explore in my dissertation.

This study triangulated discourse analysis of recorded course interactions with data collected from interviews from students and instructors in the course about their experiences and perceptions of interaction and community within the course. I am approaching each type of data differently, and thus will use different methods for each, triangulating the use of these two methods. Bernard and Ryan (2001) differentiated two types of text as qualitative data: text as object of analysis and text as proxy for experience. For the class discussion I observed and analyzed, I approached this text as an object of analysis and used discourse analysis as the analytical method. Discourse analysis provided me with an etic perspective, allowing me to view classroom interaction from an outsider's perspective. Thematic analysis of interviews from students and instructors were collected as a proxy for their experience and were analyzed specifically to provide me with an emic perspective which adds context to or checks my outsider interpretation.

Research Design and Protocol

Research Site

This research was conducted at Old Dominion University (ODU), a public research university with approximately 19,500 undergraduates and 4,800 graduate students ("University facts and figures," 2018). ODU has a main campus as well as four extended campus centers. Additionally, ODU has a large distance learning program with over 100 online programs available through ODU*Online* ("University facts and figures," 2018). According to the 2017 Annual Report, 51% of students took classes face-to-face only, 26% took both face-to-face and ODU*Online* classes, and 23% took only ODU*Online* classes ("2017 at a glance," 2017). In the distance program, 52% of students are under the age of 26 while 48% are 26 or older; 58% attend full-time, 16% attend three-quarter-time, 12% attend half-time, 14% attend less than half-time; 61% work 30 or more hours per week on average while attending ODU, and 55% are

responsible for dependents ("ODU *Online* at a glance," 2017). ODU offers both asynchronous courses and synchronous courses through web conferencing.

Descriptions of Courses Observed

For this project I looked at three writing courses that used synchronous video through WebEx to support all or part of instruction: ENGL 110C, a first-year composition course, ENGL 307T, a digital writing course, and ENGL 327W, an advanced composition course. The section of ENGL 110C: English Composition that I observed ran in Fall 2017. This course was a section of the required first-year composition course for all students as part of the general education program, which is meant "to prepare students to be effective writers of the kinds of compositions they will be called on to produce during their college careers" ("English courses," n.d.). This particular section was 100% web-delivered, meaning both the instructor and all students participated in the course virtually. The class met twice a week for an hour and fifteen minutes each class period. The instructor recorded class sessions every week and distributed these recordings to students via email. This particular section had 12 total students enrolled. The instructor, Kara[36], was an experienced online instructor who had studied OWI issues at the graduate level. During her graduate work she had taken courses as a student via synchronous video, but this was her first time teaching a course completely through synchronous video.

The section of ENGL 307T: Digital Writing that I observed ran in Fall 2017. This upper-level course fulfills a requirement of the Professional Writing track of the undergraduate English major, the Professional Writing minor, or the Certificate in Professional Writing, and/or fulfills a general education requirement for a course focused on the impact(s) of technology. In this course, students are introduced "to issues of writing in various digital environments like web pages, email, blogs, wikis, and discussion boards. It also introduces fundamentals of hypertext authoring, digital and visual rhetoric, and image manipulation" ("English courses," n.d.).

---

[36] All names are pseudonyms. If participants did not elect their own pseudonym, I assigned one randomly.

This particular section was delivered in a hybrid format. Every other week, the instructor taught a lecture class in a studio classroom broadcast with WebEx. Some students were present in the same location with the instructor, some students were in studio classrooms at satellite locations where the webconference was broadcast on a screen at the front of the room, and other students participated virtually, signing onto the WebEx meeting from their own devices in their own local locations. Studio classrooms are equipped with microphones on the tables that students must use by pushing an on-button for the duration of time they are speaking in order to be heard in other studio classrooms or virtually on the videoconference. In the weeks between these lecture meetings, both the instructor and the students would meet virtually in a different webconference program, Adobe Connect. These virtual meetings would start with the class altogether for approximately 10-15 minutes when students could ask questions before being broken into breakout groups to complete group activities for the remainder of the class session. This section met once a week for three hours, alternating between class meetings designated as lecture meetings via WebEx or discussion and group work meetings via Adobe Connect. Two different videoconferencing programs were used because WebEx Meetings Center, the version of WebEx ODU uses to facilitate SVCs does not support the use of breakout groups. The technology of the WebEx sessions was facilitated by an information technology staff member, who was responsible for setting up and recordings meetings, and monitored the meeting for any technical issues. The technology used for broadcasting instruction was similar to the instructional interface explored by DePew and Lettner-Rust (2009) and the interface of the class explored by Whithaus and Neff (2006), though the platform was a webconferencing system instead of a telecast system. One distinct difference, though, was that the webconferencing platforms allowed some students to participate from their own chosen locations on their own devices as opposed to being in a studio classroom.

The recordings of the sessions were archived by ODU's Center for Learning and Teaching and students could access these recordings via the ODU *Online* Class and Event Access Archive. This particular section had 37 students enrolled. The instructor, Bridgette, was an experienced online instructor. She had taken and later taught TELETECHNET courses at ODU early on in their development and has continued teaching the online versus tele-broadcast version of these hybrid video courses, completely virtual courses delivered through synchronous videoconference, as well as asynchronous courses. She researches OWI issues and has examined synchronous OWI in her scholarship.

The section of ENGL 327W: Advanced Composition that I observed ran in Spring 2018. This course fulfilled the requirement of a writing intensive course within the English major and fulfilled requirements for the Professional Writing track of the English major, the Professional Writing minor, and the Certificate in Professional Writing. The largest population of this course tends to be Teaching of English majors who are studying to be English teachers in grades 6-12. In this course students work on the "development of a mature, professional style in expository writing by study of the stylistic and analytical principles underlying effective prose writing" ("English courses," n.d.). This particular section was also a hybrid-delivered course. The course met once a week for three hours. Like ENGL 307T, the instructor taught in a studio classroom broadcast with WebEx, and again, some students were present in the same location with the instructor, some students were in studio classrooms at satellite locations where the webconference was broadcast on a screen at the front of the room, and other students participated virtually, signing onto the WebEx meeting from their own devices in their own local locations. All class meetings were delivered in this same format each week and the technology of sessions was facilitated by an information technology staff member, who was responsible for setting up and recordings meetings, and monitored the meeting for any technical issues. The recordings of the sessions were archived by ODU's Center for Learning and Teaching and

students could access these recordings via the ODU *Online* Class and Event Access Archive.

This particular section had 20 students enrolled. The instructor, Janice, was an experienced

online instructor who also had experiencing teaching TELETECHNET courses, and has

continued teaching the online versus tele-broadcast version of these hybrid video courses,

taught completely virtual courses delivered through synchronous videoconference, and has

begun teaching asynchronous courses as well.

Methods

In approaching this project, I am utilizing two distinct methods, discourse analysis of

recorded class sessions, and thematic analysis of interview data. This use of multiple methods

led to two distinct parts of my study with distinct data collection. To solicit participants for my

study, I first contacted instructors teaching writing (as opposed to literature or rhetoric) courses

using synchronous video in the fall semester of 2017 and spring semester 2018, to ask if they

were willing to have me look at their courses as part of my research. Once the instructors had

agreed to let me look at their classes, I collaborated with them to determine a day I could

virtually visit their class to introduce my project and seek consent from some of their students to

participate. Using a Google Form that was distributed to the students by their instructor, I

described my project for students and asked them if they consented to me analyzing their

contributions, both oral and from the public text-chat, from predetermined class periods.

I also asked students from ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T if they were willing to participate

in a focus group interview about their experience in the course. Due to issues which I will

discuss later in the chapter, I was not able to organize focus groups, so later approached those

who had expressed willingness to participate to set up individual interviews. I asked students

from ENGL 327W directly about their willingness to participate in individual interviews since that

class was observed in the spring semester after I had already changed my research protocol

from the fall. I incentivized students to participate in both parts of the project by entering anyone

who consented to me analyzing their class contributions and participated in an interview in a raffle to win a $50 gift card to Amazon. On the Google Form, students were also given the opportunity to opt out completely. Those who did agree to participate in one or both parts of my study were also given the opportunity to choose their own pseudonyms. Table 3 indicates the number of participants for each part of the study from each course relevant to the total enrollment for the course.

Table 3

Participant Numbers

Course	Total Enrollment	Instructor Interview	Students Consenting to Analyze Class Contributions	Students Interviewed
ENGL 110C	12	✔	6	3
ENGL 307T	37	✔	5	2
ENGL 327W	20	✔	14	3

The next section will discuss the details of each individual method used in this study.

Discourse analysis. I used discourse analysis to uncover interaction patterns within the SVCs I observed. Drawing on the course syllabus, and in collaboration with each instructor of the courses I observed, I chose two class sessions to record and transcribe that the instructor considered to be representative of the kinds of work and interaction typical of the class. I did not prescribe what I meant by representative to instructors and instead relied on their own judgement in suggesting classes to observe. Of course this could mean that these classes may not have been considered representative of the rest of the classes from my own or another outsider's perspective if all class sessions were to be observed, but I chose to trust the

instructors of the classes to suggest appropriate class sessions to observe. For ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T, which took place in the fall semester, I only observed the recorded class sessions so as to avoid observer bias through being present. However, I realized that classes recorded by ODU's Center for Learning and Teaching and archived on the Class and Event Access page did not include record of the public text-chat. With this knowledge, for ENGL 327W, which took place in the spring semester, I did virtually attend the class sessions that I observed and analyzed so that I could download a log of the public text-chat from those sessions.

Because the classes I observed varied in length, ENGL 110C meeting for two one-hour-and-fifteen-minute sessions a week and ENGL 307T and ENGL 327W meeting for one three-hour session each week, I determined to observe and analyze the entire length of the two sessions of ENGL 110C, but only analyze the first hour and fifteen minutes of the observed class meetings from the other two so as to have equitable amounts of class observed across the class sessions. Since my project is interested in interaction and its role in community building, I did not transcribe or analyze instances of instructor lecture without student participation and instead only transcribed instances of interaction or attempts at interaction. I defined interaction as an exchange that involved at least two speakers, or in the case of text-chat contributions, two communicators. By attempts at interaction I am referring to moments where the instructor explicitly invited students to speak though this invitation was not taken up. For example, if within a lesson the instructor stopped and asked if there were any questions, this was an attempt to encourage interaction even if no interaction occurred. Transcription began for interaction or attempts at interaction when a speaker's utterance, either through a statement or question, opened the floor for other speakers, or if the speaker was interrupted by another speaker, the beginning of the utterance that was interrupted. Additionally, I only had access to communication occurring as part of the official channels of the course. If students

were interacting via private chats in WebEx or through other programs such as text-messaging, chat on google docs or individual emails, I did not have access to those interactions so those were not included in this analysis.

   Educational discourse patterns. In analyzing these interactions, I was specifically looking for discourse patterns and seeing how they compared to common classroom discourse patterns discussed in the literature, particularly research on classroom talk. In Chapter 2, I identified one of the most observed patterns in educational discourse, IRF. Some have critiqued IRF sequences as limiting for students. One of the features of the three-part IRF interaction pattern is that it privileges teacher-student interaction as opposed to peer-to-peer interaction and it limits the types of responses each participant is likely to contribute based on their role. Walsh (2011) notes that this interaction is dominated by "question and answer routines" (p. 11) and that many of these questions are what he calls *display questions*, or questions which the teacher knows the answer to already but is asking so that the student can display their knowledge. Walsh contrasts these types of questions with what he calls *referential questions*, which are "more open-ended questions, designed to promote discussion and debate, engage learners and produce longer, more complex responses" (p.12).[37] Classroom discourse researchers such as Lemke (1990) have critiqued reliance only on a recitation format of classroom discourse that relies on display questions as inauthentic, calling for classroom talk that better resembles everyday conversation.

   Yet many scholars do not universally critique the use of IRF discourse, but instead highlight a purpose driven approach to determining whether recitation or dialogic interaction is used at any given time within the classroom. Cazden (2001) suggested that wholesale critiques of the IRF pattern are too simplistic, noting the usefulness of IRF for establishing common

---

[37] It is important to note that referential questions will not always lead to discussion or debate. Just because instructors ask an open ended question does not mean that students will provide a meaningful response or engage with the responses of other classmates. Instead referential as opposed to display questions might be understood as a first step or ingredient towards facilitating conversation.

ground between instructors and students, helping teachers check in to ensure students understand concepts or have knowledge necessary for the lesson. She claims it is less about teachers eliminating IRF discourse from their classroom and more about making them aware of other strategies that might be more effective in certain situations. Walsh (2011) echoed this idea, suggesting that the pedagogical aims dictate which types of questions instructors ask and which discourse patterns are most appropriate. Cazden (2001) and Walsh (2011) validated both discourse structures, but clearly differentiate between IRF discourse and discussion. So in my own analysis I differentiated between IRF sequences and discussion.

In determining what to code as discussion, I drew on Goldenberg's (1991) explanation of what he calls *instructional conversation*. I include an extended excerpt from his work defining and depicting this concept to outline the various characteristics:

> On the surface, a good instructional conversation might appear as "simply" an excellent discussion conducted by a teacher and a group of students. Most people have a reasonably intuitive sense of what such a discussion might be like. It is, first, interesting and engaging. It is about an idea or a concept that has meaning and relevance for students. It has a focus that, while it might shift as the discussion evolves, remains discernible throughout. There is a high level of participation, without undue domination by any one individual, particularly the teacher. Students engage in extended discussions--conversations--with the teacher and among themselves. Teachers and students are responsive to what others say, so that each statement or contribution builds upon, challenges, or extends a previous one. Topics are picked up, developed, elaborated. Both teacher and students present provocative ideas or experiences, to which others respond. Strategically, the teacher (or discussion leader) questions, prods, challenges, coaxes--or keeps quiet. He or she clarifies and instructs when necessary, but does so efficiently, without wasting time or words. The teacher assures that the discussion proceeds at an appropriate pace--neither too fast to prohibit the development of ideas, nor too slowly to maintain interest and momentum. The teacher knows when to bear down to draw out a student's ideas and when to ease up, allowing thought and reflection to take over. Perhaps most important, the teacher manages to keep everyone engaged in a substantive and extended conversation, weaving individual participants' comments into a larger tapestry of meaning. (p. 3-4)

Goldenberg's description includes several important characteristics that not only help us understand this discourse, but will help us be able to code discourse that could be categorized as instructional conversation. First, there must be "a high level of participation, without undue domination by any one individual, particularly the teacher." This immediately distinguishes this

discourse from the more teacher-dominated IRF discourse. While Goldenberg does not define what "high level of participation" means, for my own work I have chosen to operationalize it by looking for exchanges that involve at least two students who are engaging with each other's statements. These types of contributions are also what make instructional conversation distinct. While IRF follows a question-answer triad, within instructional conversation, "[t]eachers and students are responsive to what others say, so that each statement or contribution builds upon, challenges, or extends a previous one." Goldenberg suggests that teachers do have an important role in shaping this conversation, contributing when necessary and staying silent when necessary, setting the pace, and keeping the conversation focused and engaged. Of the teacher's role, Goldenberg claims, "Perhaps most important, the teacher manages to keep everyone engaged in a substantive and extended conversation, weaving individual participants' comments into a larger tapestry of meaning." This point is important because it highlights that it is not just the teacher's contributions which provide or create meaning, but the contribution of all within the conversation, especially students. Essentially, Goldenberg's description seems be be able to be broken down into three main characteristics:

- The instructor does not dominate the conversation
- Statements respond and build on each other
- The instructor serves as a facilitator and synthesizes meaning

Goldenberg's description of instructional conversation aligns with social constructivist pedagogy and the types of conversations Bruffee (1984) advocates, and seems to be a framework that would support the creation of classroom community through dialogue.

While research drawing on classroom talk patterns has been done in relation to writing centers and writing conferences (Blau, Hall, & Straus, 1998; Davis, Hayward, Hunter, & Wallace, 1988; Gere & Abbott, 1985; Thompson, 2009; Thompson & Mackiewicz, 2014) and TESOL research (Fanselow, 1977; Gibbons, 2003; Waring 2008; Warring 2009), there has actually been very little drawn upon for research in composition. However, I believe much can

be learned about classroom interaction and writing instruction from drawing on this research on classroom talk. Composition and OWI scholarship often celebrates and promotes dialogue, conversation, and collaboration, but since there is little research on classroom talk patterns in college writing classrooms, we do not really know what this looks like in practice. WebEx classes are particularly well positioned for this research since they are more easily recorded than a f2f class in which hearing and clearly recording all participants from a class is very difficult. Since these courses can be recorded, researchers can easily look for and categorize examples of IRF patterns, instructional conversation, or other patterns not currently described in the literature.

Additionally, because Hampel and Stickler (2012), Whithuas and Neff (2006), Stewart (2017), and Steffen (2017) all make reference to pauses or silence in their discussions of course conversation via videoconference, the patterns related to silence were also noted. Jefferson (1988) suggested that in ordinary conversation people have a standard maximum tolerance of one second of silence before that silence is identified as a pause, gap, or lapse. Sacks et al. (1974) distinguished a pause as silence within a speaker's turn, a gap as the space between when a speaker terminates their turn and another speaker begins or the original speaker reclaims the floor, and a lapse is the space when the current speaker has stopped and no other speaker starts. The distinction between gap and lapse is subtle but can be best understood through intentionality. A gap is a prolonged silence between speakers that was not intended where a lapse is a silence that was expected based on the end of the speaker's turn. For example, if an instructor gave instructions, and then there was a period of silence while students completed this assignment, this would be a lapse, but if an instructor asked a question, obviously soliciting a response, and this was followed by a period of silence, this would be a gap, like in this example:

| **Instructor**: | I want to know if there are any questions about the research guide that you were supposed to look at and take the quiz for. Uh which three of you |

did, so I know a good number of you may not have looked at it, um but are there any questions? About the guide or using databases to find sources?

→   (*10s*)

Instructor: Crickets.

→   (*2s*)

Instructor: Ok. I'll take that as a no. If questions come up when you get around to completing it. Uh please let me know ok.[38]

The times between the instructor's utterances are gaps because the instructor is explicitly inviting a response from students. The silences described by Whithaus and Neff (2006) and Stewart (2017) in videoconferences seem to best fit within the category of gap.

Research on classroom interaction discusses a specific type of gap: wait time. Wait time specifically describes the gap between instructor as speaker and students. Rowe (1974) found that most teachers leave an average of less than a second of wait time after asking a question before repeating or rephrasing. This timing makes sense in light of Jefferson's finding of one second as the average maximum tolerance for silence. However, Ingram and Elliott (2016) argued that an extended wait of at least three second has positive impacts on contributions and learning. They suggested, "If the teacher resists [the standard maximum tolerance of a one-second silence] and extends the wait time, the student will feel obligated to speak, and thus the likelihood of a non-response is reduced" (p. 44). Steffen (2017) suggested the technological mediation of synchronous video meant that instructors may need to wait even longer in this environment than in the traditional classroom.

Maroni (2011) noted how the teacher's role of authority impacts these wait time gaps. Maroni suggested in the classroom she observed "the teacher operated as the director of

---

[38] All examples included in this chapter to explain concepts or categories for analysis are from my data and will be analyzed in the following chapter. I have chosen to include real examples from my data as opposed to hypothetical examples or samples from the discourse analysis scholarship because it is important to understand these characteristics within the context of authentic exchanges as opposed to idealized notions of what dialogue and interaction looks like.

interaction, as she always selected the next speaker after the pause, assigning the turn to the child" (p. 2084). In other words, students expected the instructor to assign the next speaker by calling on them. Thus, gaps in transitional relevant places (Sacks et al., 1974), or places where anyone could self-select to speak and contribute to the interaction, were likely to be longer and not filled by students since they were waiting for the instructor to indicate a specific student to speak. With this in mind, when looking at wait time gaps, I distinguished between *Next Speaker Indicated* gaps and *Next Speaker Ambiguous* gaps, the former referring to interactions where the current speaker elects a specific speaker to take the floor, and the later referring to invitations with no specific intended speaker chosen.

   Discourse patterns of videoconferences. In addition to classroom talk research, my discourse analysis also draws on research on discourse patterns in videoconferencing environments. I am primarily drawing on O'Conaill, Whittaker, and Wilbur's (1993) comparison of discourse characteristics in conversations within business meetings conducted face-to-face and via video conferences. They coded for six types of characteristics including backchannels, interruptions, overlaps, handovers, turn size, and turn distribution. Linguistic backchannels[39] consist of short feedback utterances by a listener to show support or understanding of what the speaker is saying. Some examples of these types of utterances include "um-hm," "yeah," "okay," etc. Interruptions and overlaps both describe simultaneous speech, but overlaps describe instances when the first speaker has not given indication that they are about to give up the floor, and overlaps describe instances when there was an indication of giving up the floor or there is no clear person who has the floor. To illustrate, if a student is answering a question and in the middle of that answer another student chimes in, that would be an interruption. However, if an

---

[39] This type of backchannel is distinct from the backchannel discussed in Chapter 2. Here backchannels refer to a specific type of utterance by a speaker, where in Chapter 2's discussion of backchannel, I referred to conversation happening outside of the main conversation of the class, happening either verbally or textually. Because I am drawing on two different fields that use the term backchannel differently, I will refer to linguistic backchannel when discussing a specific verbal utterance and conversation backchannel when referring to underlife activities.

instructor asks a question and two students simultaneously answer, that would be an overlap. Similarly, if an instructor asks a question and after a pause begins to offer clarification, but a student began answering at the same time, that would also be classified as an overlap. Explicit handovers occur when the speaker signals they intend to give up the floor and are inviting others to speak using verbal cues like questions or statements such as "you know." Turn length refers to the length of time a speaker holds the floor before it's taken by another speaker, and turn distribution refers to the frequency and patterns of turns taken by the conversation participants. All of these characteristics are helpful for uncovering discourse patterns in this medium.

Text-chat analysis. One of the features of many videoconferencing programs, including WebEx is the ability for participants to communicate verbally and through a synchronous text-chat. In analyzing text-chat interaction, I drew on some of the categories Bower and Hedberg (2010) used for a multimodal discourse analysis of computer science classes delivered via web-conferencing, namely noting whether statements related to course concepts (content), who should be doing what and when (activity[40]), or the use of the technology of the course (technology). To these three categories I added a category of underlife for statements, as described in Chapter 2, not directly related to the course but instead are affective, interpersonal, or tangential to the course. Finally, I noted whether text-chat contributions directly related to the discussion occurring on the verbal channel (integrated) or whether they were engaged in a separate topic (separate).

Transcription conventions. To transcribe the selections of class sections to be analyzed, I used an adapted version Jefferson's transcription system (Atkinson & Heritage, 2006). Overlapping utterances are indicated with brackets with a left bracket ([ ) indicating the

---

[40] The term "activity" for this coding category was used by Bower and Hedberg (2010) broadly to refer to any action students were being asked to complete as opposed to a more narrow idea of a classroom activity that students engage in.

start of the overlap and a right bracket ( ]) indicating the end of the overlap, and double

brackets ([[ ]]) were used when another overlap followed quickly after another. A dash was

used to indicate when a speaker's turn was cut off:

> **Instructor**: Well here's a [question]
> **Jen**:   [Yeah like I respect] that. It's just, you know, I thought it was a
>   story—
> **Instructor**: Well Jen [[let me ask you this—]]
> **Jen**:   [[and I just kept waiting]] for it to get to the facts.

Short pauses within an utterance were indicated with an ellipses:

> **Instructor**:   Questions? ... So far?

Length of pauses between utterances are indicated in parentheses. Only pauses longer than 1

second are indicated, and pauses have been rounded to the nearest second:

> **Instructor**:   Is there anything you think I missed in my question list?
>   (*15s*)
> **Instructor**:   Ok. Because there is something I missed in my question list. Not on
>   purpose. But it was brought up by, in one of the groups' discussions.

In addition to pauses, moments of transcription doubt are also indicated with parentheses,

though these moments will be indicated with empty parentheses:

> **Ariel**:   Redshirting can hinder proper (   ).

I am also drawing on conventions for representing backchannel responses, or short statements

that a second speaker makes to indicate they are listening or to encourage the current speaker

that has the floor, that Gilewicz and Thonus (2003) advocate in what they call "close vertical

transcription." These are distinct from minimal responses, which occur when one speaker asks

a question or invites another to speaker and the new speaker offers a short response, for

example, "Yes" or "OK." I followed the convention advocated by Gilewicz and Thonus to have

backchannels positioned vertically in the space when they occur within the dominant speaker's

turn. This is distinct from a more play-script like structure which treats all utterances equally. I

have chosen to indicate these backchannel responses in italics:

Pam: I think that he was um very descriptive. That he would stop everything that was going on. I think in that Anger essay, while you were reading I heard a metaphor   that he used.

Instructor: *um-hm*

Pam: So I read, I think it was the one before it, before Anger, I heard imagery in that essay, like how he describes liquid gas. So I think he's very um descriptive and he uses a lot of literary devices in his um writing.

Additionally, for simplicity, and because this project is rooted in writing studies versus linguistics, I have chosen to use punctuation following the conventions of writing and not to indicate characteristics of speech delivery, which is a deviation from Jefferson's system.

Also, because WebEx meetings afford multichannel communication, when verbal and text-chat communication occur simultaneously, transcriptions will be presented in a two-column format with verbal communications indicated in the left column and public text-chat contributions in the right lining up vertically with where they occurred in the conversation:

Verbal Channel	Text-Chat
Pam: That was basically it. I just didn't know how to [start it off—]	
Instructor: [Oh we can't hear you.] Let's see.	
Pam: My earpiece. Every time I use the earpiece…	
Instructor: No still can't [hear you.] I'm sorry.	
Pam: [Can you hear me now?]	
	Olivia: I can hear her.
	Taylor: We can hear her on Webex.
Instructor: Let's see. I think I hear Nakkita coming.	
Pam: What about now?	

Finally, to draw attention to specific lines within a transcript, I use arrows placed in the left-hand margin to direct readers to specific moments:

Instructor: Did that work?
          (*3s*)
Ariel: Yep. Oh [I think—]

→   **Instructor**:   [Ok.]

    Ariel: Oh wait, no, it was still loading. I'm sorry.

    Instructor: Oh ok. Um well let me know if it didn't work

→   **Ariel**:   [Ok]

    Instructor: [And what] we'll do is when I'm done walking through it, I'll let everybody else start, you know, playing around with it. And then I will have you share your screen with me, so I can see.

For reference, a concise list of transcript conventions followed that have been identified in this section can be found in Appendix A.

     Discourse analysis coding summary. Drawing on the literature related to classroom discourse, discourse in videoconference, and discourse in SVC, I determined to code the transcripts from the observed class sessions by focusing on four types of interactional patterns: 1) the presence of IRF discourse patterns in comparison to the presence of more dialogic patterns of instructional conversations as described by Goldenberg (2011) or unique discourse patterns that emerge in the data, 2) the length and type of wait time gaps in class interactions, 3) the presence of specific discourse characteristics, including linguistic backchannels, interruptions, overlaps, handovers, turn size, and turn distribution, and 4) types of statements made in text-chat. These codes were used to address my first two research questions:

- How do undergraduate students participate and interact in WebEx mediated writing classes?
- How do the affordances and constraints of WebEx shape how undergraduate students participate and interact in writing classes?

    Thematic Analysis. While valuable information can be gained from discourse analysis about whether collaboration is occurring in video-based online classrooms, this method does

not offer me specific insight into why some of the discourse patterns I observed may have occurred. In discussing the discourse patterns they noticed in the video classes they explored, Whithaus and Neff (2006) wrote, "We *wonder* if students saw the instructor's moves…" (p. 449, emphasis mine). All they could do is *wonder* about the cause of the phenomenon they were observing because they did not have access to students' explanations or perceptions of their participation. Mortenson (1992) shows this same type of shortcoming of research using only discourse analysis with the example of Freedman and Katz's (1987) exploration of writing conference conversations that drew on Hugh Mehan's IRE framework of classroom discourse. Mortenson suggested, "To further ground their analysis in the conversational text, Freedman and Katz might have solicited interpretations from the involved student and teacher. These participants' contributions to analysis could well have illuminated or challenged the researchers' own careful interpretations" (p. 110). Mortenson highlighted how collecting text as proxy for experience from participants along with discourse analysis can give the researcher a clearer picture of the interaction they are examining.

Thematic analysis of texts of participant perspectives has long been praised for its ability to provide a contextual window into experience. In their *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) stated, "The province of qualitative research is the world of lived experience" (p. 8). Since I am interested not just in the interaction patterns in WebEx undergraduate writing classes, but also the "lived experience" of students and instructors in these courses that shape these interactions, qualitative data of participant perceptions was important to collect through interviews.

Student interviews were conducted in the last two weeks or directly after the conclusion of the course—all occurred after the class sessions that were observed for discourse analysis. Instructor interviews were conducted after the conclusion of the course. Both students and instructors were given the option to conduct interviews over the phone or through a WebEx

meeting. Interviews were semi-structured. Table 4 includes the questions used as the foundation for the student and instructor interviews.

With these preliminary questions, I was trying to guide participants towards an in-depth discussion of their experience with WebEx as mode for learning or teaching and its impact on how they interact with others in class, along with how these experiences have or have not lined up with their expectations for the course. Some questions did ask participants to contextualize their experience of the course within their broader context of online education and online communication software to help me consider this modality within the realm of online writing instruction and distance education. However, I purposely did not ask participants explicit questions about comparing their experience to f2f classes because, though these comparisons may come up organically from participants, my dissertation is not seeking to compare synchronous video classes to f2f classes; therefore, I did not want to steer the conversation in that direction. With these questions I was trying to get participants to focus on this particular modality and offer their insights into how it shaped their interactions and learning or teaching. If, however, participants did choose to use f2f courses as a reference point, I allowed the conversation to follow their lead.

Table 4

Student and Instructor Interview Questions

Student Interview Questions	Instructor Interview Questions
● Have you taken or are you taking any online classes besides this one? ● What are the benefits and challenges of online classes for you? ● What were your expectations for the course in terms of content and format? ● What do you like about WebEx? ● What do you not like about WebEx? ● Do you think your instructor effectively uses WebEx for your class? How or how not? ● What device (tablet, computer, phone, etc.) do you typically use to connect to WebEx? How does your device selection or environment shape your experience? ● Where do you typically participate in class from? How does your environment shape your experience? ● Do you think WebEx facilitates student participation? ● Do you prefer to participate in WebEx class meetings verbally or on text-chat? Why? ● How do you communicate with people in your class? Just in-class or outside of class? Verbally or through public or private text-chat? ● Do you think WebEx facilitates interaction between students well? Why or why not? ● What do you wish you could do in WebEx, but can't? ● What advice would you give someone who was about to take a writing class on WebEx?	● What is your experience with teaching online? ● What experiences or scholarship informs your online pedagogy? ● What are the benefits and challenges of teaching online classes for you? ● What do you think went well in this class? ● What were challenges you faced with this class? ● What do you like about WebEx as a teaching tool? ● What do you not like about WebEx? ● Do you think WebEx facilitates student participation? Why or why not? ● Do you think WebEx facilitates interaction between students well? Why or why not? ● How did your students use the text-chat function? ● What do you wish you could do in WebEx, but can't? ● What other tools did you use to facilitate student participation and interaction? How do you feel these worked with the synchronous videoconferencing modality of the class? ● What advice would you give someone who was about to teach a writing class on WebEx?

To analyze the interview data that I collected, I used the heuristic developed in Chapter 2. I translated each question from that heuristic into a specific coding category for analyzing the interview data. Table 5 shows the translation of the heuristic questions into specific codes. I considered these codes preliminary codes; since one of my objectives was to test the heuristic developed from my review of literature related to community, I was also open to emergent codes that developed from the data itself. In this way my approach to the interview data was distinct from methodologies often promoted for this type of qualitative data, namely grounded theory. I determined not to use grounded theory and its completely open coding approach, and instead opted to approach my data with both *a priori* codes and an openness to emergent codes. I felt like this would best help me consider my data within the framework of the theories of community I synthesized in Chapter 2 to see how student and instructor experiences aligned with the current literature as well as identify gaps or new directions for consideration.

Despite how it might sometimes be represented in published literature, coding is a messy and often subjective process. Since I did not have a research partner or team to also code the data in an attempt to achieve inter-rater reliability, I determined instead to engage in an iterative process. My first coding pass of each interview consisted of coding responses based on my *a priori* codes. I then returned to the coded interview several days later and took more detailed notes that indicated different code assignments, overlapping codes, and/or emergent codes and subcodes. After having two coding passes of all the interviews, I reviewed them all a third time, categorizing and organizing emergent codes and subcodes.

Table 5

Heuristic Questions to Coding Categories

Teaching Presence		Social Presence		Cognitive Presence	
Heuristic Question	*Code Category*	*Heuristic Question*	*Code Category*	*Heuristic Question*	*Code Category*
How are students oriented to the technology of the class?	**Technology Orientation**	How are students able to get to know each other within the class?	**Student Presence**	How is the connection between communication, collaboration and learning presented to students?	**Social Learning in Theory**
How are students oriented to the communication and community expectations of the course?	**Community Orientation**	What are the communication or discourse norms within the class?	**Course Discourse**	How are students making connections between course discourse and/or collaboration and their learning?	**Social Learning in Practice**
How does the instructor convey she/he is a real person who is willing/able to help students?	**Instructor Presence**	Is there any backchannel or private communication occurring between students, and how was it initiated and/or developed?	**Student Underlife**	What is the content of the course and how does it support or challenge the importance of community and/or collaboration in the course?	**Course Content**
How have access and inclusivity been considered/designed for?	**Accessibility in Design**	Are there accessibility/inclusivity issues impacting students' interaction within the course?	**Access and Interaction**	Are there accessibility/inclusivity issues impacting students' access to content or ability to complete activities/assignments?	**Access and Learning**

Problems Addressed and Limitations of Study

This section discusses three major problems or limitations I encountered as part of my data collection and analysis. The first problem related to the need to widen my scope of the types of courses I observed, leading to varied course formats across the three courses that hindered direct comparisons. The second problem involved gaining access to all data from recorded meetings that I had intended to analyze. The third problem involved recruiting enough student participants to follow the research protocol I had originally designed. I will also discuss the difficulty of capturing multiple features and factors that govern the complex ecology of videoconference meetings.

The first problem I encountered when embarking on this project involved choosing the courses that would be observed. My initial intent was to observe courses that were taught completely virtually online through synchronous videoconference, the format for the section of ENGL 110C that I observed. However, during the time period I was collecting data, this was the only section of an undergraduate writing course that was being taught in this format that was not being taught by me. In order to collect enough data, I widened my scope and included hybrid-delivery courses which combined participants in a studio classroom, participants in studio classrooms in satellite locations, and students participating virtually through WebEx—the format of the sections of ENGL 307T and ENGL 327W I observed. This format for synchronous distance courses was more prevalent during the period of my data collection, perhaps due to ODU's history with TELETECHNET courses, which followed this format. While looking at these two formats together was interesting, there are many differences between them, not least of them that for some students, particularly those participating in the studio classroom with this instructor, they may not even view this course as an online class at all. These differences made it difficult to draw comparisons or generalizations between classes of such distinct formats. However, I believe that the inclusion of the hybrid-delivery courses also makes the results of my study more fruitful for ODU specifically since this is currently the more common synchronous

delivery format at this institution. This change in types of courses examined allowed me to collect data that can provide data-driven suggestions for these types of courses at the institution.

The second problem I encountered was accessing all data from recorded class sessions that I hoped to analyze. I intended to examine both verbal participation and contributions to the public text-chat for all classes observed. I was able to do this for ENGL 110C because the instructor recorded the class sessions herself and shared a link with me to the recorded meetings which were able to be viewed in the WebEx video player. These recordings included the text-chat with timestamps within the recording. However, ENGL 307T was recorded by ODU's Center for Learning and Teaching and the recordings were made available on the ODU*Online*'s Class Access and Archive page. This archive was where I was able to access the recordings of the class sessions I observed; however, these archives did not include a log of the text-chat discussion from the meetings. In the spring observing ENGL 327W I was able to mitigate this problem by attending the class sessions I observed and downloading the chat-log myself. However, I was very disappointed that I was not able to access and therefore analyze chat logs from one of the courses that I observed.

The third problem encountered involved securing enough student participants. To collect participant experience data, I originally planned to organize focus groups of student participants from the synchronous online writing classes I recorded to get information about their perception of participation, interaction, and community building in this modality. I chose focus groups as a method because I thought it would allow student participants to articulate their thoughts and feelings about their WebEx writing class experience in tandem with others who had shared in this experience with them. Krueger (1994) suggested, "The focus group interview works because it taps into human tendencies. Attitudes and perceptions relating to concepts, products, services or programs are developed in part by interaction with other people" (p. 10). Krueger highlights that perceptions are not just developed in isolation. Krueger went on to suggest that

focus groups can be an effective method when "[t]he purpose is to uncover factors relating to complex behavior or motivation. Focus groups can provide insight into complicated topics where opinions or attitudes are conditional or where the area of concern relates to multifaceted behavior or motivation" (p. 45). I had hoped the use of focus groups as method would mirror the experience of the synchronous video classroom, perhaps making participants more conscious of the different aspects of their experience through this mirroring. Unfortunately, I was unable to coordinate a focus group with enough willing participants from each course. In fact, in my first scheduled focus group only one of the students who had agreed to participate in a focus group at a previously announced date and time attended the virtual meeting. Since this student was still willing to discuss his experience with me, I opted to conduct an individual interview, and from then on changed my research protocol and conducted individual interviews with students and instructors instead. While I was not able to capture the participant interplay that a focus group would have provided, I was still able to collect rich data because participants were open, forthcoming and engaging in their interviews.

Though through this protocol change I was able to collect enough data to consider the perspectives of multiple participants from each class observed for my project, I have a small sample size, which is limitation of the project. I was only able to recruit a small number of students from each course to interview, particularly from ENGL 307T. This small sample size is particularly problematic in the hybrid-format classes because I do not necessarily have a representative from each of the ways students could attend (i.e. in the studio classroom with the instructor, at a satellite location, or completely virtually). For ENGL 307T I also had a very small percentage agree to let me analyze their contributions to class sessions. For this class, the consent form was distributed outside of class, and I was not able to coordinate visiting the class virtually but instead made a video introducing myself and the project. This difference could have resulted in the low percentage of students who completed the consent form.

Due to the problems discussed above, I determined not to transcribe and analyze interactions from ENGL 307T following the same discourse analysis protocol as was used for ENGL 110C and ENGL 327W. This decision was twofold. First, only 5 of 37 enrolled students consented to me analyzing their contributions to class, leaving me with little data to analyze. Additionally, this course was fundamentally different in course design from ENGL 110C and ENGL 327W because specific class periods were designated as primarily lecture. It was these lecture courses that I had access to observe, yet by virtue of being framed as a lecture, these classes did not contain much interaction by design. Because of this distinctness, I determined I could not analyze this course in the same way I could the other two (i.e. analyze a transcription of participant contributions) but instead coded patterns such as the number of times students contributed during the class and the number of IRF exchanges versus other discourse patterns. I did transcribe some of the instructor's statements directly that were examples of solicitation for participation or interaction as well as commentary she made related to student participation or interaction.

Finally, I acknowledge that while my methodology allows me to consider a wide variety of aspects of students' and instructors' experiences in SVCs, this analysis only scratches the surface of the complex ecology involved in this teaching and learning environment. More in-depth case studies of individual students' experiences throughout the duration of the course which included tools like screenshots or screen-capture to get examples of their individual experience of the interface, images of the environments they participated from, and reflections from throughout the course would provide a more developed window in their individualized experience not able to be captured through a single interview. However, I believe the more general picture gained about this modality from my current methodology provides the necessary groundwork to effectively utilize methods like I just described in future studies.

Summary

This chapter explored how my research questions were developed and how these particular questions required both types of research called for in Effective Practice 15.1, namely analysis of "actual exchanges" and "participant perceptions." I discussed how triangulation of etic data derived from discourse analysis, and emic data derived from student and instructor interviews allowed me to best approach my research questions and contextualize my own analysis and interpretations of the interaction patterns I observed with perspectives from students and instructors on their own motivations and experiences. I provided an overview of the specific classes observed for this project and a detailed discussion of the data collection and analysis procedures of data collected from the two methods utilized. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the problems faced while collecting and analyzing data and the limits of my methodology.

The next chapter focuses on the first method used, providing an analysis of the discourse patterns found in the observed class sessions from ENGL 110C, ENGL 307T and ENGL 327W.

CHAPTER 5

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of discourse analysis performed on recorded sessions

of three undergraduate writing synchronous video courses (SVCs). This chapter is primarily

focusing on my first two research questions:

- How do undergraduate students participate and interact in WebEx mediated writing
  classes?
- How do the affordances and constraints of WebEx shape how undergraduate students
  participate and interact in writing classes?

Thus the findings and analysis presented in this chapter convey my etic, outsider perspective on

interaction patterns in these types of classes.

This chapter is organized around each of the courses I observed for this research. I first

present the patterns I found in the two class sessions I observed of ENGL 110C discussing the

results around the four elements I identified in the previous chapter: 1) specific discourse

patterns, for example the presence of IRF discourse patterns in comparison to the presence of

more dialogic patterns of instructional conversations as described by Goldenberg (2011), 2) the

presence of specific discourse characteristics, including backchannels, interruptions, overlaps,

handovers, turn size, and turn distribution, 3) the length and type of wait time gaps in class

interactions, and 4) types of statements made in text-chat (as are all described in detail in

Chapter 4). Because many examples I include in this chapter demonstrated more than one

element, I chose to organize my discussion around these four elements loosely, bringing

elements together into discussion when appropriate. I did choose, however, to maintain a

structure of discussing verbal patterns and text-chat patterns. I then follow the same format,

presenting the patterns observed in two class sessions of ENGL 327W. Next, I provide a more

generalized discussion of my observations of ENGL 307T because, as I articulated in the

previous chapter, factors such as low numbers of consenting students, lack of access to the

public text-chat, and the distinct pedagogical structure of this course, made completing a robust discourse analysis impossible. After discussing each course individually, I then synthesize my discussion, comparing and contrasting the results from the three classes to see what conclusions can preliminarily be drawn.

ENGL 110C

This first-year writing course was taught completely online with the instructor and all students signing on from their own computer or device from their own chosen location. The first class session that was observed took place a little more than half-way through the semester and focused on source evaluation for a research project. Nine students were present for the session, and there were a total of six or seven participants in the discussion including the instructor. The ambiguity in the number of participants results from two instances of an unidentified student verbally participating, and it was not clear if this was the same individual in these two instances or two different individuals. The second class observed took place in the final month of the course and focused on introducing students to WordPress, the tool they would be using to produce ePortfolios for the course. Eight students were present for the session, and there were a total of three participants including the instructor. For both of the class sessions I observed, all of the identified[41] individuals who participated either verbally or through text-chat in those sessions agreed to participate in my study, so the exchanges included below are representative of the interaction in these class periods

Verbal Discourse Patterns and Characteristics

One type of discourse pattern I was looking for was the IRF pattern when the instructor initiates, a student responds, and the instructors provides feedback on that response. In the first class observed, there were several instances of IRF interactions, like this example which

---

[41] I specify *identified* here because as I will discuss below, there are times when the identity of a speaker is impossible to discern. In these cases, these utterances are attributed to an unidentified speaker.

occurred after students completed an exercise related to source evaluation and the instructor

was trying to assess what they had learned from the activity:

> Instructor: Ok, so what did you learn about evaluating sources?
>
> James: I never really thought that much about it. Thinking about the ethos and pathos, um articles when checking for research. I guess.
>
> Instructor: Ok. Yeah. With peer review articles it— it's important. But it's most important in evaluating websites…

This example shows the classic three part sequence which is used to have students display

their knowledge or learning to the instructor. Sometimes this pattern could be seen in a slightly

modified version with the instructor's initiation being assumed from the previous interaction with

another student in which that first student provided a response and then the instructor provided

feedback, and then another students adds on to this discussion with their own response, like in

this example:

> Instructor: If you feel like taking the time, right?
>
> Instructor: Go ahead James.
>
> James: Um. I'm going to pay a lot more attention to the dates on when the article was published and make sure it's relevant to current times. Make sure the information I'm writing about hasn't been changed or outdated since that article was written.
>
> Instructor: Ok. Good. Yeah and sometimes you know the information might be outdated and sometimes that's not an indication that it's wrong. Sometimes it might be an indication that the topic is not um it's something that people have agreed on um so it's not worth researching to to people anymore. So it could mean that your topic isn't necessarily relevant to society anymore. Um, but yeah. Very good point.

In this example, the first utterance by the instructor is feedback to the previous student who had

answered the instructor's question of whether the exercise they just completed would change

how students approached evaluating sources. Then James ostensibly[42] pushed the raise hand

button in WebEx and the instructor gave permission for James to also offer a response. Though

this response follows that of the previous student, it does not acknowledge it nor build upon it,

so it does not count as an example of instructional conversation, which has the following three

characteristics:

- The instructor does not dominate the conversation
- Statements respond and build on each other
- The instructor serves as a facilitator and synthesizes meaning

In fact there were no examples of instructional conversations as described by

Goldenberg (1991) present across the two sessions observed. The closest any interaction came

can be seen in this example where the student does acknowledge the response from the

student before her:

	Instructor:	Good. What else?
		(*3s*)
	Instructor:	Was this helpful?
		(*5s*)
	Georgia:	( )
	Instructor:	Um Georgia. You're breaking up really bad. Can you try again?
	Georgia:	Can you hear me now?
	Instructor:	Yeah
→	Georgia:	Ok sorry. ( ). It's like what he said. I just never really looked into things that deep when it came to you know research papers so I think it was very helpful in helping me to understand basically what questions to ask ( ) for myself. Like what questions to ask myself to make sure that ( ).
	Instructor:	Ok good.

---

[42] I say ostensibly because no indication of the use of the hand raise button is preserved on the recording so I am assuming that is what happened to make the instructor aware that James wanted to speak.

When Georgia says, "It's like what he said," she's referring to the response another student just gave, thereby explicitly tying her response to his, showing that she is agreeing with him and building on his response. However, nothing comes of this exchange, with the instructor simply responding "Ok good." No conversation results from this interaction. This may be because of the sound issues that made parts of Georgia's contributions impossible to hear. Or it may be that there was no more discussion to be built on these contributions since the question was individualistic about how the exercise impacted them.

Another common pattern in the first class I observed is what I'm calling failed IRF. This describes moments when the instructor asked a question and then received no response from students. Often this pattern occurred when the initiation was a general inquiry if the students had any question, like this example:

Instructor:	I want to know if there are any questions about the research guide that you were supposed to look at and take the quiz for. Uh which three of you did, so I know a good number of you may not have looked at it, um but are there any questions? About the guide or using databases to find sources? (*10s*)
Instructor:	Crickets. (*2s*)
Instructor:	Ok. I'll take that as a no. If questions come up when you get around to completing it. Uh please let me know ok.

This example demonstrates that these general attempts at handovers, which I categorized as creating *Next Speaker Ambiguous Gaps*, were generally not taken up, even when there was a long pause. Long pauses were characteristic in both sessions with *Next Speaker Ambiguous Gaps*, like the one above. In fact these *Next Speaker Ambiguous Gaps* averaged 10 seconds across the two sessions observed, which is far longer than the three second wait time Ingram and Elliott (2016) advocated. There were no *Next Speaker Indicated Gaps* in either of the two sessions observed since the instructor never called on any specific student unless they had indicated their desire to speak through hitting the raise hand button.

In another instance of failed IRF, the instructor was trying to solicit particular information by asking what Walsh (2011) called *display questions*, or questions which the teacher knows the answer to already but is asking so that students can display or share their knowledge:

Instructor:	Is there anything you think I missed in my question list?
	(*15s*)
Instructor:	Ok. Because there is something I missed in my question list. Not on purpose. But it was brought up by, in one of the groups' discussions.

The instructor knows one group mentioned this concept in their group work, and is implicitly encouraging them to speak, but they don't take up this invitation.

There were additional different discourse patterns than the IRF or instructional conversations patterns that I was looking for. One I have labeled *student-initiated clarification*. This pattern describes interactions when a student does not respond to an instructor's initiation, but instead takes control of the interaction through posing their own question. In this example, the instructor does begin with an initiation, but the student pivots the interaction into a different direction with his own question:

Instructor:	Um so for those of you that completed the research guide, um do you have any questions now? On how to look in the databases and find what you're looking for in the correct field? That kind of stuff.
	(*9s*)
Instructor:	Alright. We'll take that as a—
	Oh go ahead James.
James:	I just have a more general question. I'm just researching about the topic that I picked and I ended up changing my mind. Do I have to email you telling you that I changed topics or am I allowed to change topics?
Instructor:	You are allowed to change topics. Um that's kind of why we've been spending so much time on it and getting into the research slowly. Um and that's why we started with the research. 'Cause a lot of times, you know, you get, you get in there and you realize no that's not something that's interesting to me. So yes you can change your topic, but yes you do need to let me know if you are [changing it.]
James:	[Ok.]

After a long wait after her initiation, the instructor is about to move on, but James appears to push the raise hand button, is given permission to speak, and then asks his own clarifying question.

This exchange is interesting also because it contains one of the only instances of an interruption despite the instructor's invitation in the first class session to interrupt her during the lesson, saying "Stop me if I go to fast or you have questions as we're going through." What's interesting about this example is that it was not a verbal interruption. Though I cannot be sure because it has not been preserved on the recording, I am assuming that James used the raise hand button to indicate his desire to speak and it was this digital communication that actually interrupted the instructor's utterance.

Student-initiated clarification was also the primary discourse pattern seen in the second class I observed introducing students to WordPress. This class session provided a walkthrough of the initial steps in the process of creating a site on WordPress, and a few students participated verbally by asking clarifying questions or asking for help to troubleshoot problems, like this example:

Instructor: Go ahead Jasmine.

Jasmine: Um I'm sorry. Every time I go to type in create a new site with my um ID it says um at the top, site cannot be created. Enter a different title and try again. I used everything (   ) the ID.

Instructor: Hmm. Have you ever used WordPress before?

Jasmine: Uh, not that I remember…honestly.

Instructor: Ok. Well maybe try your user ID with um--, and do ENGL 110 Fall 17 and see, see if that lets you.

Jasmine: I'm typing. You said ENG—

Instructor: Yeah, the name of the class. English 110.

Jasmine: Gotcha.

Instructor: Questions? ... So far?
                (*3s*)

Shannon: If we've used it for another class. We have to create a whole new site for your class. Is that correct? Or do you--, do I like--, does Shannon just have like one awesome page that you can see her stuff for SPED class or stuff for your class. 'Cause 'cause I've done it for, ironically, a teaching technology class. So would it all be encompassed or would I have two different websites?

Instructor: Um the system will allow you to create two different websites. Um this class is part of a study which is looking at using this specific template in lower level writing classes. Um so I believe technically I'm supposed to tell you that you should use it. However, if you would like to add to your other site, um, I don't I don't want you, I don't want to create more for you. I guess that's what I'm trying to say.

Shannon: So essentially however I can get it worked will be fine as long as you can access information that you need. If there is stuff in there that I didn't do in your class, that's still acceptable?

Instructor: Yeah. Yeah definitely. If there's if there's work in there that you that you can connect to, you know this is a showcase of your writing abilities and um strengths, um and weaknesses. Your growth, right? So if some of the work you have in there, as long as the work you have in there pertains to that overarching topic then it's fine. But I don't want a site that just has, you know, these are all the assignments I did in this class, and these are all the assignments I did in that class. Does that make sense?

Shannon: Yes ma'am.

As can be seen in this example, student-initiated clarifications are highly individualized and personal discussions. However, the fact that these discussions play out in the public channel can benefit other students who may have similar questions or problems.

In terms of specific characteristics of interaction, in the first session there were no examples of verbal backchannels, but there were a few overlapping minimal responses in the second session like this one:

Instructor: Did that work?
              (*3s*)
Jasmine: Yep. Oh [I think—]

→   Instructor: [Ok.]

Jasmine: Oh wait, no, it was still loading. I'm sorry.

Instructor: Oh ok. Um well let me know if it didn't work

→   Jasmine: [Ok]

Instructor: [And what] we'll do is when I'm done walking through it, I'll let everybody else start, you know, playing around with it. And then I will have you share your screen with me, so I can see.

In this excerpt there were minimal responses offered both by the instructor and then the student participating in the conversation. These overlaps of minimal responses were the most frequent overlaps observed and happened between the instructor and a student and served to demonstrate understanding of what the previous speaker had said.

There was only one instance where two students overlapped each other:

Instructor: Anybody planning on taking this whole list and going through all of your sources with these questions?
                  (*4s*)

→   (   ):   [Yes.]

James: [Yeah] I plan on going through uh I think I have a list of 10 and I'm going to go through a take some out and add some more where I took one out.

In this example, one student "won out" and took the floor. James may have won out because he continued to elaborate on his answer to the instructor's question. However, we cannot know whether the unidentified student would have elaborated had they taken the floor. This student may have been deterred by the overlap to continue speaking. Whether the instructor heard the overlap is also not known, but in either case the overlap was not acknowledged. Even if she had heard it, it would have been impossible for her to know who had spoken since WebEx only shows the feed of one speaker at a time, so without generally asking who else had spoken and encouraging them to elaborate, she cannot acknowledge the other speaker.

In terms of turn distribution and turn size, besides an attendance check when the instructor called on students to speak to ensure their microphones were working, there were either six or seven total verbal participants including the instructor in session one (with two instances of unidentified students contributing and lack of clarity of whether these were the same of different individuals leading to the ambiguity), and three contributors including the instructor in session two. Only one student out of the five or six who verbally participated in session one participated in more than one exchange during that session, whereas in the second session, the two students who verbally participated, participated in at least two exchanges during the class meeting. Unsurprisingly, the instructor had the most turns, including extended turns for lectures or explaining assignments, which were not coded as part of my analysis. There was only one extended turn from a student in either session observed:

Instructor: Ok and I think I heard Alice.

Alice: Yeah. I was just going to suggest to our classmates, I don't know they
                may have already done this but the—I live in a very rural area, so getting
                to a like library or whatever is hard. But I have a really hard time
                researching stuff online. ODU's website you can actually go to that online
                library or whatever and chat with a librarian. And they can give you tons
                of information to help make your online search much more productive. So
                that's another--if anybody is like me and not really--I second guess the
                websites that I find. They're really good about helping you weed out what
                you may not need or thinking of other words to search that you didn't
                think about prior to talking to them.

What is unique about this example is that it was completely unprompted from an instructor's initiation, thus I have labelled it *student-initiated sharing*. The student simply felt compelled to share this information. This was a student-initiated response meant to share her knowledge and experience with her classmates. Though not dialogic in the traditional sense since she does not directly interact with any of her classmates, this is one of the few examples of a verbal response indicating collaboration or community within the class.

This response is interesting in several ways. At first, Alice is directly addressing the instructor though the information is directed at her classmates. This feature is not very surprising because, though it does not qualify as an IRF exchange, like IRF, it demonstrates a pattern of students interacting primarily with the instructor in class discourse. However, while Alice is speaking *about* her classmates at the beginning of this response—"I don't know *they* may have already done this" (emphasis mine) — she ends her response speaking more to them—"[The librarians are] really good about helping *you* weed out what *you* may not need or thinking of other words to search that *you* didn't think about prior to talking to them" (emphasis mine). This shift from the third person *they* to discuss her classmates to the second person you could reflect her purpose in offering this student-initiated sharing. This student wanted to help her classmates by sharing knowledge she had that they might have found helpful. This purpose allowed her to shift from speaking just to her instructor to beginning to address her classmates. In addition to beginning to address them, Alice attempted to develop a rapport with her classmates by acknowledging her own difficulty in order to share advice with them. In this one response we see an example of a student acknowledging her peers as individuals who may be struggling with what she is struggling with, thereby displaying a sense of social presence.

Text-Chat Patterns

In addition to verbal communication, videoconferencing also provides the opportunity for textual communication. WebEx provides opportunities for public text-chat and sending private messages to specific people. In the first class session, the instructor was the primary user of the public text-chat, and she used it to send links to students to direct them to activities or resources. Only one student, a student who had not participated verbally in the class period, also contributed to the public text-chat, wishing everyone good night at the end of the class session, a small gesture towards building social presence. The public chat was not used at all in the second session observed. The instructor's contributions were all coded as activity-integrated

contributions, and the lone contribution from the student was coded as underlife-integrated as it served a purely interpersonal communication function.

I did not have access to private messages sent by students or to text-chat used in other programs such as Google docs, but from speaking with the instructor and some students, I believe private messages and chat in Google docs were an important communication medium for this class that I was unfortunately unable to capture. I will discuss these communication mediums in the next chapter as I turn my attention to interviews from instructors and students. In terms of the public text-chat within WebEx, though, I was surprised by how little it was used. In Chapter 3 I highlighted the affordance of multichannel communication within WebEx; as part of whole class discussion at least, this potential was not realized in the sessions of ENGL 110C that I observed.

ENGL 327W

This advanced composition course was taught in a hybrid structure with some students present in the studio classroom with an instructor with extensive experience teaching this type of synchronous distance course, with some joining from studio classrooms in satellite locations, and others joining from their own devices at their own chosen locations. The first class session observed took place a little before halfway through the semester and focused on students' questions regarding revising drafts of an essay after peer review had been conducted. It was not possible to determine the total number of students present for this session since attendance was not verbally taken and there are several students at some of the studio classroom locations, particularly in the classroom with the instructor, so it was impossible to tell for sure exactly how many students were present for each class period. Similarly because the camera did not always show speakers in the studio classroom with the instructor, instead just a disembodied voice could be heard making it impossible to tell at times who was the speaker, the exact number of participants could not be determined either; however, there were at least 15

participants in both the verbal and text channel during the hour and fifteen minute segment of the course session that I analyzed. The second class session observed took place shortly after spring break and was an introduction to Michel de Montaigne and his essays. As with the other session it was impossible to determine the total number of students present or the exact number of participants, but there were at least 11 participants. All but one of the identified individuals who contributed verbally or through text-chat in the parts of these sessions I observed agreed to participate in my study, so there were very few interactions that I did not analyze as part of my study, making the exchanges included below representative of the interaction I observed in this class.

Verbal Discourse Patterns and Characteristics

Unlike in ENGL 110C, in which IRF was a common discourse pattern, strict IRF patterns were rare in the sessions of ENGL 327W I observed. In fact, there was only one moment in the first class session discussing their drafts that I coded as IRF:

Instructor:	OK I think Taylor had citation questions. OK here's one question. Taylor did not include her draft but she said, asked, do we include the links web addresses on the work cited page? Well, how do we find the answer to that?
	(*6s*)
( ):	Purdue OWL
Instructor:	Purdue OWL. Yay! OK so if we go here to Purdue OWL and we look over here, if we go—first of all we need to go to the MLA formatting and style guides so it's important that you guys—a lot of you wrote your papers in A.P.A. format probably because that's what you're used to so you need to go back and revise it um to make sure follows M.L.A. But this is the place to look for those questions.

Interestingly, it was not clear who actually answered the question. It was someone in the studio classroom with the instructor, so they did not appear on camera. Regardless of which student provided the answer, this is a classic example of an instructor asking a display question to ensure the class knows this information. This type of exchange, however, was infrequent in the class sessions I observed.

Also in stark contrast to the patterns observed in ENGL 110C, there were examples of instructional conversation in the class sessions observed from ENGL 327W, particularly in the first class session when they were discussing questions they had regarding peer feedback they had received on essay drafts. In this example, one student wondered if starting her essay with a story was appropriate, so the instructor read her introduction then opened up the question to the class:

Instructor: Alright so I'll just open the floor up to see what you guys think, what your instinct tells you. Does a story work in the beginning?

Instructor: Mary you say yes. Laura Yes. Why? Yeah Go ahead.

Laura: I mean I read her paper. And I just thought I thought when she started off with a story it was like obviously grabs your attention, want to keep reading and it helps you understand like the point she's trying to get across.

Instructor: Good. Attention grabbing. OK anybody else want to weigh in. Brandi are you talking? I see somebody trying to talk.

Jen: Oh um I have a couple comments.

Instructor: OK.

Jen: This was really like personal I guess like a, like the other person said, an attention grabbing story but I thought maybe it could be a little shorter or use like a little more medical terminology in order to be taken more, I guess, not seriously, but like in order to be less fictional and more like a real life example. Like it was a very good story, but at the end I thought it was it was a fictional example.

Instructor: um-hm.

Jen: So like a real life [um]—

Pam: [It actually wasn't] fiction. I actually went through that. So it's not fictional. I changed the occupation but I didn't feel like medical terminology was necessary if my paper isn't about medicine or medical leave period it's about a father being there to help out when the child is born and money.

While the instructor could have used the poll function of WebEx (a feature which none of the classes I observed used to facilitate interaction) to hear from students their view on using a story to open an essay, the instructor instead opts for facilitating a conversation, and in this excerpt we see several students contributing to the discussion and their responses begin to be in conversation with each other. At first, like what I saw in ENGL 110C, students often speak to the instructor even when they are speaking about each other's responses. When Jen offers her opinion, she connects her response to Laura's response though she does not specifically name Laura or address her: "...I guess like a, like the other person said…" This discourse move echoes Georgia's response in ENGL 110C, "It's like what he said..." which in that class was the closest any exchange came to instructional conversation. These types of responses vaguely referencing the previous speaker brings into question whether or not students know each other's names.

However, as the interaction continues, we see a shift in the way students interact with each other. Pam's assertion, "It actually wasn't fiction" directly addresses Jen versus speaking primarily to the instructor. Her desire to answer and engage directly to Jen is also seen by the fact that she interrupts her speech.

As the exchange continues, the instructor rejoins the exchange and we see a series of interruptions and overlaps:

Instructor: Well here's a [question]

Jen: [Yeah like I respect that. It's just, you know, I thought it was a story—

Instructor: Well Jen [[let me ask you this--]]

Jen: [[and I just kept waiting]] for it to get to the facts.

Instructor: If Pam were to change it and make it first person… how would that hit you? [[[Would you still--]]]

Jen: [[[I would be a lot more on]]] board just because it's a direct narrative instead of an anonymous person that I'm not sure is real or not. So instead of like a possible fictional story it would be a first person narrative which would make like a first-hand like primary source.

When the instructor rejoins the exchange, we see a return to the student addressing the instructor, which makes sense since the instructor is asking Jen direct questions. The instructor's reinsertion of herself in this exchange may have been to prevent Pam from "being on the spot" so to speak since she seemed to bristle at Jen's assertion that her introductory narrative was a hypothetical story. To help defuse the tension, the instructor's questions helped shape Jen's feedback in ways that might be productive and helpful for Pam. The pattern of interruptions and overlaps in this exchange, potentially prompted by Pam's interruption in the previous example is also interesting. These interruptions could demonstrate students' engagement in this conversation; they wanted to contribute and be heard. Coates (1994) suggested overlaps in turn-taking between female friends were evidence of supportive speech moves. Perhaps the overlaps in this exchange between students and the instructor can be similarly interpreted. The overlaps, particularly those by the instructor, were not attempts to take the floor but to support the other speaker and prompt them to continue.

This exchange was followed up by another student joining in the conversation:

Instructor: Um-hm. What do the rest you guys think? Some people are nodding here.

Beth: Um I don't know if have anyone can hear me.

Instructor: I can hear you.

Beth: OK Sorry. Also it's loud. I'm in a coffee shop because I don't have internet. Um I liked the story, although, I think like-- I'm a political science major so it's a little bit different for us because I've seen stories and research papers before so and maybe if you started your introduction just like say what you're going to say, if that's like a thing, I don't know, again but maybe in the next paragraph talk about like this is going to be like say your story and then say this is an example of why this is important and lead into what you were going to say I feel like that would be--People would take it more like into consideration versus being like Jen said, just like a story. If that makes sense.

Beth takes an extended turn, building on the conversation between the instructor, Jen, and Pam, but contextualizing it within her own experience as a political science major. She also speaks directly to Pam, offering her a direct suggestion: "maybe in the next paragraph talk about like this is going to be like say your story and then say this is an example of why this is important." Later, she links her advice to what Jen had said and explicitly names Jen, "People would take it more like into consideration versus being like Jen said, just like a story." When Beth actually names her classmate when referencing her previous statements, versus Jen's previous invocation of the "other person" or from ENGL 110C Georgia's reference to a vague "he" when referencing one of her classmates, it signals perhaps a deeper level of social presence and engagement, and thus perhaps more indication of community. Beth's move of actually referring to her classmate by name may have been facilitated by the instructor actually naming Jen earlier in the exchange, helping her identify who had spoken before her. Throughout all of these interactions as part of this exchange about Pam's question, we can see the emergence of students co-constructing knowledge about appropriate ways to begin a paper based on their own knowledge, experiences, and expectations, beginning to directly refer to and address each other as part of the development of collaborative discourse supporting cognitive presence.

Sometimes the instructor prompted instructional conversation by asking the class to help a student out in explaining idea:

Instructor: Alright Beth, what would you say?

Beth: It's very action-y if that makes sense.

Instructor: Talk a little bit more about what you mean.

Beth: Well in one of the essays that I read, like that he describes things in action. Like it's not like just subtle. Like I'm trying to think I'm reading one right now.

Instructor:		um-hm.

Beth: Like the way he uses his words like I guess his adjectives to describe things, it's always like moving forward. I don't know how to, to better put that into thing.

→ Instructor: Anyone want to help Beth like articulate what she means there.

( ): Does she mean like in present tense?

Beth: Not necessarily. The way that I feel like he describing things, it's like, not futuristic because it's so original to me like the way describing things

Instructor: um-hm

Beth: That it feels like it's not really, he uses action. I don't know how to really articulate [it.]

Instructor: [Yeah.] Well that's okay Beth because I think what you're describing is something that's subtle here and that is like we can feel his presence on the page, like, and the action that I think you're describing is he's he's transcribing what's happening in his mind, you know, and so it's his it's the streams that [[you—]]

Beth: [[Stream of consciousness.]]

→ ( ): Yeah.

Instructor: Yeah [[[that's]]]— um-hm

Beth: [[[That's]]] I think that's what I'm trying to say.

Like in the previous exchange between Jen and the instructor, we see several supportive

overlaps, but this time, the instructor has also explicitly invited others into the exchange. An

unidentified student in the studio classroom with the instructor responds to the instructor's

question, addressing the instructor versus Beth, which is not surprising considering it was the

instructor who asked the question. However, the contribution from the unidentified student

prompts Beth to directly address her to reject her suggestion and discuss more of her own

thinking, which clues the instructor into getting a better sense of what Beth means so she can

lead her to the idea of stream of consciousness as a feature of Montaigne's essays as a clearer

way to express her original descriptor of "action-y." We can see by the fact that the unidentified

student chimes in again later in the conversation to agree with the term "stream of

consciousness" as appropriate that she has remained engaged in this exchange, making it more

of a conversation than a formal question and answer sequence between the instructor and a

student.

While this example does show collaborative discourse, it also demonstrates one of the

challenges faced in this particular instructional mode: unidentified speakers. Unlike when all

speakers sign-on to WebEx from their own device, when there are some students in a studio

classroom who are off camera, if they don't identify themselves and if the instructor does not

identify them, when they speak, those not physically present have no indication of who

specifically has spoken if one of them speaks—instead they just hear a disembodied voice.

This challenge was observed several times through the two class sessions, like in this

example where students in the studio classroom contribute information to help a student

participating online who was having trouble figuring out where to submit their assignment:

Marcia:		OK because when I first look on it on Blackboard it shows me the traditional academic essay which is the rubric of what to do and it shows me their reflective commentary but it doesn't show me where to turn in the academic essay.
Instructor:		Did you guys have any trouble with that? I don't know, Marcia I'm not sure because I mean it may be whenever you guys go to submit something do you have to click on something in particular to open it up to to upload, like—
→	( ):	You just need to click on the title.
→	( ):	Yeah.
Instructor:		Click, click on the title Marcia.

Two different students chimed in to help this student, one offering a suggestion and the other affirming it. However, on the recording it is impossible to tell who contributed these responses, meaning Marcia also likely did not know which of her classmates came to her aid. This challenge could negatively impact social presence within this class because these classmates to Marcia are just unidentifiable, disembodied voices versus specific individuals she can get to know and build collaborative relationships with.

While students participating from a distance, whether in a satellite location or in their own chosen locations, may not have always been able to tell which student was speaking at any given time, the instructor seemed to be able to generally discern who contributed when. One strategy that she seemed to use to aid other students was to use the name of the speaker in her exchanges with that student, though this did not happen one hundred percent of the time. Besides indicating the various speakers, the instructor also acted as a facilitator generally by prompting specific students to speak, asking clarifying questions, and opening up the floor to additional speakers. Another key aspect that she provides as facilitator is providing a synthesis of the conversation with her own advice as the instructor. This synthesis is a key component of Goldenberg's definition of instructional conversation. Janice, the ENGL 327W instructor, often provided this synthesis as part of class discussions, as can be seen in this example from the first class when she brings together the responses of Laura, Jen, and Beth to Pam's question about the use of a story to begin her essay included above:

Instructor: So to Beth, to begin by kind of doing the traditional thing where you, you know, give us your thesis statement and then do some kind of a little transition into then a personal story so that, as you said, tell us what you're going to tell us basically. Set it up for us so that we can see that you're getting ready to share personal story and yeah it's much more powerful when we know that this actually happened to Pam. Um so allow it to be first person. And I can understand why Pam wouldn't want to do it as a first person because we're afraid to do first person. Um we get mixed messages about whether or not it's OK to do first person in an academic essay. So, so Pam I would say I think with that combined advice there I think both Beth and Jen actually made some really good suggestions. It is powerful. I think keep it and keep it early but I think begin with your thesis then give us this maybe a little bit of an abbreviated version just because

> this is assignment is so short really. I mean if it were a long research paper maybe you could keep it this long but I think maybe tighten it up a little bit.

The instructor here specifically advocated to Pam using the "combined advice" of two of her peers and shows her what this might look like. Through her synthesis, the instructor is also reaffirming the value of the contributions from students, which could encourage future contributions from students. Through an assertion of teaching presence by offering a conversation summary and synthesis, the instructor demonstrates that student contributions are valued and are an important part of learning and cognitive presence within the course.

Another example of instructor synthesis came in the second class I observed focused on Montaigne's essays, when after asking students for adjectives they would use to describe Montaigne's essays, she sums up some of the contributions so far:

Instructor: OK we've got this, as Beth points out, this carefree shift from one part of the topic to another, sometimes without warning so you know we're moving as Pam said, I think it was Pam. No. Who said tangents? Somebody said to tangents. Anyway. Carefree shifts. Alright. No warning for the audience moving from one thing to the next. Bringing evidence to bear on an idea. But the position on the idea is incomplete, right? So we're bringing in evidence but not to prove some particular singular point. We're just bringing evidence in just to give you something to think about.

While she may not remember exactly which student contributed which response, she is trying to give the students credit for their responses, naming them to identify them as the a reminder to the class and to show how these responses weave together to help them understand Montaigne's writing style. In this way, we see the interconnectedness of teaching, social, and cognitive presence. The instructor works as a facilitator to help students get to know each other and see the value of their classmates contributions for their own learning. Thus, in the examples of instructional conversation in ENGL 327W, we see multiple students working with the instructor to engage with each other and build on each other's responses to co-construct

knowledge related to the topic of conversation, which is in stark contrast to the verbal discourse patterns observed in ENGL 110C.

Like ENGL 110C, though, student-initiated clarification patterns were present in ENGL 327W, like this example when the student follows up the instructor's explanation of whether to include URLs in MLA citations with another question:

Instructor: OK So Taylor does that answer your question?

Taylor: Yeah, but then I also have a piggy-back question on that. If we do include the links for the web addresses, some of those sources like that we've gotten off of, through like, you know through like a library and everything. Um some of them you have to have like a student log-in or, um, what am I trying to say. Uh like you have to access it through a library through like the school or whatever it may be. So if like a random person were to click on that link like they might not be able to get to that source so how do we handle that?

Instructor: Well I think what you may need to do Taylor (*loud feedback*) And this is, this is, this is kind of how things get dicey now that so much is available electronically because there are so few periodicals now that are print. I mean every, just about everything is in e-version of something now. And see it used to be like a lot of the a lot of the periodicals used to actually be hard copy, so there was no confusion for students because they had actually go in the library and get the hard copy version to make a copy of it. Nowadays students sometimes get confused because, yes you access journal articles through a website, but that does not mean it's a website. It is a periodical. It can be an online journal, but it's a journal. So Taylor there shouldn't be any sources that you access through the ODU library page that are web sources like web pages that other people wouldn't be able to get to. The only things that would be there that other people would be able to get to necessarily are the journal articles which are not web pages. Does that make sense what I'm saying?

This student's question about online sources, which was a specific question she had about how to cite one particular source, turned into a moment where the instructor could provide more instruction for the entire class about the difference between sources that could be accessed online through a database and a web-native source. Most student-initiated clarification examples I observed from ENGL 327W, in fact, related to citations, like this other example:

Deirdre: Well my question was an in-text citation and I think earlier we brought it
                up and the sentence that I was having problems with I've already decided
                to change anyway but if the first part of the sentence is the material you
                took from the source

Instructor: um-hm

Deirdre: but then the second part of your sentence is
                separated by like a comma or semicolon that's your own thought

Instructor: um-hm

Deirdre: Do you place the page number before the comma or semicolon or still at
                the very end of the sentence?

Instructor: You would still do it at the very end. You would just want to make sure
                Deirdre that she composed the sentence in such a way that there
                wouldn't be confusion there about what you're referring to like if that
                makes sense.

Because creating citations often relies on procedural knowledge, it is unsurprising that I saw the

student-initiated clarification pattern in dialogues relating to citation use, because like in ENGL

110C, these patterns arose when students wanted more information about *how* to do something

they were being asked to do for class.

Besides being an example of the student-initiated clarification pattern, the previous

example also demonstrates a discourse characteristic that was largely absent from the classes

observed from ENGL 110C: linguistic backchanneling:

Deirdre: Well my question was an in-text citation and I think earlier we brought it
                up and the sentence that I was having problems with I've already decided
                to change anyway but if the first part of the sentence is the material you
                took from the source

→   Instructor: um-hm

Deirdre: but then the second part of your sentence
                is separated by like a comma or semicolon that's your own thought

→   Instructor: um-hm

Janice, the ENGL 327W instructor, frequently contributed verbal backchannel responses to

student speakers. This may have been a deliberate verbal strategy employed by this instructor

for the synchronous video modality. Or it may simply have been indicative of her own verbal

tendencies in conversation and while teaching. Regardless of whether it was intentional or not,

the instructor's use of linguistic backchannels highlights the commitment to conversation to

support learning by this instructor. Linguistic backchannels are features of conversation that

demonstrate engaged listening. Intentionally or not, the instructor modeled engaged and active

listening within exchanges with students.

In terms of silence and wait time, there were examples of both relatively short and long

wait times and pauses. Relatively short wait times, or those fitting within the parameters of the

three second wait time advocated by Ingram and Elliott (2016) were often observed in *Next*

Speaker Indicated Gaps, or when a specific student had been called on to speak, like in this

example:

Instructor:	Let's see. How about we start with I see Cassie first. So Cassie, can you give us a description for something that you see as this is a shared characteristic among what we've listen to of Montaigne?
	(3s)
Cassie:	He uses the first pronoun in all of his essays.

Yet, like was observed in ENGL 110C significantly longer pauses were observed in *Next*

Speaker Ambiguous Gaps, like this one:

Instructor:	OK. So she had a question regarding thesis statements and quite a few of you I think either had a question introduction or thesis statement so let's take a look at hers again: "Even though redshirting child may appear to have some advantages, parents should not redshirt their child and further deprive their child from receiving proper learning instruction." And her question is does she need to elaborate more or should she include the identified reasons why which she goes into detail in her body paragraphs. Um let's see what you guys think.
→	(*11s*)
Jen:	This might be the time to hit that if you had your sources like studies that show about the effects of redshirting on children you could just say like you know "studies have shown that parents who redshirted their child

>have resulted in this and that which is why it deprives children from academic like experience" or whatever. Like that that's where maybe you could give a hint that studies or like scientists or whoever found data for this.

Despite the extended length of the pause, a student does eventually take up the open invitation to speak. Sometimes, though, long pauses were the result of students' engaging in a silent activity before speaking, like in this exchange that followed the previous one:

Instructor: Yeah. That's, that's actually a good suggestion and and I think Jen's point is too, is you don't have to be really specific Sadie. You can just say studies show or experts agree that, and then, in terms of like giving reasons, you can simply say there are negative consequences, or you can say you know it can be developmentally disruptive, or, something like that which is sort of like broadly describing the reasons but not going into very specific detail there at the beginning. So I would say, like if I were reading this and grading it, I wouldn't say that this is, this statement is um unclear, but it probably wouldn't hurt to have a little bit of a hint at the reasons, and broad reasons here, and you know Jen's point I think is a good one too because it gives it a little bit more umph to say, not simply you know this is my opinion, but my research has shown that. It could be helpful to strengthen it. What do you think?
                (*10s*)
Instructor: Are you talking Sadie?

Sadie: I was just rereading [and then]

Instructor: [Ok. Sorry.] Yeah reread it and take your time.
                (*16s*)
Sadie: And I, I think I know, I started out with a longer version of this and I go down to what it is now and I just feel like it's a little hard to add onto it by myself.

The silence in this exchange is not the result of ambiguity about who should speak next, but instead consists of the student actively thinking and reading before speaking, ultimately to acknowledge that she is still struggling to see how to incorporate the feedback she had been given. Thus, while there were still instances of long pauses and silences in the sessions of ENGL 327W I observed, these silences were generally not part of failed IRF sequences like in ENGL 110C, but instead were part of *Next-Speaker Ambiguous Gaps* that were eventually filled

by student responses or represented silent action by students including reading and thinking before speaking.

Text-Chat Patterns

Like ENGL 110C, the public text-chat was only used minimally in the class sessions I observed. Public text-chat contributions were present in the first session but not in the second and there were only three contributions total. The first two were coded as technology-integrated contributions, with students participating from a distance noting that they could in fact hear the student who the instructor was saying she could not hear:

Verbal Channel	Text-Chat
Pam: That was basically it. I just didn't know how to [start it off—]	
Instructor: [Oh we can't hear you.] Let's see.	
Pam: My earpiece. Every time I use the earpiece…	
Instructor: No still can't [hear you.] I'm sorry.	
Pam: [Can you hear me now?]	
	Olivia: I can hear her.
	Taylor: We can hear her on Webex.
Instructor: Let's see. I think I hear Nakkita coming.	
Pam: What about now?	

Here we can see students contributing integrated responses related to the course technology, demonstrating the usefulness of multichannel communication when there is an issue with one of those channels, since an issue with sound in the studio classroom was at this time preventing the instructor from being able to hear any students at a distance. The students' text-chat contributions alerted the instructor that the issue was on her end and not simply a technology issue on Pam's end. Synchronous classes organized by the Center for Learning and Teaching

are monitored by technology assistants throughout the class periods. The students' responses prompted Nakkita, the technology assistant to realize that there was a sound problem in the classroom that need to be addressed.

The other contribution was coded as a content-integrated contribution. A student (who did not consent to me including and analyzing his participation in my project) had mentioned being worried that he would be able to reach the page requirement for the assignment. Jen offered the following advice over text-chat:

> Jen: You could quote the reading we had about the 5 paragraph essay and explain some of those quotes. Easy way to add 2+ paragraphs.

Here Jen directs her classmate to a specific resource from the class and offers a concrete suggestion to his question about how he might lengthen his assignment to meet the requirement. This suggestion is never acknowledged on the verbal channel, however, so if this student was not also following the text-chat, he may have missed Jen's suggestion. It is not clear why Jen chose to use the text channel as opposed to the verbal channel to offer her suggestion, particularly because this use of the chat was not common in the sessions I observed. There also was not evidence of the use of private chat, or at least private chat between students and the instructor being prevalent in this class, which may have been the result of the instructor's own preference for communication medium, which I will discuss more in the next chapter.

ENGL 307T

Similarly to ENGL 327W, this digital writing course was taught in a hybrid structure with some students present in the studio classroom with an instructor with extensive experience teaching this type of synchronous distance course, some joining from studio classrooms in satellite locations, and others joining from their own devices at their own chosen locations. As I discussed in the last chapter, due to the distinct format of delivery for ENGL 307T and the limited number of students from this class who consented to have me analyze their verbal and

public text-chat responses, I determined to approach my analysis of this class differently. Instead of directly transcribing segments of two class periods and then analyzing these transcripts, I instead took notes on general discourse patterns observed in these two sessions. Also because of the lecture format of these class sessions, I chose to observe the entirety of the class sessions instead of just an hour and fifteen minute segment to have more examples of student participation to consider. In presenting these findings, then, I am positioning them as a comparison to the data collected from ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T, looking for broad patterns observed in these two classes. Having access to the instructor's specific responses, though, and including them here for analysis, did allow me, I feel, to draw conclusions about discourse patterns specific to this course.

The first class observed took place about half way through the semester and had two foci. The first half of the class focused on a discussion of an upcoming assignment that asked students to create instructional videos based on a feature of an assigned digital software platform. The bulk of this part of the class consisted of the instructor showing example projects created by past students and then asking for feedback from students about the strengths and weaknesses of the project based on the assignment criteria. Generally, after each video, the instructor engaged in an IRF sequence: the instructor asked students for their feedback on the video, a student would respond, and then the instructor would comment on that response, generally building on it to offer her own feedback. These sequences represented a type of display question where the instructor was asking students to display their understanding of the expectations of the assignment based on what they believed were the strengths and weaknesses of the project. The second half of the first class consisted of a lecture on visual rhetoric. At various points during the lecture, the instructor would stop and ask students questions about the visuals displayed on the slide to check their understanding of the concepts from her lecture. These exchanges also followed the IRF pattern.

The second class observed took place in the last few weeks of the semester and focused on usability research. Like the first class observed, the lecture was punctuated with IRF exchanges where the instructor asked a question or asked students to give their feedback on a website or platform, students responded, demonstrating their understanding of the concepts from the lecture, and then the instructor gave feedback based on that response. Thus, across the two classes observed, IRF was the most prevalent discourse pattern and there were no observed examples of instructional conversation. This is unsurprising because based on the structure of this class, these class periods were designated as lecture classes and discussion occurred in other venues through small group discussions held on the alternating class meetings through Adobe Connect.

In addition to the prevalence of IRF patterns, other patterns emerged, like can be seen here in this excerpt from an IRF exchange:

Instructor:	What are the comments you have on that video? If you were in my position and grading the video, what would be some of the good things you could say about it? What are some of the things that need improvement or you would advise the student to fix?
	(*4s*)
Instructor:	Go ahead.

→   (   ):   (   )

The final line of this excerpt represents that the speaker is unidentifiable and the response is unintelligible. The response came from someone in the studio classroom with the instructor; however, in the recording it was impossible to tell who was speaking, and the response was so quiet it was not possible to understand what was said. This inability to hear the response would have been the case for any student participating from a distance, whether in a satellite studio classroom or participating from their own device. This volume issue is likely due to the student in the studio classroom not successfully using the desktop microphone used in the studio classrooms; students have to press a button to make it a hot mic that will pick up their voice and

broadcast it through the video conferencing system. Most times when a student in the studio classroom with the instructor offered a verbal response in the sessions I observed, this response was not able to be heard.

Like in the sessions of ENGL 110C I observed, there were examples of long pauses, like can be seen in this example from ENGL 307T:

Instructor:		What other comments did anyone have? Good or bad about the clip we watched?
→		(*16s*)
Instructor:		So everyone else is kind of like "eh?"
		(*laughter*)
Instructor:		Yeah? Anyone? Anyone?
		(*laughter*)
Instructor:		Anyone? Ok.
		(*noise*)
Instructor:		Was there someone?
→		(*8s*)
Instructor:		I think it was just me. My reverb.
		(*laughter*)
Instructor:		How sad is that? It's just my own echo.

Here, like the example included above from ENGL 110C, the instructor of ENGL 307T explicitly acknowledges the long silence. In this case, the instructor does an impression of Ben Stein's famous line from *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, "Anyone? Anyone?," which while does result in laughter from the class, did not ultimately compel anyone to respond to her solicitation for their opinions about the video project they had just watched. The reference to the classroom scene in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* is a good reminder that student silence is not unique to SVCs and can also be a feature of f2f classes, suggesting that pedagogy and class expectations may have a larger impact that modality or technology.

Another interesting pattern related to the diversity, or perhaps more accurately, the lack of diversity, of speakers. The instructor spoke the most during the sessions, which was also true in the other courses I observed, but the ratio was far more unbalanced in the sessions of this

course that I observed; this result is unsurprising because these class periods were specifically framed as lectures. There were a few responses from students in the studio classroom with the instructor, but, like I mentioned before, I could not tell who was speaking, so it was impossible to determine how many distinct speakers there were from that location. Yet by far, the majority of student responses as part of IRF sequences came from a single student located at one of the satellite studio classrooms. This student was also the only student I observed to engage in an example of student-initiated clarification, and there was only one verbal example of that discourse pattern across the two class meetings. Of the total number of times a student spoke across these two sessions, 60% of these instances came from this same student.

A final aspect of interest for this course was the use of the public-text chat. Because ODU's Center for Learning and Teaching, which made recording of the class periods available, does not also archive and include the transcripts of the public text-chats with video recordings, I was not able to see and analyze this text. However, in the verbal transcript there are moments that imply some of the ways it was used by the students in the course. In the first class I observed, after the instructor gave the students a ten minute break, she restarts the class by answering a question that someone had posted through the text-chat. It was not clear whether this question was posted in the public text-chat or if it was sent to the instructor privately. Either way, this was an example of a student using the text-chat to engage in student-initiated clarification.

There was also evidence the text-chat was used for more informal discussion between students. At the conclusion of the second class I observed, the instructor turned her attention to the text-chat and responded to what she saw there:

Instructor: I'm just getting the WebEx chat log. Since it's over on the side, I always miss it. So now I'm getting to enjoy all this screaming about the red. The ketchup and mustard site. I like that. Yeah, you'll have to send that. I don't know the TedTalk on information overload. I'm interested in that. If you have it, send it to me. But don't feel like you have to go digging it up.

The first types of responses she mentions—"all this screaming about the red"—referred to responses to an example website she asked them to analyze for usability that made use of a predominately red and yellow color scheme. The inclusion of "all" indicates there were multiple participants in this part of the text-chat and "screaming" suggests perhaps that these students were using a more informal tone (e.g. perhaps using all capital letters to show emphasis and emotions). She then seemingly reads one of the specific responses— "ketchup and mustard site"— which again seems to suggest the informal tone of the text-chat; the students seem to be joking with each other.

Then when the instructor starts mentioning the TedTalk that a student mentioned, we can see another use of the chat: a place to post additional resources or texts related to the verbal discussion. The student's choice to share information about a TedTalk video is similar to the moment from ENGL 110C when Alice offered the verbal suggestion to her classmates of using the "chat with a librarian" service offered by the library. However, here the student chose to use the text channel as opposed to the verbal channel. In this way it shares characteristics with the moment from ENGL 327W when Jen offered a suggestion to a student to make his paper longer over chat instead of making the suggestion verbally. However, the inclusion of the reference to the TedTalk video seems to be distinct from Jen's suggestion because the student's decision to suggest this resource does not appear to be a direct response to what was being discussed on the verbal channel like with Jen's example, but instead is a parallel response that is building on the verbal channel; thus it is an example of using the text-chat as a supplemental channel.

Without being able to see the actual text-chat contributions from students, it is difficult to make any conclusions about how the text-chat was used in this class, yet this discussion of the chat by the instructor seems to suggest that it was a student-initiated space that functioned as a type of underlife activity, but also was a space of collaborative knowledge making where students shared their thoughts and knowledge related to the course material. The instructor's

admission that "she always miss[es]" the chat, reinforces the idea that students are engaging in the text-chat by their own choice and for their own purposes. The instructor's explanation of why she always misses the chat during the bulk of class, "it's over on the side" also highlights the way the text-chat has not been effectively integrated within the WebEx interface for it to be effectively integrated into class discussions.

Synthesis and Discussion

In analyzing the public discourse of these three classes, I was attempting to answer the questions:

- How do undergraduate students participate and interact in WebEx mediated writing classes?
- How do the affordances and constraints of WebEx shape how undergraduate students participate and interact in writing classes?

In terms of the first question, it is difficult to offer an overarching answer because when a pattern seems to emerge in two of the courses observed, it is belied by what occurred in the third course. For example, ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T seem to confirm the prevalence of IRF discourse patterns in SVCs, but this finding is challenged by the patterns observed in ENGL 327W in which instructional conversation was much more prevalent. Long pauses of silence appear to be awkward and a little uncomfortable in ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T, but generative in 327W. The public text-chat within WebEx seemed to be underutilized in ENGL 110C and ENGL 327W, but it seems to have been a space of underlife, supplemental participation and potential community building in ENGL 307T. Interestingly, though, the public text-chat was much less utilized for direct class participation than I was anticipating across the three courses, and it was not used as a robust, *integrated* channel of communication in any of these courses. This result is interesting when considering my question; despite the affordance for integrated, multichannel communication provided by the text-chat feature within WebEx, I observed that this affordance did *not* shape participation and interaction in classroom conversations, though,

in ENGL 307T, the use of this feature as a conversational backchannel as opposed to a secondary class discourse channel did shape underlife interaction.

In terms of the impact of constraints on participation and interaction, one commonality observed in the sessions across all three courses was that they all did seem to suffer from technology issues at times and moments where it was difficult to discern who was speaking or what was said. Having to negotiate occasional technological challenges does appear to be a common trait of teaching and learning in SVCs which impacts how students participate and interact with the instructor and with each other.

So how do we begin to account for some of the differences in the discourse patterns across these courses? Course level is one factor that may have impacted the students' reticence to participate verbally in ENGL 110C. Since this course was a required course for first-year students, they may have been less confident in themselves as students than we might expect upperclassmen to be, less engaged with the material because it was compulsory, or both. The material and format also seemed to play a large role in the discourse patterns across the three courses. The subject matters of the classes observed from ENGL 110C and 307T focused on information the instructor knew and was conveying to the students. In ENGL 327W this was not always the case, particularly in the class focused on discussing students own questions about their drafts. Yet the second class observed from ENGL 327W presented an introduction to Montaigne's essays, and thus could be considered a class where the purpose was the instructor conveying information to the students; however it still presented different discourse patterns. This is likely due to the communication expectations of this class compared to the sessions I observed from ENGL 307 which was explicitly framed as a lecture. Students in ENGL 307T knew that it was the discussion session held the following week in which they were expected to actively participate versus the lecture presented on WebEx.

I do want to note that the prevalence of IRF patterns observed in ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T is not a bad thing. As Cazden (2001) and Walsh (2011) noted, IRF discourse can play an

important role in education, particularly when the instructor's goal is to check the understanding of students. This seems to have frequently been the goal of the ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T instructors from the sessions that I observed, so the prevalence of this pattern is completely justified. Therefore it is difficult to conclude whether the delivery mode of synchronous videoconference plays a large role in determining broad instructional discourse patterns or if these patterns are driven much more by the way the course is structured and communication norms are established. What the transcription data from ENGL 327W shows, though, is that instructional conversation is possible in SVCs as long as it is designed for.

I would also suggest though that another key difference between some of the discourse patterns present across the three courses, and one that is most helpful for considering effective teaching in SVCs were distinctions in the instructor's strategies when soliciting student participation. The instructors of ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T generally created *Next Speaker Ambiguous Gaps*, not calling on anyone specifically, but instead opening the floor to anyone who wanted to speak. I think it is important to note that the instructor of ENGL 110C used many of the best practices advocated in face-to-face instruction: she left generous wait time after asking for participation, and even engaged students in freewriting activities to help them generate ideas before opening up the floor. However, these strategies often did not result in students taking up the invitation to speak. In contrast, the instructor of ENGL 327W was more likely to directly call on students to speak. Perhaps consequentially, her class also had the highest diversity of speakers across the three that I observed. Directly calling on specific students and inviting them to speak may be a helpful practice in this environment where the mediation of the screen could distance some students from the sense that they need to participate; it is easier to "hide" across a screen than across a room, perhaps. Additionally, even if students are inclined to participate, those at a distance, particularly if they do not have access to the hand-raise button either because they are participating on a mobile device or attending in a satellite studio classroom, might hesitate because without the visual clues available from

being in the same physical space with other students to see when other students want to speak, whether it is literally them raising their hand, or other, subtler body language cues indicating their desire to speak, they may fear interrupting someone. In this environment it may be even more crucial than in face-to-face environments for the instructor to act like a conductor, orchestrating the shape and players of the conversation.

Summary

This chapter provided an analysis of the major discourse patterns observed across two sessions from three writing SVCs to answer my first two research questions:

- How do undergraduate students participate and interact in WebEx mediated writing classes?
- How do the affordances and constraints of WebEx shape how undergraduate students participate and interact in writing classes?

I found that students did not engage verbally very often unless explicitly called upon by name to do so. When instructors asked the class generally to answer a question or if they had any questions of their own, these invitations were generally followed by long, awkward pauses, and sometimes not taken up at all, as was seen in ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T. However, when students were explicitly called upon to speak, as was the case in ENGL 327W, there was much more verbal participation. From the sessions of ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T, I observed a prevalence of IRF interactions as opposed to examples of instructional conversation which was much more common in the sessions of ENGL 327W. In the three classes, students primarily addressed the instructor as opposed to their peers, though there were notable exceptions, especially in ENGL 327W as instructional conversation developed. I also observed relatively little use of the public text-chat for integrated student participation across the three classes, though the public chat was a place for noting technology issues or for affective, backchannel communication, with the latter seeming to be especially present in ENGL 307T. The relative little use of the public text-chat, however, points to the fact that many students did not take advantage of this affordance of WebEx.

Other features of the interface which appear to impact how students choose to interact within class sessions include the distance created through the mediation of communication through a screen which might account for students seeming reluctance to contribute when asked *Next Speaker Ambiguous* questions, since, as I suggested, it might feel easier to "hide" in this circumstance compared with being in a shared physical space. I also saw inconsistent use of the hand raise button for students to indicate their desire to speak, seeing it seem to be used primarily in ENGL 110C only. Students either chose not to, or did not have access to this affordance of the interface. Other technological challenges included being unable to tell who was speaking or to be unable to hear who was speaking due to the interface being unable to identify overlapping speakers, issues of microphones not being properly turned on, or the camera in studio classrooms not capturing individual speakers, leading to the display of disembodied voices. All of these aspects could have contributed to the patterns I observed in these class sessions, especially patterns of verbal interaction because they impacted students' and instructors' ability to easily recognize, hear, and/or respond to those they were interacting with.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of what can be learned by considering the discourse analysis data from these three classes together, noting that class level and course structure seem to play a larger role than the delivery mode of synchronous videoconference in impacting discourse patterns. However, I argued the practice of calling on specific students does appear to be a significant factor to support the development of instructional conversation.

The next chapter focuses on my second method, qualitative analysis of interview data from students and instructors of the SVCs I observed. This data is used to contextualize the findings of the discourse analysis data as well as illuminate students' and instructors' attitudes towards and experience with synchronous video conferencing as a mode for learning and teaching.

CHAPTER 6

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from thematic analysis of student and instructor interviews from the three courses I observed. The data collected and analyzed from these interviews was used to consider my second set of research questions:

- How do undergraduate students want to and how do their instructors want them to participate and interact in synchronous writing classes, and how do students and instructors feel the WebEx technology supported or hindered these goals?
- How do the choices students make about how they participate and interact in WebEx classes affect their sense of collaboration and community within the course?

Thus the findings and analysis presented in this chapter attempt to capture an emic, insider perspective on interaction patterns and experiences within these types of classes. While the research questions above primarily focus on students' experiences, I also spoke with instructors to gain their insider perspectives on their course to help contextualize the students' responses.

Like the previous chapter, this chapter is organized around each of the courses I observed. This organization allows me to structure my analysis in conversation with the previous chapter and, when appropriate, connect the findings from these interviews with that from my discourse analysis. This explicit linking provides the opportunity to support, check, explain, or expand my own conclusions with the impressions of participants from that course. For each course I provide an overview of the participants, particularly discussing their previous experience with online teaching or learning generally as well as specifically with SVCs. Then I discuss the major themes arising from my analysis of the interview data from that course.

In my methodology chapter (Chapter 4), I included a preliminary coding system that was based on the Online Writing Course Community Heuristic presented in Chapter 2 (Table 5), which I've included again in Table 6.

Table 6

Preliminary Interview Coding System

Teaching Presence		Social Presence		Cognitive Presence	
Heuristic Question	*Code Category*	*Heuristic Question*	*Code Category*	*Heuristic Question*	*Code Category*
How are students oriented to the technology of the class?	**Technology Orientation**	How are students able to get to know each other within the class?	**Student Presence**	How is the connection between communication, collaboration and learning presented to students?	**Social Learning in Theory**
How are students oriented to the communication and community expectations of the course?	**Community Orientation**	What are the communication or discourse norms within the class?	**Course Discourse**	How are students making connections between course discourse and/or collaboration and their learning?	**Social Learning in Practice**
How does the instructor convey she/he is a real person who is willing/able to help students?	**Instructor Presence**	Is there any backchannel or private communication occurring between students, and how was it initiated and/or developed?	**Student Underlife**	What is the content of the course and how does it support or challenge the importance of community and/or collaboration in the course?	**Course Content**
How have access and inclusivity been considered/designed for?	**Accessibility in Design**	Are there accessibility/inclusivity issues impacting students' interaction within the course?	**Access and Interaction**	Are there accessibility/inclusivity issues impacting students' access to content or ability to complete activities/assignments?	**Access and Learning**

While I used this coding system to provide preliminary codes to ground my thematic analysis in the synthesized community framework discussed in Chapter 2, I was also open to emergent codes and/or subcodes that developed from my *a priori* codes that focused around the three categories of the Community of Inquiry framework: teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence. However, during the reiterative coding process, I found a lot of overlap and interchange with coding categories across these three categories of presence. For instance, a response in an interview could be coded as both *Access and Interaction* and *Access and Learning*. In retrospect, this overlap is unsurprising because the Community of Inquiry framework clearly establishes the interconnectedness of these levels of presence (Garrison et al., 1999). Thus, as I considered how to talk about these interview responses, cross-presence umbrella categories emerged to organize my analysis. Table 7 shows this new thematic and coding framework.

Table 7

New Coding Framework with Cross-Presence Themes

	Teaching Presence	**Social Presence**	**Cognitive Presence**
Access & Autonomy	Accessibility in Design	Access and Interaction	Access and Learning
	Technology Orientation		
Relationships	Instructor Presence	Student Presence	Social Learning in Theory
			Social Learning in Practice
Interaction	Community Orientation	Course Discourse	Course Content
		Student Underlife	

In my discussion for each class I begin with a discussion of access because OWI Principle 1, "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible," is meant to be an overarching principle for approaching online writing instruction. Then I examine what students and instructors had to say regarding relationships and their sense of presence of the instructor and/or students in their SVC and finally interaction in this modality. When examining responses related to interaction, I make explicit references back to my own discourse analysis findings when appropriate.

ENGL 110C

I interviewed the instructor and three students from ENGL 110C. The instructor, Kara, who teaches exclusively online, had almost ten years of experience teaching asynchronous online writing classes (OWCs). While she had been a student in SVCs, this course was her first experience teaching in this modality. The three students I interviewed, James, Nick, and Alice, all had some previous experience with online learning, but those experiences varied. James had taken an online health class while in high school, Nick had taken several asynchronous online courses at the university, and Alice had taken both asynchronous and synchronous classes at the university, meaning she had taken an SVC before. Nick and James were located on the main campus, allowing them to take a mixture of online and face-to-face classes, whereas Alice lived at a distance from the campus and exclusively took online classes.

Access and Autonomy

I asked both students and instructors about what the benefits and challenges of online courses were for them, and many discussed issues of access and autonomy within their experiences. These responses generally coalesced around three subtopics: location, time and technology.

Location. The issue of access to learning was often framed in spatially bound terms by participants. Unsurprisingly, locational freedom as a key benefit of online classes was identified by the instructor and one of the students from the course. The instructor, Kara, noted how online

teaching fit into her lifestyle: "Well the benefits for me are probably that my spouse is in the military, and so I move a lot. More than your average person. So it allows me to have some kind of career." Kara's inconsistent geographical location made online teaching an opportunity for consistent employment. Alice also noted the impact of location on her decision to undertake online learning:

> ...my geographical location is not near the university, so it would be very difficult for me to travel the approximately an hour and a half to hour and forty-five minutes to Old Dominion to take [a class in person]. Um my other option would be like VCU or something like that. VCU, that's probably the closest but that's still over an hour. So it allows me to take the classes from my home. Um and also still be able to you know, take care of my family and that kind of thing.[43]

Alice highlights how geographical constraints bar some students from f2f instruction. We can see in Alice's response the value of the "any place" feature that is often celebrated as the key value of online education.

Yet the students revealed that locational freedom and the autonomy to choose where to participate in class from also came with its own challenges. Several of the students noted that it was more difficult to concentrate or be motivated in environments outside of the traditional classroom. Alice explained that she had created a designated spot to participate in class from in her house:

> I have a dedicated—I set myself up a little desk and stuff on the corner of my bedroom that I use as kind of makeshift office...Um I think it helped. It helped separating myself um I find that when I'm doing assignments and stuff, I need to go to the library and stuff because if I'm at home I find myself folding laundry or doing other things...It's just a balance. But I do find that getting away and not—I don't have tv or anything and I'm able to separate myself a little bit. Especially with kids and people in the household. My husband comes home, and you know, he's doing whatever with the kids in the living room and I can shut the door and be you know semi-quiet for classes.

---

[43] In presenting participants responses, I chose to present them following standard grammatical rules for written English. When participants began one train of thought and then switched to expressing it in a new way or new sentence, that is represented with a dash (—). When an ellipsis (...) is present, that represents places where my own responses or questions occurred between the participants responses but are not included here to focus on the participants' thoughts and views. Material in brackets ([ ]) include added contextual information or changes in wording to make it more general to not reveal names or locational details that might indicate who a participant is.

Alice has obviously recognized the danger of conflation between home and school and has

been proactive in trying to carve out a distinct location for class and school work within her

home or seeking outside locations. She also has a partner who is willing to take on the

responsibility of the parent role while she is focusing on being a student during the class

sessions. The tension she describes, though, in having to consider the location of her learning

showcases the interconnection between location and identity. In the traditional classroom, a

person assumes the role of student while in this space; obviously their other identities and roles

are still present, but it is clear that in that space, they should behave as a student first.[44] Yet,

when students participate in an online class from home, they take up the role of student in a

space normally coded for other identities. Alice's confession that she will sometimes start

"folding laundry or doing other things" when she is supposed to be doing school work, shows

how easy it is to slip into the parent role when in the location where this is generally her primary

role or identity.

Alice also highlighted the benefit of having the ability to participate from unconventional

locations:

> I like the fact that [WebEx] can be used remotely from anywhere. Um I mean I've had an instance where I was running late getting home and I was able to connect to one of my classes on my cell phone...And that was super nice because even though I couldn't interact as much, my professor knew I was there and I was able to listen even though that particular day I was literally driving home so you know for the first fifteen minutes of class I was able to hear it and my professor knew I was there. I couldn't interact because I was doing something else but I could, you know, understand what was going on and I didn't miss as much.

Alice was able to be present in her class in a situation when she normally would not have

access to class. Of course, as she mentions several times, she did not have full access

because she could not interact because she was busy doing another activity that requires a lot

---

[44] Of course this does not always happen. Students may choose to prioritize other identities/roles, which leads to underlife activity. Yet the space of the traditional classroom at least establishes the expectation for what role will be assumed.

of her attention: driving. For Alice, this was a one-time occurrence so this limited access to class was better than nothing and not a consistent challenge for her. However, the locational flexibility Alice praised could set up a situation for a different student where they choose to participate in class from a location not conducive to full class participation.

Even students who did not have to contend with geographical limitations or parental responsibilities still expressed the challenge locational autonomy provided by SVCs. James specifically highlighted the conflation of where he learns and where he lives as a challenge of this course for him. He suggested he preferred traditional f2f classes because "it always helps me to see in the environment where I'm learning, and it keeps me focused, and it kind of separates school from home instead of going to school and then coming back home to do more school." He wanted a separation from home and school like that provided by distinct physical locations. Unlike Alice, he had not carved out a unique space within his home environment that was a designated school spot. James also noted that this lack of locational boundaries impacted his motivation, saying sometimes he struggled with being "just willing to go [to class]. Because you're not really obligated to go to a room you just have to open your computer. 'Cause the motivation factor is better when I have to go into a classroom." James highlighted the personal motivation that he must have to decide to take on the role of student within his own space versus having a space that defines him as a student for him.

In this way, synchronous courses are not so different from asynchronous ones. Students can participate from almost anywhere as long as the location has sufficient internet access. The element of video conference does suggest that this place needs to be, as Alice said, "semi-quiet" so participants can hear and be heard. Additionally, students are also constrained by the expectations of others in the spaces they choose to participate from. Unlike James, Nick indicated that he prefers to participate in class from his room:

> I would say for me personally I'd probably be more inclined to talk in my room...If she asks a question, and I'm in the library then I don't want to worry about being loud or something...So I just feel more comfortable.

So for Nick, his room is a location where he feels like he is able to speak up, whereas he worried about disrupting others in his other accessible spaces. However, students in theory have a lot of autonomy of where they choose to participate from. With Alice we can see how these choices can be constrained—as a mother she cannot leave her children, so she is constrained within the confines of her house. But even in examples like hers with constrained autonomy, students still have the responsibility to find a suitable location for their learning, and like Nick, will not also be disruptive to others. Or, like in the case of James, to find the motivation to take on the role of student outside of an environment that usually provides this definition.

   Time. One of the key differences of SVCs from asynchronous learning is that learning is no longer "anytime"; the instructor and students are working within temporal constraints of when instruction will happen. Thus, it is in tension with what one of the students, Nick, claimed he generally liked about taking online classes: "Um the benefits is that you, um, you can do it on your own time. Um you can take it at your own pace, which I think is pretty good." With SVCs students can no longer approach the class on their own time and at their own pace, but instead are constrained like a traditional f2f class by the confines of a designated class period, which follow the same schedule as f2f classes at the institution. This lack of temporal freedom generally is challenging for students like Nick who enjoyed the freedom of asynchronous instruction; however, for other students the issue was just the literal time when the course was held that posed problems. The specific timing of ENGL 110C posed a challenge for Alice:

> The biggest challenge for me and it may just be a personal challenge is the timing of it all. I wish that they had more classes during the day as opposed to night time which I understand for people in grad school and stuff that work and makes sense to do it at nighttime, but for me, personally, with kids it's harder for me to do it at 5 o'clock at night when my kids want to eat dinner than you know 2 o'clock when they're still in school.

Alice struggles with access to learning because of the scheduling of SVCs by the institution. Yet though she did not like the actual time frame for their class meetings, Alice, unlike Nick, did

appreciate the temporal constraints of SVCs. In fact, this aspect was something she appreciated about this particular modality: "I also do not get as much benefit from the classes that are strictly online and not WebEx or the meeting types. Um I like having the classroom atmosphere even if it is on a video screen." For Alice, having set meeting times seemed to preserve the sense of the classroom and class time, so while there may not be a physical space she enters to take on the role of student (other than her "makeshift office"), there is at least a time frame when she knows she will step into this role.

Kara, the instructor, noted that one of the challenges she faced in teaching an SVC were conflicting views about the temporality of the course. Speaking about SVCs, she claimed:

> It's very different from asynchronous and very different from face-to-face. I think it's more work than either one because students still thought that they should be able to get a response from me in twelve hours. And they wanted the class to be already designed, like it would be in an asynchronous class. And I did every week so they would know what was coming up Tuesday and Thursday and post it on Mondays but I was still getting a lot of, well what are we doing next week? Well we're going to cover this and this like it says in the syllabus, but I don't have specific activities yet because this isn't that type of class.

Students desire to have the class "be already designed" is likely reflective of values like those expressed by Nick who appreciate the anytime affordance of asynchronous education. Kara seems to be struggling against expectations of what online education is and looks like, which SVCs with their temporal constraints do not necessarily follow.

Technology. When asked what advice they would give to future students about to take an SVC, several students suggested getting comfortable with the technology. For example, Alice said she would tell them "get yourself familiar with Google docs and all that stuff...Like become techno-technologically comfortable." James suggested that the use of technology worked well in the class because Kara the instructor was knowledgeable and available to help:

> I think she did a very good job with [the technology] because she knew a lot about it and answered all of our questions when we had problems...Everything went well and even if we had questions or there were technical problems, she would either make a video

explaining what to do or she would be understanding and give us more time to get a hold on the technology before we had to turn in an assignment.

One might expect that Kara could better address technology questions because of the synchronous modality of the course—if students had questions they could ask during the class period. However, James' responses suggests the strategies she used to provide technological orientation were actually asynchronous strategies. Having a resource like a video explanation of how to do something within the technology used for the class seems to have been just as valuable in a synchronous environment as it would be in an asynchronous one.

Kara could not, however, necessarily support students struggling with their own technologies. Nick advised that students make sure they have the time and tools to successfully use the technology for every class: "I'd tell them to log into their computer maybe ten to fifteen minutes early 'cause you never know what your computer can do...And I'd also say get a headset." Nick focused on having to be responsible for his own technological devices, demonstrating a significant challenge when considering technology and access. Sometimes, however, students had to negotiate how their device worked with WebEx, like Alice who noted, "The only thing, and I don't know whether it's my own thing um for me, if I am in WebEx it makes doing different things more difficult. Like everything else on my laptop or on the desktop goes slower." The bandwidth required for WebEx to run properly was a challenge for some students based on the devices they had access to and their internet speed.

Since students choose[45] the technologies that they will use to participate within the class in SVCs and the instructor is spatially if not temporally separated from them, students must do their own troubleshooting when encountering technology challenges. Kara also noted that

---

[45] I recognize that students' choices may be extremely constrained by a variety of factors in their life that impact what technologies they can afford to buy or what technologies are already available to them so many in reality to not have full choice to utilize any technology that would be effective for use for videoconferencing and class participation.

students' technology choices might constrain their access to meaningful participation in the class:

> There were a lot of students who were attending WebEx on their phones and then using a tablet to do whatever else we were doing in class. So right there could be a reason why there wasn't so much participation.

Kara highlights how some students had to juggle multiple technologies to have access to all parts of the class experience, which ostensibly would have added to their cognitive load, impacting their experience and engagement.

Autonomy = / ≠ Access. The students' and the instructor's responses related to access and autonomy demonstrate the interrelatedness and tension of these concepts. Sometimes the relationship looked clear: more autonomy = more access, less autonomy = less access. For example, the autonomy of location in the SVC increased Alice's access to learning compared to f2f instruction, but the lack of autonomy of when the synchronous meetings would occur posed an accessibility challenge for her. However, technological autonomy for students often posed access issues since students became responsible for managing their own access as it related to the devices they chose and their own comfort with the platforms used within the course. James suggested that this responsibility was partially mitigated by effective technology orientation by the instructor, but there are a lot of factors related to access that instructors ultimately do not have control over.

Relationships and Presence

Students also talked about their relationships with and sense of presence of their instructor and fellow classmates. Nick noted that one thing he typically did not like in online classes was the lack of immediate response from the instructor:

> And I think the challenge is that it might be harder to get in contact with the person since you don't have them like, you know, you can't just call on them immediately if you need them. I'd say that's like a challenge of it.

Nick's response points to the transactional distance (Moore, 1993) between students and instructors when they are separated by time and space. In SVCs, this distance is ostensibly minimized because there is no longer a temporal distance; students can ask any questions they have during the synchronous videoconference and the instructor can immediately respond, thus creating more dialogue which leads to a decreased sense of transactional distance (Moore, 1993). However, when Nick discussed his relationships with his fellow students, his response suggested that being separated by spatial distance might still make relationship building a challenge:

> Um, I'd say that it's probably harder to get to know someone in an online class... On one hand I can think maybe you'd be more inclined to because you might be too shy to ask someone for help face-to-face instead of asking them over the like internet...But on the other hand, I think that if you're not, you know, near somebody you might not be inclined to go, you know, ask to study with someone. I mean it could, it might not be convenient because everyone might from a different part of the Hampton Roads area.

Nick is pointing to a central tension when thinking about relationship building in online classes. For some students, as he suggests, being freed from anxieties associated with f2f communication might make them more comfortable and thus likely to reach out to fellow classmates. However, he also suggests that without physical location in common, students might not consider seeking out relationships which might have developed organically from habituated shared physical presence. Perhaps, then it was this physical distance which led Nick to suggest he got to know his fellow students "not personally, but on an acquaintance [level] maybe." James echoes this language when he suggested he got to know his classmates "a little bit. Uh not like on a personal level. You could kind of see the type of person they are by what they say."

Now it is important to note that within the context of this study, it is impossible to compare these descriptions of their relationships with fellow students to how well they feel they get to know classmates in other class modalities such as f2f and asynchronous classes. Perhaps due to the sometimes over romanticized notions of community in f2f classes compared

with online classes, we have little research on students' sense of relationship with their peers in f2f classes to compare to these characterizations of relationship building in SVCs collected from these interviews.

However, the instructor, Kara, pointed to a feature of this particular SVC that might be specifically contributing to students' sense that they only got to know each other "a little bit." She noted students' reluctance to turn on their cameras during the videoconference class sessions, even noting that some did not turn on their cameras when doing class presentations. Kara explained that she had failed to require cameras be on in her syllabus language, so she did not feel that this was something she could mandate students do after she noticed their decision not to activate their web cameras after a few class sessions. In my analysis of WebEx in Chapter 3 I hypothesized that the use of web cameras afforded students to get glimpses into each other's personal spaces which could support relationship building and the sense of each other as real people. Students' decision to not use their cameras in ENGL 110C, meant that students not only did not have access to that visual information, instead they often experienced each other as disembodied voices, which could have influenced their sense of social presence with each other.

Kara also highlights the way that simply the requirement for literal presence in an SVC—students must log into the videoconference to be considered present—can obscure the teacher's ability to assess their social and cognitive presence, particularly when compared with asynchronous online classes where you can tell who isn't present "by the students who are not submitting the eight million discussion boards that you have them doing. But it's harder in the synchronous class because they may show up, but then they won't ask a question." This challenge is also present in f2f classes; however, in that modality, instructors at least have access to visual clues about students' engagement with the class. In SVCs when students do not use their cameras, the instructor has little indication beyond when they choose to contribute verbally or on the text-chat if they are engaging with the course material.

Kara also did discuss an aspect of the class that did seem to have an impact on social presence and relationship building: group projects.

> I do think that group projects went fairly well. You know like any group project there was, there's always that one group. But otherwise I do feel like—and I kept them in the same groups all semester. I asked if they wanted to switch and they didn't, so that's who they felt comfortable with and I do think that those went well.

The students' interest in remaining in the same groups could suggest they were beginning to build relationships together. However, one challenge that Kara faced was that WebEx did not easily facilitate group work since WebEx Meetings does not allow breakout groups. Kara suggested she did not really like teaching this course with WebEx:

> Because you don't get to create that small group interaction that is—that's where most students feel more comfortable participating in...I tried to do chats in like Hangouts where they were individual and I had multiple computers where I'm bouncing between rooms...I feel like if I had had something like breakout rooms that maybe...Something that would make it more conducive to hopping from small group to small group like the face-to-face classroom.

Kara tried to work around the interface to run her class the way she wanted to help students be more comfortable interacting with each other, having to rely on multiple technologies because the interface did not allow small groups of students to interact together, which was very cumbersome for Kara as the instructor, making the SVC even more "extremely demanding" (Cornelius, 2014) in terms of what she needed to pay attention to as the instructor than if she was able to focus within the confines of the videoconference interface.

From the responses from students and the instructor, the WebEx interface, therefore, in this class seemed to serve as barrier as opposed to a bridge to relationship building between students either because students did not take advantage of all of its affordances, like web cameras, or because it did not afford particular types of interaction, small group interaction, which students were more comfortable with and thus would have been conducive to them getting to know each other.

Interaction

Students' and the instructor's comments about how students chose to interact verbally or through the text-chat feature of WebEx often supported the conclusions I drew about discourse patterns in this course in my previous chapter, particularly those about verbal interaction, namely students' reluctance to contribute verbally, leading to long, awkward pauses, and the prevalence of instructor-student focused communication through IRF patterns. However, they did provide more insight into the use of textual communication within the course.

Verbal interaction. The students often noted the lack of verbal participation in the course, which was one of my main observations about verbal interaction in the class sessions I observed. James noted, "My classmates didn't really talk at all...There were a few who answered questions, but for the most part it was just like answering and talking to the professor." Without naming it specifically, James's response points to the instructor-focused IRF patterns I observed in these class sessions. Students primarily just responded to the instructor. Sometimes, however, even this interaction did not occur. Nick suggested: "sometimes the class is kind of slow because it's like she asks a question and then it's just kind of silent for a few seconds until she's like 'Alright let's just move on.'" Nick alludes here to instances of failed IRF patterns and awkward silences when students do not offer responses to the instructor's questions that I had noted in the class sessions I observed.

The instructor, Kara, reiterated these interaction patterns, claiming, "The video chats we had were not always productive, because they didn't want to speak up. The same way undergraduates don't want to speak up in a face-to-face class." Kara reminds us that the discourse patterns within this course might not be arising from the technology modality but instead from students', particularly first-year students', general comfort with verbal participation.

However, Alice did suggest that not being in the same room was an additional challenge for participation, saying participation via video is "harder than in a classroom where people raise their hand or can see, a conversation. You don't get that for WebEx." She went on to claim, "I

think it's harder to converse via any sort of internet based thing just in general because you're not seeing voices, you're not able to, you know, I don't know, I think conversing one-on-one in person is easier." Being able to see the other people in educational discourse seemed to her to be an important component for successful verbal conversation. Students' choice to not turn on their cameras, therefore, would have constrained this aspect even more. Alice noted that she wished WebEx had a feature "where people can raise their hands, and like click a button or whatever" to indicate their desire to speak. Of course WebEx does have this feature, but either this affordance was not perceived by Alice, or she was participating from a device like a phone or tablet which did not provide access this this affordance. Alice's comments suggest that the WebEx interface might have an impact on the discourse patterns present because students' either are not taking full advantage of its affordances (being able to see each other through the use of web cameras) or do not have full access to the affordances because of differences in the interface across devices. Whatever the cause, whether it is the reluctance of first-year students generally, the pedagogical approach of the instructor, or the affordances and constraints of the interface, the students and instructor from ENGL 110C supported my observation of stunted verbal contributions and aligned with previous examinations of discourse patterns in video writing courses (Whithaus & Neff, 2006; Steffen, 2017).

Text-chat Interaction. While student and instructor interviews may have confirmed my conclusions about limited verbal interactions in this class, their responses related to text-chat interaction revealed aspects of interaction norms that I was not able to see by just observing what was publically viewable in the WebEx interface. While the public chat was little used in the class sessions I observed, students in the class apparently used it frequently for private interaction. Kara provided the following overview of her view of how the text-chat feature was used in the course:

> The text-chat that is in WebEx they use primarily to talk to me and would only do so privately. You know I pointed it out multiple times, you know if you have a question, ask

> it. But even then they wouldn't. It got to be so that I would go in a check to make sure I hadn't made it so they could only respond to me. I'm like checking my settings and nope they can respond to everybody. Um and if anyone did type to just everyone, it was always if I was making sure that they could hear me. That's how I took attendance with saying "Can you hear me?" and if I wasn't getting a verbal response, they would type in the chat.

Thus, Kara saw the text-chat as primarily a way for students to have another way to interact with her.

However, while students did indicate they used the text-chat to ask their professor questions, they indicated they actually used it for communicating with their group members. Nick suggested he liked the text-chat feature of WebEx "Because it allows [students] to uh message other students and get feedback or info or whatever without having to like talk over the channel or whatever...And they might be like too shy to ask or something. So I'd say that." Nick notes that students sometimes preferred to communicate with each other through a text channel versus a verbal channel, suggesting that shyness might be part of this preference. Kara noticed this pattern too, which is why she employed Google Docs for group work:

> So we ended up doing where they could just chat in a Google Doc and comment and talk to each other that way, and they seemed to be very comfortable with that. They were, you know, students who were not talking at all in the large group were heavily participating when they got into the document.

Text-chat both within and outside the interface for both instructor-student interaction and student-to student interaction was therefore much more prevalent that what I was able to observe as an outsider of the class and was a key aspect of interaction patterns within this class.

Kara frequently worked outside of the WebEx interface to encourage interaction, which Alice discussed:

>She um definitely used the um format of WebEx where you have her and then you have the slides or whatever and then she also used other internet—Kahoot.[46] And we used other things to bring in conversation as much as she can without being in the classroom and seeing everyone raise their hand. We were able to use Kahoot to see how everybody else voted on a certain question, if that makes sense...So but um she used other internet based formats to um, to have everybody interact as best as they can considering so many of us were on a television screen.

Alice's comment provides a great encapsulation to understanding interaction within this course. The technology mediation of the course, which Alice interestingly characterizes as a "television screen," seems to have impacted how students felt comfortable interacting, often preferring text-based communication over verbal communication. I suggest that Alice's characterization of the technology as a *television screen* is interesting because a television screen is something you generally passively interact with—it is one-way, broadcast communication. This view of video instruction might also partially explain students' reluctance to use their cameras—they could see themselves as receivers of information as opposed to participants in learning. Alice's word choice of *television screen* might reflect a subconscious expectation of passivity, like that described by Whithaus and Neff (2006), on the part of students related to video instruction that is in tension with Kara's desire to "bring in conversation as much as she can," which leads her to rely on opportunities outside of the WebEx interface to encourage interaction.

ENGL 110C Discourse Analysis and Interview Data Synthesis

My discourse analysis of ENGL 110C sessions discussed in the previous chapter suggested that interaction within the course was dominated by IRF discourse, awkward silence, and little student-to-student interaction, which might suggest little collaboration and community building within this course. And while my interviews confirmed my observations about verbal discourse patterns, they also revealed the importance of the work and interaction occurring outside the whole-class communication channels within the WebEx interface. In fact,

---

[46] Kahoot is an internet based game and quiz software program which allows students to answer questions posed by an instructor through their computers or mobile devices in a synchronous session. See https://kahoot.com/welcomeback/

collaboration and community building often occurred outside of the videoconference interface, and the interface, either because affordances were not perceived or were not available, seemed to be more of a hindrance to community building than a support for it. The students I interviewed felt that they got to know classmates as acquaintances, suggesting it was harder to get to know classmates in this type of class than in a f2f course. However, because of Kara's willingness to experiment with different technologies and provide opportunities for students to work in groups and interact through text communication, she was able to "bring conversation in," just in a different way than we would see in a f2f class, and that was not necessary revealed by observing a set of class sessions on their own through the main course delivery interface.

ENGL 327W

I interviewed the instructor and three students from ENGL 327W. The instructor, Janice, had several years of experience with distance education having taught tele-broadcast courses at a satellite campus of the university with students joining from other studio classrooms when ODU used TELETECHNET technology. She also had experience teaching completely online videoconference courses like the section of ENGL 110C I observed. She had only recently had the experience of teaching an asynchronous online class. The three students I interviewed from this class, Deirdre, Kelly, and Sadie, all participated in the course from studio classrooms at satellite campus centers, so were physically distant from their instructor, but were not participating from their home or other personal designated space. Deirdre had taken an asynchronous online course before, but this was her first SVC. Kelly had taken a couple SVCs before, but in her previous experiences, the instructor was in the same studio classroom that she participated from. Sadie was concurrently registered for another SVC; these two were her first experience with these types of courses, and she admitted she had not realized she had signed up for these types of courses before the semester began.

Access and Autonomy

      Location. The students' choices to participate from studio classrooms at satellite campus centers were largely driven by access concerns related to their physical locations and schedules. Kelly suggested that she liked taking class at the satellite campus "because it's closer to home," and Deirdre noted she went to a satellite center near where she lived because, "I substitute teach almost full-time, and as a full-time student, there aren't a lot of classes offered on the main campus that allow me to do this." The satellite campuses offered these students an opportunity to take classes they wouldn't normally have access to if they were required to travel to the main campus.

      Now one might imagine that participating from home might have been even more convenient for these students; however, they suggested that the studio classrooms offered them something else that may have offset this convenience: an environment conducive to their learning. Sadie recounted an experience when she did sign-in from home instead of participating from the studio classroom that highlights this idea:

> I do like how it's convenient and I did experience the other day I took a nap and realized I wasn't going to make it to the higher education center so I just got on my computer and was able to login from home… [But] I noticed I didn't really talk as much. Maybe the fright of having my own screen on the big screen for everyone because when we're in the building, all our screens are on there, but like tiny little people.

Sadie suggests that while logging in from home was convenient, she found it more intimidating because when she participated from home, she and her environment were on display for her classmates in ways they were not when in the studio classroom with a camera capturing the entire room. Deirdre pointed to aspects of her home environment that would make it challenging for her learning: "I always went into the [satellite] center because I have a dog at the house and he tends to bark at things, and I didn't want the distraction." Like, James from ENGL 110C, Deirdre liked having separation between her personal space and her learning space, but in her case it resulted less from issues of motivation, and instead was more about the distractions in

her home environment. She went on to suggest, "The webconferencing took a little while to get used to...I felt like kind of detached from the classroom...But I still had a classroom." For Deirdre participating in class from a designated classroom space provided a distraction free space that was appropriate for her participation and learning within the course. The instructor Janice spoke about her past experiences with distracting environments when students participated from spaces other than designated classrooms:

> You know I had in some of my webconferencing classes some really bad experiences with students. I had a student who would join from work and she was a cashier at a Y and she would join from work and periodically she would accidently leave her mic unmuted, so we could hear her talking to people and working at like the kiosk or whatever it was. People have been driving and joining that way. You know obviously children, you know, dogs, just who knows where they are because you can hear wind blowing and all this noise and then you can't get their attention to tell them to mute their mic. And so that can totally just derail a class.

Janice's reminds us that distractions in individual environments do not just distract those in those environments in SVCs but have the potential to impact all members participating in the class. Her description is the perfect encapsulation of Kazmer's (2005) notion of the online classroom as a hybrid space in which the classroom becomes a complicated network of distinct physical locations, which not only impact individuals within those spaces but the entire class. Instructors as meeting hosts, do have the ability to mute participants, which could help alleviate this issue; however, Janice either did not know she had this ability or chose not to exert this power in her class.

Like the students in ENGL 110C, students participating at a distance in ENGL 327W had autonomy about where to participate in class from; however, students in this class also had the opportunity to participate from studio classrooms in various locations. Giving up the convenience of home was a reasonable sacrifice for some these students to participate in spaces with less distractions because they were designed for learning in ways their home or other personal environments were not.

Time. Time constraints and expectations were also relevant to the participants from this class. Like Alice from ENGL 110C, the times of SVCs were a consideration for Kelly, who noted, "The way my work schedule is, I can't do classes until I get off at 4. Sometimes some of the classes start earlier, and I can't get them because of work. I have to take what's available to me." Unlike Alice who would have preferred classes to be scheduled earlier in the day, Kelly's job dictated that she was only available for evening classes, so the timing of this particular class worked well for her schedule. Though as her comment above suggests, she is not always so lucky when looking for classes that she wants or needs to take. When we consider the cases of Alice and Kelly together we see one of the significant challenges in scheduling SVCs in ways that are accessible and inclusive. Online classes afford parents like Alice and those that work full-time like Kelly access to education in ways traditional education might not; however, their schedules are opposite in terms of when they are available or when it would be most convenient to participate in class. SVCs are by nature temporally bound in ways that asynchronous education is not, and trying to find the right time to accommodate students with diverse needs and schedules is difficult.

Additionally, some students may be resentful of the temporal constraints put on them within SVCs, which I've discussed anecdotally with other instructors who have taught SVCs, and which Janice explicitly described as being frequently part of her past experience teaching in this modality:

> I found the students first of all, many of them thought they were taking an asynchronous class, so then they were resentful that they had to be in this class where I required them to be on camera. And then half of them wouldn't even abide by that rule and they would be off camera and I would just try to call out to them and they wouldn't answer. Who knows what they were doing. And so it felt kind of like herding cats a little more. I mean I think people still had the same mindset that they would have if they were taking the class online, you know I'm independent, I'm doing it at my own pace, but yet it was a synchronous class. So it was like I had an expectation and they had an expectation and it really didn't align.

Interestingly, Janice's response has echoes of the ENGL 110C instructor, Kara's, discussion of the challenge of students' expectations that the course will be "already designed." Kara's comment suggested she ran up against a tension in students' expectations for how she as the instructor should teach from an asynchronous class, expecting all materials to be available for them to review on their own time. What Janice described is how students can also bring expectations about their own behaviors, assuming since they are taking an online class, they should have more autonomy over how they spent their time.

Technology. With students having the option to participate from a studio classroom with dedicated technology and technicians, many of the students were freed up from having to take responsibility for their technology. The students I spoke to from this class rarely noted issues or concerns with the technology they used for the class. Instead technology concerns generally focused on apprehension to how different technology presented them to the class, like with Sadie's comment above about being more nervous to speak when participating from home because that meant she was more visible to her classmates through her webcam. Deirdre touched on this issue as well, suggesting:

> I think also the fact that the last person to speak uh is—their face is—the camera stays on them until someone else speaks is a little bit—uh—it makes people maybe not want to speak...You know what I mean. The little small pictures are fine, but then when somebody speaks and then [the professor] would go into some type of lecture and there's one person, the last person who spoke, you can just see everything they're doing, especially if they're watching from home, you know like, you just see—you're like staring into their home for extended periods of time. And I think for some people that's a little bit difficult, makes you maybe not want to speak.

So for these students, technology considerations focused less on potential technology accessibility issues, but instead on the way the interface works and how it displayed them as individuals to the entire class, suggesting that the interface itself, not just what the technology can or cannot do or any potential technology issues influences their decisions of how or whether to participate in the class in certain ways.

While technology accessibility might not have been a paramount concern for the students I spoke with, it was for the instructor, Janice. Janice's discussion of her experience leading a course in this modality suggested that even with the technology burden being lifted off some of her students and having the aid of a technician in her studio classroom, she still struggled to balance technology concerns to promote access and inclusion of all students:

> And also trying to control for the students speaking in the class who may forget to push their mic, in which case, the people who were away can, you know, that can just break up the flow and they may totally disconnect at that point and not listen. So it's, it's complicated. It makes it difficult. In a sense it helps to hone your teaching persona, but at the same time it requires so much attention to these outside factors that you can't really get lost in the material.

In this case, Janice mentions that she must consider the technology in the studio classrooms, both the one she is present in and those she is not, as well as any technologies students participating from their own locations may choose to use. So in this hybrid model of SVC with students participating from various types of locations, some of the technology concerns are lifted because students participating from studio classrooms just have to show up and they will have access to technology that affords their participation in class. But because the course is still technologically mediated, primarily through the microphones which have to be manually turned on by pushing a button by the students who wish to speak in a studio classroom, the instructor must always be on guard for possible technology issues that are impeding full access for some students and balance helping individual students address these issues in ways that do not ignore or alienate the larger class by taking up too much class time.

The various locations also had an impact on the kinds of activities Janice could have students engage in and how she could collect the products of such activities. She explained:

> I like to have students do timed writing in class, um but then I've got students who are at a distance who don't have a laptop and they can't turn their writing into me. They can't, I mean I don't want to ask them to put it in an envelope to me and send it me. So it limits me in terms of some of things I could do if we were all together. So that's kind of a problem...And I still feel like I can't—the kind of informal writing I want students to do, I just don't feel like I can do it in a way that is equal for everyone. Because there's always

students who don't bring in their laptops, and composing on paper is much different than composing on a laptop. You know I'm not sure in terms of technology what I can require students to do.

Thus Janice also had to consider what technologies students who chose to participate in a studio classroom will have access to. These students are ostensibly released from the responsibility of having a particular technology like a laptop or mobile device to participate in the webconference because this technology is already present within the studio classroom. Yet if they do not have access to a personal computer or device through which to compose and submit writing, this will impact both how they can complete an activity within the class session and how they can submit that activity. Students present in the same space with her can easily turn in handwritten assignments, but students at a distance cannot. Students participating on their own device can complete the assignment on their device and submit it electronically, but students participating from a studio classroom who cannot or choose not to bring a laptop to class (which again, is not necessary for them to access the videoconference since that access is provided by the technology in the studio classroom) are then not able to easily or quickly share that assignment with the instructor if handwritten. Therefore we see that while the technology present in the studio classrooms provides access to the video portion of a SVC, it does not necessary provide access to all elements of the course.

Relationships and Presence

The students' and the instructor's comments about relationships with and sense of presence of others in the classroom generally coalesced around discussions related to instructor presence and those related to student presence.

Instructor Presence. The ability for synchronous communication with the instructor was a key benefit of this type of course for some students. Deirdre claimed:

Well, I prefer classes, I guess, if I'm going to pay for college, I guess I prefer to have an instructor speak to me and have participation that way, class participation that way. So the convenience of not having to travel to main campus and deal with tunnels and traffic was amazing while also being able to actively participate in class...And have an

> instructor you can see and I guess get to know, which in a traditional online class I don't really feel like you have an opportunity.

Like students from ENGL 110C, Deirdre identified feeling like she gets more of a sense of teaching presence in this type of class than an asynchronous class because her instructor speaks to her and she can see her, which makes her feel like she gets to know her better and has more opportunity for active participation.

Yet a key theme emerging in discussions of instructor presence in these interviews was the fact that students had unequal access to the instructor and thus difference senses of instructor presence. Janice described it this way:

> So yeah I think that [distance students], I think they somehow feel more disconnected in part because they feel they have unequal—you know there's unequal access to me. And so the students who are right in front of me have a very different experience than the student who is joining from home... Or the student who's joining from a location and is by herself knows that and feels that distance. And as a result, I think the community always feels fractured. You know you have these little, you know they talk about microclimates, you know, like there was the climate in the classroom that I had with those students, that was a particularly kind of rapport. And then I think I had a rapport with the students who were alone in a location, and then a different sort of feeling with the students at a distance.

Janice described how the hybrid structure of this course, with some students experiencing f2f instruction, some experiencing distance broadcast education, and some experiencing online education created these microclimates which did not provide students with a sense of equal access to the instructor and to instruction, therefore creating distinct levels of transactional distance.

The students echoed this sense of microclimates and unequal access when discussing their experiences. Kelly compared her experience in this SVC compared to her previous experience of being in the same physical location with the instructor of a SVC: "But the thing is the last two [classes], the instructor has been there. And I'm more, I have to be there with the instructor. I get more out of it." While she did not elaborate on what "more" she felt she got from her previous experiences of being in the same physical spaces with instructors teaching SVCs,

it is clear that she felt like her learning was impacted by the transactional distance she experienced from the instructor of ENGL 327W. Sadie's response of how the distance to her instructor impacted her might point to part of the reason for Kelly's sense that she lost something because of the distance: "I felt like I didn't get to have that one-on-one time with the teacher that I would like to. Like maybe if I'm a little too shy to ask a question, I'm able to just go up to the professor and ask the question. I would have to pass it over the intercom and maybe I won't be as comfortable that way, so I just don't." Because Sadie would have to use the "intercom" which is a public, verbal communication channel, she felt less comfortable asking the instructor for help and did not feel like she had access to one-on-one time. Sadie's reticence to seek clarification over the microphone could definitely have impacted her learning in the course.

Student Presence. Participants also noted their sense of presence of other students. Like her feelings about being able to see and hear her instructor, Deirdre felt like the video aspect of the course aided in her sense of presence from her classmates:

> Just hearing other people talk and… I guess you can, for me anyway, I think you can, it's a lot easier to read people's intentions or what they mean when you can hear inflection in their voice and facial expressions and stuff like that versus just reading what they've written on a discussion board or something.

For Deirdre, having access to non-verbal communication clues like tone and facial expression helped her better understand and get to know her peers. Kelly also noted enjoying getting to see her classmates: "It was nice to see all the other people interact. Other people from the internet [camera] coming in. You could see everybody together at once. Like a classroom." Her comment about the videos making it feel like a classroom is interesting because, as Cisco, the producer of WebEx, itself suggested in its promotional material, the videoconference captures the sense of a shared physical space or room, creating a "rich learning environment" ("Education WebEx, n.d.) that can create a simulacrum of a traditional classroom.

Interestingly though, while she liked the video interaction, Kelly actually pointed to textual communication as the way she best got to know some of her classmates. She told me

about the peer review process using the discussion board on Blackboard. When I asked if she

liked that aspect of the class she responded, "I did. You get to know more personal, close, more

personal stuff about a person that way." Thus while the videoconference provided an

environment she appreciated because of its similarities to a classroom as the location for her

learning, this environment was not necessarily helpful for her to get to know her classmates and

it was the asynchronous textual communication that provided this opportunity. Or perhaps it was

the small group nature of this interaction that was actually responsible for the development of

social presence among these students.

Deirdre expressed a wish that she had gotten to know her classmates better, specifically

by getting to know them in person:

> Well, when I said I felt a little detached, I wish I could have taken the class on the main
> campus but I think it's because I actually really enjoyed the class and I think I would
> have, uh, I don't know, maybe, I guess actually getting to meet the people that you meet
> on the screen every day.

Janice explained this strange phenomenon of getting to know people but not feeling like you

fully had because of the distance as similar to "online dating," suggesting "you achieve some

sort of intimacy that is normally something that we would belong with being in the same room

face-to-face, even if it's artificial and, so it's yeah, I don't know what you'd call that

interpersonally. It's just kind of a weird disconnect."

Sadie, though, did not feel like she got to know her classmates through the synchronous

video, suggesting, "I feel like the only people I really get to know were the ones sitting right next

to me." She went on to explain, "For both my classes, it's just one other person [in the room with

me]... So usually we try to say we're not going so that way we both won't go because it kind of

feels really empty—well I've been there by myself and it does feel empty by yourself, so." Sadie

points to shared physical presence as the factor which promoted relationship building with her

classmates, and also highlights the awkwardness of being in a studio classroom, a room

designed to accommodate groups, by yourself to participate in class. However, Sadie did

suggest she has had experience building relationships with classmates at a distance in a

previous class:

> With my other class we did group work and we stayed in the group the whole semester, so I was able to get to know my two other group members, one was from maybe Quantico, only through WebEx. And the other was down [on the main campus] while I was at [a satellite center], so I actually got to meet her when I was at school on campus so that was pretty cool.

Sadie's comment about her experience from her other class shows how students can get to

know each other across distances through group work. In this case they got to know each other

well enough to actually want to meet up in person. Sadie's comment about group work creating

a key opportunity for relationship building and community development also aligns with the

feelings from the ENGL 110C students and instructor, Kara.

Interaction

Verbal Interaction. Most of the discussion from the participants from this class

regarding interaction within this class, focused on verbal interaction patterns. In my discussion

of the class sessions of ENGL 327W that I observed in the last chapter, I noted that these

classes seemed to have fewer long, awkward pauses compared to both ENGL 110C and

ENGL307T. However, in my interviews with participants from ENGL 327W, the issue of long

silences similarly was raised. The instructor, Janice, noted that in teaching these types of

classes, "You have to, and I'm constantly trying to remind myself of this, you have to literally be

okay with awkward silences and things like that." She said of this particular course:

> Because I know in my 327 class that you watched there were a couple times that students did write their responses and they had really great things to say that would have been really insightful for us to talk about, but when I would ask people to speak up, no one would talk. And I always say to myself maybe I have to wait 3 or 4 beats longer than I would in a typical classroom. You know to give them time to think about responding and that's part of it. But they, unless I call on them, which feels mean to me, they won't speak up. But again that could just be the way that it is in a different medium so it just feels more obvious when they don't speak up.

Janice indicates that she has tried to give an extended wait time to encourage student

participation, but like what I observed in the sessions of ENGL 110C and ENGL307T, extended

wait times did not always lead to student responses, but instead became awkward silences that the instructor would then need to address. Janice suggests that she calls on students since this seems to be the only way to consistently get student participation, but she feels guilty about this strategy because she sees it as "mean."

However, the students I spoke to did not interpret her strategy of calling on students in the same way. Kelly saw this as the instructor's attempt to bring everyone into the discussion: "Well she would try to make everyone participate. She would call on everyone from everywhere. [The satellite centers], all the people on webcam. I guess she just called on everyone to give more interaction with the group of the class like that." Kelly recognized that by calling on students, Janice was encouraging more interaction, which Kelly thought was a good thing.

Other students offered some insight into why students, as Janice suggested, "won't speak up," namely fear of interrupting each other. Deirdre identified this issue as the main thing she did not like about taking a course this way: "And I don't like the feeling of interrupting other people when they're speaking and that's really the only way that you can speak in those classes, interrupt. I don't really like that." Sadie echoed this sentiment and offered some explanation of why this was an issue:

> One thing that I do notice is there's no raising hands or anything, so you do have to interrupt...if you want to say something so it's a little difficult when a lot of people want to say, speak their opinions at one time. You can't hear at all...So sometimes people will like they'll wait for someone else to talk but then they won't end up talking themselves or there'll just be a long, long time of silence waiting for someone to talk.

Sadie points to the fact that "there's no raising hands" so students do not know who else wants to speak. Now WebEx does in fact have a raise hand feature; however, the students in the studio classroom do not have access to this feature since they are not logged into WebEx with their own device but instead are viewing the videoconference through the studio classroom technology. Even if they did have access to this feature, however, the WebEx interface only displays the raised hand icons pushed by students to the instructor or host of the meeting, not to

all other participants. This creates a situation in which students are not sure who of their peers desires to speak, and for fear of speaking over anyone, often then choose not to speak. Deirdre suggested that this was not just a perceived concern but a situation that had played out due to issues with overlapping speech: "Because I think there were times where if two or more people tried to speak at the same time and then whoever went first, I feel like the others you know didn't sometimes didn't even speak at all after that." Like I saw in the class sessions I observed, when overlapping speech occurred, one speaker tended to win out and the other would simply fall away. This concern about overlapping speech and interruptions seemed to be a large factor, for these students in the studio classrooms at least, for any reticence to participate verbally in class without being explicitly called on.

Another aspect of verbal interaction discussed among some of these participants was the question of the direction of interaction generally, meaning was it between instructor and student or was there student-to-student interaction. In my discourse analysis of ENGL 327W I noticed a much higher percentage of peer-to-peer interaction with the presence of instructional conversation occurring in these class periods. Yet, participants did not feel like this was the norm. Sadie suggested, "I feel like most of the interaction is to the professor, student to the professor. Not really student to student." The instructor, Janice, explicitly discussed one of the exchanges I observed that did contain student-to-student interaction:

> There was a class period where, were you there for the class period with the student when she was talking about when she had her baby? Um yeah so the other student said something and she interrupted her and kind of took offense at what she said. That felt like an unusual moment to me. Um because typically the students will direct their answers to me and not to one another. So it's unusual, but again, in thinking about a face-to-face classroom, students tend to do the same thing, they'll direct their answers to you. Um but I think I can kind of infer that they feel even less likely to talk to one another just because for one they can't see each other.

Thus, Janice suggests that the student-to-student interaction necessary for instructional conversation was actually "unusual" within that class, meaning what I observed in the class session where students were giving feedback to each other was not typical of the discourse

patterns within that class, suggesting that IRF patterns may have been more typical than what I observed. Janice suggests, though, that even in f2f instruction, students typically direct their responses at the instructor; however, she does guess that this pattern might be even more prevalent in SVCs since students cannot always see each other. Janice's assessment of this interaction sheds light on my analysis of discourse in this class because it provides the context that the instructional conversation I observed was rather rare within the class. However, its presence suggests that this type of peer interaction can occur when the right set of circumstances occur.

Text-Chat Interaction. In my observation of ENGL 327W class sessions I noted very limited use of the text-chat feature. In her interview, the instructor, Janice, explained that she actually discourages the use of this feature in her SVCs. She offered a few reasons for this discouragement. For one, she pointed to challenges with the WebEx interface itself that made using this feature challenging:

> If there was some way for me to see everybody that didn't require me to click on the participants' thing, and you know it separates the chat out, so you can't look at people and chat at the same time. If there was a way to look at the screen and see everyone, and then when someone chatted, wanted to chat, which I don't even do, I don't even allow chat for that reason, then like their box would light up, like Hollywood Squares or something and then you could still be maintaining eye contact and talking to them, but you would be able to see the collective. I think even something like that would kind of help make it feel a little less fractured.

Janice notes that because the interface does not allow her to see both the participants' video feeds and the chat at the same time, it makes it difficult to use and to be able to monitor both, which was something the instructor of ENGL 307T, Bridgette, acknowledged within the class session I observed when trying to bring the textual participation into the conversation. Additionally, Janice suggests it is difficult to know if or when students use this feature because there is not a clear indication on the students' video feeds.

Yet she also offered a more pedagogical or philosophical reason why she did not encourage the use of the text-chat within her class:

> Um also I want to discourage students from using the chat instead of talking in class because I want, especially for the 327 folks, I'm trying to run it more like a seminar. And so I don't want—in a regular class students can't write a note and like send, like shove it to the professor and have the professor read it and say "oh" or "I can't say what's in this note, but I'll say what's in this one." It's just a weird kind of thing. It's disruptive. And so I think if they have a question or if they have something to say then they need to figure out how to raise it collectively. They shouldn't have that option unless they want to talk before or after class, same as the other students.

In this comment, we can see Janice's preference for verbal participation within this course. She wants to create a robust verbal, public channel which all students have access to. She seems particularly troubled by students' use of the private chat feature, particularly to communicate with the instructor, feeling it is disruptive, and not something that is available in a "regular class." Interestingly, she frames this as an equal accessibility issue, not wanting students at a distance to have access to her in ways that students in the same physical space as her do not, instead wanting to restrict private interaction to the periods before and after class or to have students use the public, verbal channel to ask questions or get clarifications. However, from the students' comments above about their sense of instructor presence, students at a distance did not feel comfortable with the available means for this type of interaction with the instructor and instead felt cut off from her. Perhaps the private text-chat could have mediated this issue. Of course the instructor would still need to contend with the disruption of this type of interaction, but perhaps with clear expectations of when and how private text-chat messages would be addressed, this feature could have opened up an important channel of communication between distance students and the instructor.

Students' comments regarding interruption and overlapping speech also suggested the value the public text-chat could have played within this course. Explaining why her thoughts on why some people would not contribute to the verbal discussion, Deirdre conjectured, "Because we would get into a discussion about whatever that person said and then and we would kind of move beyond the initial prompt or whatever, so sometimes I think that other people didn't, or

maybe they felt like what they had to add wouldn't add to the conversation." This phenomenon is not unique to SVCs. I know I have experienced both in the classroom and outside it in f2f conversations instances where I had something I wished to contribute, but the conversation moved on too quickly and my contribution no longer felt relevant. However, OWI Principle 3 states, "Appropriate composition teaching/learning strategies should be developed for the unique features of the online instructional environment." One of the key affordances of the WebEx interface is that it allows for multi-channel communication not available in f2f interaction. The public text-chat has the potential to be a space for students to add thoughts and contributions while someone holds the floor in the verbal channel, creating a rich tapestry of student participation. However, because of issues both with the use of this feature within the current interface configuration and the instructor's challenge with following multiple channels simultaneously, this affordance was underutilized within this course.

The students I interviewed did not talk about the text-chat at all, and I do not think this is a coincidence. Not only did the instructor not encourage the use of this feature, I do not believe these students participating from studio classrooms even had access to it. If students are participating through the classroom technology, they do not have access to the chat, neither to participate, nor not to even see it, because the chat is not displayed on the main screen in the studio classroom. Thus these students are cut off from accessing a key way to communicate with the professor and their other classmates not in the same physical space as themselves beyond the public, verbal channel, which as the students comments above demonstrate, students might be intimidated to use because of being singled out over the camera and microphone but also because of their concern about interrupting each other. The hybrid structure of the course with students accessing the course in different ways means that students do not have equal access to all aspects of the course that could impact their communication with other students and the instructor, thereby creating, as the instructor, Janice, called them, "fractured" communities, which could ultimately impact students' learning.

ENGL 327W Discourse Analysis and Interview Data Synthesis

The verbal discourse patterns I observed from this class, which were discussed in the previous chapter, suggested that there was much more student-to-student interaction and collaborative dialogue through the verbal channel in this course versus the other two that I examined. In the last chapter I had suggested that the instructor's strategy of calling on particular students, as opposed to creating *Next Speaker Ambiguous* gaps, encouraged more students to speak. Interview data confirmed this conclusion, and though the instructor, Janice, worried about this practice, considering it "mean," students' comments revealing fear about interrupting classmates demonstrates the value of this strategy in helping navigate turn-taking within this modality.

The interviews also revealed, however, that the greater number of verbal participants and the presence of instructional conversation that did occur did not necessarily lead to a greater sense of community among students within the course. The distinct physical locations which led to different experiences of access to the instructor, course materials, and classmates for students participating either in the same location as the instructor, in a satellite studio classroom, or through an individual WebEx login, created "fractured communities" which left some students feeling disconnected from their instructor or classmates. Additionally, the decision of Janice to eschew the text-chat feature of WebEx and the inability of students participating from studio classrooms to even access this feature if they wanted, increased transactional distance since it limited the form dialogue could take—public, verbal channel communication—which some students felt less comfortable engaging in.

<div align="center">

ENGL 307T

</div>

I interviewed the instructor and two students from ENGL 307T. The instructor, Bridgette, had extensive experience teaching both SVCs and asynchronous online courses, had done research comparing these modalities, and had experienced taking courses in both of these modalities herself as a graduate student. Bridgette taught in a studio classroom from one of the

institution's satellite centers, not on the main campus. The two students I interviewed, MD and

Sailor, both has experience taking asynchronous online classes before and this was their first

experience with an SVC. On the weeks when the class had lecture sessions through WebEx,

MD participated from a satellite center, though not the same one that Bridgette was teaching

from. On the discussion class sessions mediated through Adobe Connect, she participated from

home. Sailor participated from home for both the WebEx and Adobe Connect class sessions.

Access and Autonomy

Location and Time. Like the students and instructors from ENGL 110C and ENGL

327W, the instructor and students identified locational freedom as a key aspect of their

experience teaching or taking an SVC, and also touched on issues of temporal autonomy,

though to a much lesser extent than was noted from participants from ENGL 110C and ENGL

327W. The instructor, Bridgette, noted both the convenience and the importance of her ability to

teach from other places besides the main campus: "I live [at a distance from main campus], and

a couple years ago I realized I could broadcast from [a satellite] center [near me], and that's

great because it helps support the site. You don't want the sites to shut down." Bridgette points

to teaching from a satellite center as both a personal convenience, which several of the

students from ENGL 327W had done, but also as a way to make it possible for students like

them to have access to these centers. By teaching there, she is trying to keep the center open

and operational. She also suggested that she likes teaching SVCs from a studio classroom

because "it's just nice to be in the classroom," unlike her experience teaching asynchronous

courses in which all her teaching activity occurs from home. Her comment suggests that like

some students who identified preferring a distinct learning space from their home, either to

maintain separation between school and their personal life (like James from ENGL 110C) or to

avoid the distractions of home (like Deirdre from ENGL 327W), instructors might also appreciate

a distinct teaching space.

MD suggested that an important benefit of online education for her was locational as well as temporal freedom: "I like that you don't have to commute to a campus. Um that you can work on it on your own time and that if you're working or busy you can work on it on your own time." For this course she did not have that same level of autonomy she normally enjoyed in asynchronous classes, having to travel to a satellite center every other week, and having to work during the prescribed course meeting time. However, she did not find this decrease in autonomy to be an issue and was appreciative of the every other week format between lecture and discussion sessions, claiming "the biggest thing [I liked] was not having to commute every week." She also pointed to an additional benefit of this format for her: "Ultimately once I become a programmer I'd like to work remotely. So I, so this was a good introduction to that. Um conferencing as opposed to having to go to a location." She felt the webconferences over Adobe Connect that she participated in from home were giving her experience she could draw on to be successful in working remotely in the future. She saw her distance learning experiences as good preparation for distance employment.

Sailor, who participated from home for all class sessions, identified locational freedom as one of his favorite features of the course format, suggesting, "I didn't have to be home or I didn't have to be necessarily in a particular location in order to participate in what I needed to do." However, when discussing his experience with online education more fully, it became clear that he did experience more locational constraints in this format compared to his previous experiences. He noted:

> Yeah when I first started going to class um back to school I, I would do it like on breaks. I worked for a preschool so I would sit there and do like, I'd have a two hour break between 'cause the kids go to nap and sometimes I didn't work the nap so I would sit and do homework.

Yet for ENGL 307T he explained that "the majority of my coursework I did here at my house." Because of the independent nature of most asynchronous courses, Sailor could complete school work in down times at his work. However, the videoconference aspect of this particular

course, both because of its audio-visual components and its temporal expectations, constricted when and where Sailor could do course work. However, like MD, Sailor did not take issue with the constraint, viewing the added sense of presence, which I'll discuss in a later section, a fair trade off.

Technology. Discussions related to technology and access with these participants brought up similar issues as the students and instructors from the other classes discussed above. For instance, like Alice from ENGL 110C, who had identified bandwidth issues when using WebEx that made it difficult to use other programs on her computer, MD noted a similar issue when using Adobe Connect for the discussion sessions:

> I don't know if it's a problem with my computer or what but sometimes Adobe, what is it, the meeting program. Um, that was kind of laggy on my computer. Sometimes it would take a little bit longer and I would have to restart my computer during the session, which was frustrating.

The instructor, Bridgette, also noted that when students participate from own chosen location and are responsible for their own technology:

> It increases the likelihood of issues, technical issues like microphones not being muted properly, or suddenly there's a loud noise or sound coming in when someone tries to participate. It can be really dependent on their technology, too, for them to participate.

Sailor's experience with technology for the course supported Bridgette's claim. Like the instructor from ENGL 110C, Kara, Sailor often relied on multiple technologies to fully engage with the course, noting, "sometimes I would log in on my desktop and my tablet uh to do a class, I mean if it was an unsupported document." Sailor's decision to use multiple devices was further illuminated when he compared his experience using the mobile and desktop versions of WebEx:

> The thing I liked about the mobile version over the desktop version was that the mobile version offered automatically, when you logged into the meeting, it mutes your mic and asks if you want to share your screen and stuff and like the little bit I had to go through when I first came in...On the desktop, when you run the application, it immediate—your mic's hot and your video is hot and a lot of time that interfered with the class.

Sailor liked the control over when he was heard and seen through the mobile version of WebEx compared to the desktop version and felt this autonomy could help eliminate distractions in the

class when people log into class. However, he sometimes would also use his desktop for class if he needed to access a document that was not supported through his tablet. Sailor was lucky to have access to both of these technologies to fully engage in class in ways he felt comfortable with; not all students will be this lucky.

Some other issues raised regarding technology and access focused on issues ranging from familiarity with certain platforms to issues of censorship power. Speaking of the former issue, MD suggested that using a technology students were more familiar with could make the course more effective:

> I think Adobe Connect is more like school use and not really used in the off time...So people weren't as well versed with it. I think that even it was a Skype--Skype call in where everyone was skyping I think that would be a little better. Yeah. 'Cause more people are familiar with it and it doesn't lag as much. Um I think that would be a little bit easier honestly.

While MD's suggestion that Skype wouldn't lag as much as Adobe Connect is likely untrue and this perception is likely the result of her personal use of Skype with a much smaller group of people (if you remember, ENGL 307 had 37 students registered in it, meaning that many people were logged into the conference meeting at the same time)[47], her suggestion that using a technology students are more familiar with would make the experience easier for students is worth considering. As I detailed in Chapter 3, WebEx has many affordances and features; however all these affordance can also make it more challenging for students to learn and use. Institutions need to consider balancing choosing a platform with rich affordances with using programs which may be simpler but students have more familiarity with.

The instructor, Bridgette, also drew attention to the role the technicians who work in the satellite centers and in the Gornto Teletechnet Building play in technology access. Obviously these technicians support the technology within the studio classrooms, but Bridgette suggests

---

[47] In fact, Skype can only accommodate 25 participants so it would not have been able to be used for ENGL 307T because the number of students registered exceeded this minimum ("Group calls, n.d.).

they can play an even larger role in relation to access. She said the technician assigned to a class is "almost like another instructor, another person, a gatekeeper for people to go through." To illustrate her point, she related a memorable experience she had in a previous class:

> And that's been an experience for me more than once where technicians muted a lecture when someone was saying something that they thought might be offensive. That happened to me once…. So a student was saying something about learning English and how people should have to learn English and the technician muted what they were saying. And I didn't realize what had happened until after class when I asked the technician was that a hiccup? So there is, there's that level of the discussion isn't—it's being heard by this third party that has different responsibilities to different people, you know, like they're not concerned with free speech as much as maybe I would be as the professor. They are more concerned with the fact they're broadcasting live content that has to meet certain guidelines, FCC guidelines or whatever.

None of the instructors I spoke to discussed instances where they muted students, even in the face of microphones left on and noise distractions. Though WebEx offers instructors this power, it is not a power they utilized. However, as Bridgette's comments show, censorship can be part of the SVC experience when it is monitored by someone with concerns other than just the pedagogical. When SVCs are recorded, there is a literal record of what occurred during the session, which from an accessibility stand point is generally positive; if students were not able to attend the session, they can view it later. However, Bridgette shows that those meant to mediate the technology may also be making judgement calls about what should be recorded and available as part of the recording. While I am not sure the technicians should have this power, since it could infringe not only on students but also the instructor's autonomy to run the class the way they would like to, it is a reality that at the very least both students and instructors need to be aware of if technicians do have this authority[48]. This discussion shows the

---

[48] I did not have access to the specific parameters or guidelines technicians at ODU use to monitor and censor communication in synchronous recorded classes, so I cannot comment significantly on their role within the classroom or whether these guidelines have been established by the University's lawyers based on legal parameters or if they are internally determined within IT and the Center for Learning and Teaching. This particular issue was outside the scope of my project, so I did not pursue it further; however, an examination of the role of support technicians in SVCs and their goals and objectives compared with instructors would be a fascinating future project.

importance of technology orientation for both students and instructors of SVCs to fully understand not only how the technology works but also how or why their access might be constrained by the university.

Relationships and Presence

Like the interviews from the previous classes, discussions of presence and relationships generally focused on either a sense of the instructor's presence or the sense of presence of students.

Instructor Presence. Bridgette suggested that she feels the main benefit of SVCs is an increased sense of instructor presence for students: "I found that students still really wanted that sense of a face-to-face with the teacher... And a sense of the classroom." Yet while this may be true, just like Kelly and Sadie from ENGL 327W described, students still felt a larger sense of transactional distance from the instructor which impacted their communication with her. MD elaborated on this idea:

> I did kind of miss having the ability to ask the professor questions. Um with the hot mic, I was a little too embarrassed to speak up. And I think I kind of suffered a little bit in that regard, because I'm familiar with HTML but I'm not well versed in it. And I think it would have been nice to uh ask her questions periodically if I had them, if they came about, you know?...And I would email her with questions, but I was too afraid to speak up during the lectures.

The technology mediation of communication, particularly the requirement to speak through the "hot mic", made MD feel less comfortable and able to initiate synchronous communication with her instructor. MD's statement supports Steffen's (2017) conclusion regarding participation in SVCs that "[b]oth the microphone and the camera are eliciting something akin to stage fright for some students, discouraging them from participating even when they want to" (p. 145). Thus, while synchronous video might help students see their instructor as a real person and give a sense of the classroom, it does not necessarily provide them greater access to dialogue with their instructor if they feel intimidated by the technology and distance mediating channels of communication.

Student Presence. Like the students from ENGL 327W interviewed, MD and Sailor felt that they had a greater sense of the presence from their classmates and got to know them better in this SVC compared to their experience in asynchronous courses. When asked if she felt like she got to know her classmates in this type of online class better than her previous experiences, MD said, "Definitely." However, she also singled out "the two in my class I met I knew pretty, pretty well." Here she pointed out the fact that the students she actually felt like she got to know best were the students physically present with her in the same studio classroom, echoing the assessment from Sadie from ENGL 327W that she only really felt like she got to know the students in classroom with her. These responses suggest that for students participating from studio classrooms, the "microclimates" that the instructor from ENGL 327W, Janice, articulated have a great impact on relationship building not just between instructor and students but also between students in these classes.

Sailor only participated from home and felt like the visual element of SVCs impacted his ability to get to know his classmates:

> Yeah sometimes it's hard to, you know—you know you see the faces, I mean names on Blackboard and stuff but you don't interact with people really other than just chat dialogue and uh writing back and forth. Whereas this was like you actually kinda got a sense of who was who and people's thoughts and like especially in our little group that we had.

Sailor's comment ends by discussing a key factor relating to student relationship building that came up in interviews from the other two classes as well: the importance of small groups. The instructor Bridgette discussed that she specifically designs her class around the belief of the benefits of small group discussion. She suggested that she built her class structure, which has students meeting in groups every other week to complete activities related to course concepts, "to help give them a learning community, a smaller group of people to tackle this together." She claimed, "it's better to have them just discuss it as a group and that reminds them they're a small inquiry community. To focus on something and feel less overwhelmed by all the

responses." This strategy might be especially important for a large class like ENGL 307T where it makes sense that contributions from many in the class could be overwhelming. Sailor exemplified this idea when discussing what the first few minutes of the class sessions on Adobe Connect were like before they went into breakout groups:

> And then when it came to Adobe it was like full on Battle Royale….You'd get in there and there's like 50 people logged in, 'cause it wasn't on campus it was—you know, you could do it anywhere. So for everybody to be in Adobe at that time it was—you know everybody was asking questions and throwing things out there.

Having students working in small groups gave them a more manageable space to participate, interact and get to know each other. Bridgette pointed to her commitment to small group pedagogy as a driving factor for not only the broad structure of the course—lecture sessions one week and then discussion sessions the next—but also at the root for her decision to use two different technologies to accommodate this structure, claiming, "I just don't feel that WebEx can [accommodate group work] in the same space." She went on to suggest of the other technology she used for course delivery:

> But what I like about Adobe Connect is that I can put them in groups and then I can move around the groups and participate in their conversations without being creepy treehouse vibe[49] where I'm just hanging out. You know the one. So I don't want to be in their full conversation but I have access to their conversation after the fact and I can move around, when they raise their hand I can answer questions and be there in a second and I can pop in and read if there's any confusion or misinformation being spread, I can circumvent that.

What Bridgette describes, being able to do through breakout groups in Adobe Connect, is what Kara from ENGL 110C tried to accomplish using Google hangouts, though by using Adobe Connect, Bridgette did not have to use multiple devices to check in on the various groups. For both instructors, though, they had to work outside out of the primary technology for the course, WebEx, in order to enact their pedagogy.

---

[49] "Creepy treehouse" as a concept describes instructors' use of technology platforms, particularly social media, in which faculty invite students to join their personal network or seek to gain entry into spaces students view as "private online spaces" (Young, 2008), thereby sharing digital spaces in ways that make students feel uncomfortable.

Bridgette's small group pedagogy not only seems to make sense in light of the structure and number of students within this class, but also aligns with what I've seen across all three classes, namely group work supporting student relationship building. However, MD's discussion of her experience with her group reminds us that relationship building will not occur in *all* groups. In discussing her experience with her group, MD claimed, "Like I said, they were a little bit older and like this one woman, [Martha[50]] I think her name was, she was emailing me asking for help but I didn't really get to know her, I just kind of troubleshooted things for her." Towards the end of the semester, which is when this interview took place, MD is not even sure of the name of one of her group members, and points to age difference as a barrier to building a relationship with the other students in her group. Thus, while the interview data collected generally points to the value of group work in establishing students' sense of presence with each other and relationship building in SVCs, it is important to remember that factors like age, background, and interests may challenge the cohesion of some groups, thereby diminishing their value for those particular students, even if generally group work does increase students' sense of each other's presence and help them get to know some of their classmates better.

Bridgette considered her own sense of student presence a main factor in her preference for synchronous as opposed to asynchronous teaching: "I do like to teach it I think more synchronously because I feel more connected to the students that way." Yet, like Kara, the instructor of ENGL 110C, suggested, Bridgette felt like it was harder to know whether students' literal presence in the videoconference meant that they were engaged since while she could consistently see her own video feed, she could not see the video feeds of all of her students:

> And see when you're in a regular classroom you can tell when people are starting to get bored with the lecture. It might be time to switch things up. It's hard to do that when you don't see their faces. You just see yourself and you're smiling and you're like this is going really well. My one student of me is having a great time. So it's hard to read obviously when you can't see their faces. You have to know from experience when it's time to shift gears.

---

[50] Name has been changed to a pseudonym.

Because you can never see the video feeds of all participants through WebEx, especially for a class of 37 students, instructors do not have visual indicators of students' (seeming) cognitive presence with course material during synchronous class sessions, especially if they do not participate. This disconnect is another reason Bridgette is an advocate of group work. She suggested, "You'd be surprised how you can just move them into a small group and they are typing. Whereas before you thought maybe they weren't present." This was the same phenomenon that Kara noticed in her class; students were more likely to participate and engage in small groups versus the whole-class conference, and more comfortable participating through text communication instead of verbal communication.

Interaction

      Verbal Interaction. Besides students' reticence to speak over the "hot mic" discussed above, another aspect of verbal interaction interviewees discussed was that most verbal contributions from students came from a single student. MD noted, "One person asked questions, but he was like in [another location.] Like we would see him on TV asking questions. The three people in my class, we never asked questions. We just would be lost and ask each other." Echoing comments about her own reticence to speak up and interact verbally on WebEx, MD suggested that this was the case for her peers as well. Sailor similarly discussed the minimal participation within WebEx sessions: "most contributions came—one guy he talked a lot like during the WebEx one, he would always ask questions. I mean sometimes, I don't know, it seemed like he would ask the question of something that she had just said. But uh the WebEx the participation the lecture was a lot lower." He went on to explain that there was not a clear sense of what the expectations of participation within this space was for this class, which could have also contributed to the lack of diversity of speakers. He suggested:

      I mean I don't know what her grading policy on like our participation was going to be for
      307. I guess I didn't really—I was—in my other class it was easy to go to Blackboard and

you participate, so uh I'll be interested to see if there—what the participation was for 307.

While students like MD may have lamented not feeling comfortable enough to ask questions over the verbal channel during the conference, it came from her own desire for clarification from the instructor, not out of a sense that there was an expectation for verbal participation. This contrasts with ENGL 327W in which the instructor, Janice, both through her limitation on the use of chat and through practices such as calling on students made it clear that students were expected to contribute verbally to class discussions.

Bridgette also discussed the issue of interruption that was brought up in the ENGL 327W data, and students' preference for typing versus verbal contributions like from the ENGL 110C data:

> Students will buzz in, I still use the phrase buzz in, but they'll buzz in at the same time and interrupt each other, and you waste a lot of time with apologies and "you go first," "no you go first." And then nobody wants to speak at all, so you have that added layer of discomfort. Students are afraid they're going to interrupt. They'd rather type their responses in.

Neither of the students from ENGL 307T brought up those concerns. However, with such a small sample size of 2 students from a class of 37, it is difficult to know if this was not a feature of this particular section as opposed to Bridgette's experiences in her other classes, or if this just was not something these particular students were attuned to.

Text-Chat Interaction. While there may not have been a robust verbal exchange in ENGL 307T, text-chat communication was important, both in the small group work like was discussed above, but also during the lecture sessions. Sailor, after discussing the lower participation in WebEx, noted, "But we still had the chat dialogue," suggesting this was the more utilized channel during these sessions. Bridgette offered her own assessment of these chat dialogues, specifically positioning them as conversational backchannel communication:

> I think backchannel is a good description because they do ask questions and if I'm not answering, which 90% of the time I'm not because I don't know that it's being—I'm not—

I try to remember to look, but you get carried away. Especially when you've got those three or four students who are really engaged in the verbal discussions so they don't give you a lot of opportunities to check the text discussion. So the text discussion carries on or others will answer the question or pose additional questions. It's always a conversation going on back there. They'll give examples and a lot of times they'll um just come in and say hi, whereas you don't usually get that—people don't sit down in Gornto and turn on their mic and say hi [professor], you know? But you see it in the WebEx. They'll type in "Hi [professor]," "Good evening," that sort of stuff. So they feel a little bit more comfortable or cordial when they're doing the text instead of the speaking.

Thus we can see this backchannel offering both an affective and cognitive function for the students participating. They can, as Bridgette called it, be "cordial" with each other through greetings and sign offs, but they can also ask questions and offer examples and answers to each other—the definition of collaborative, social learning. The text-chat becomes the location of underlife activity (Brook, 1987) which Guglielmo (2005) had lamented was lost when students did not share physical proximity. The text-chat from ENGL 307T suggests this underlife communication can occur in online spaces like this.

However, not everyone has access to this backchannel site of underlife communication. Like the students in the studio classroom interviewed from ENGL 327W, MD, who participated from a studio classroom did not allude to the text-chat within WebEx at all because she did not have access to it. Sailor, who did have access, noted that this was a space in which only those not in a campus classroom participated within: "I don't know how it worked for the people on campus but uh I assume it was just for the people um who were WebExing, not for the people who were on campus."

Bridgette recognized this inequity and had tried to solve it in the past by bringing in additional technologies, but has found additional problems:

I've tried opening Adobe Connect during class and that gets those folks in as well, but then it presents a problem for WebExers because now they have two conversations. You have to be in WebEx for the WebExers but then I'm saying "oh get into Adobe Connect, too." They don't want to type everything twice. So that's more likely to cause problems for WebExers. Whereas the people at the sites find that there's an issue because they don't want to have to bring a laptop to class. You know they signed up for

this class to watch it on TV, they didn't sign up to bring a laptop to class. They may not own one. So I can't require more technology then what was required of them when signing up for the class.

Like Janice, the instructor from ENGL 327W, Bridgette struggles with what technology she can ask students to provide who are participating from a studio classroom that ostensibly negates their need to bring their own device. She also has to consider how demanding it can be to ask students who are using WebEx through their own device to keep track of another technology to connect with the students in the studio classrooms. Essentially, Bridgette has not found a way to bring all students into text-chat conversations equally.

She also struggles to include herself meaningfully into the text-chat conversations that are happening among some students, and a lot of this has to do with the interface of WebEx itself. Within one of the sessions I observed and discussed in the last chapter, Bridgette explicitly discussed this issue with her students, noting, "Since [the text-chat is] over on the side, I always miss it." She elaborated on this idea during her interview pointing to the lack of noise cues along with the placement of the chat window influencing her engagement with it:

> Now it's possible if they're on WebEx, they can type in their comments. And years ago we used to get a sound effect when somebody typed in something. We'd get this little bell that would—we would know to look over and answer the question, but now WebEx doesn't have that feature so I won't notice that the WebExers are typing and then at break I'll check and they're having this whole backchannel conversation which is really good, but I'm just not a part of it, and I feel bad for that.

As an instructor who has taught SVCs for a long time, Bridgette has experience with other interfaces used for this type of course and laments the loss of a feature that helped her remember to engage with the chat. While she is speaking specifically about an auditory cue, it is very similar to Janice's desire for visual cue like "Hollywood squares" light up boxes around participants who used the chat so you knew who was contributing. Both instructors suggest that the interface does not allow for easy integration of this feature within the main discourse of the class session. For Janice in ENGL 327W, this challenge results in the text-chat being eschewed

in the course. In contrast, within Bridgette's 307T class, it appears to develop into a student-led, robust space. Some might feel that having this space be student led is good, and that its backchannel position allows for greater student autonomy and affective discourse within that space. I agree with this view somewhat; yet, I also feel that there could be real benefits to an integration of the verbal and textual communication of the course. If the text-chat could be better integrated into the main discussion of the class, the learning happening in that space could be engaged with more fully.

ENGL 307T Discourse Analysis and Interview Data Synthesis

In my discussion of the discourse patterns from this class in the previous chapter I noted the prevalence of IRF discourse, long silences, and participation from a limited number of students, but I also suggested that these patterns might rise from the structure of the course and the designation of the class periods I observed as "lecture" classes. Sailor's reflection on the lower participation in WebEx meetings and his uncertainty about the expectation for participation in this space supported this conclusion. However, MD's acknowledgement of her fear of speaking over the "hot mic" suggests that the modality may also have played a role in the discourse patterns observed from this class. Thus, it appears to be a combination of course structure, pedagogy and expectations, coupled with students' feelings about communication through the technology of the course that can explain how and why students choose to or to not participate verbally.

Interviews also confirmed my conclusions about the use of the text-chat. Sailor noted the use of this communication channel by students accessing the course through their own devices, and the instructor, Bridgette, confirmed its use as a student-initiated space for affective communication, providing answers to classmate's questions, and resource sharing. She also noted her own separation from this communication channel, resulting primarily from the interface design which made it difficult for her to keep track of this conversation while also delivering the lecture or engaging with students verbally. The interviews also revealed that

students had unequal access to this communication channel, however, with only online students like Sailor having access, but not students in studio classrooms like MD. Bridgette recognized this inequity and has tried to find solutions, but has not been able to find a way that is equitable and not too demanding, either in the sense of asking students to monitor too many technologies at once or asking students to provide their own personal devices that they may not have access to or not wish to be responsible for providing. The discussion of the lack of equal access to this feature of the course highlights the main challenge of a hybridly structured course like this (and ENGL 327W) of creating an equally inclusive class for students who are accessing and experiencing the course in very different ways.

Synthesis and Discussion

In analyzing themes emerging from interview data from these three classes, I was attempting to answer the questions:

- How do undergraduate students want to and how do their instructors want them to participate and interact in synchronous writing classes, and how do students and instructors feel the WebEx technology supported or hindered these goals?
- How do the choices students make about how they participate and interact in WebEx classes affect their sense of collaboration and community within the course?

The answers to these questions seem to be intertwined. Students generally seemed to prefer text communication for participation and interaction over verbal participation, often because of anxieties related to speaking over the microphone or appearing on camera or concern over interrupting other speakers. Despite features of WebEx which do allow students to indicate their interest in speaking through the Raise Hand Button, this feature was largely not used, either because participants did not realize it was available or because they did not have access to it either because of the device they were participating from or because they were participating from a studio classroom. Kara and Bridgette, the instructors of ENGL 110C and 327W respectively, recognized students' preference for text communication and provided avenues, particularly through the use of group work, for students to use this communication channel.

Janice, the instructor of ENGL 327W, in contrast, preferred oral communication and centered it as the primary way that students would interact with her and with each other. Janice's was able to engage students in primarily verbal communication because she set clear expectations that this was how students were required to interact. By calling on students to speak, she not only compelled students to use this channel, but also mitigated a key concern that some indicated with why they might be reticent to use this channel: fear of interrupting each other.

I would argue that both of these strategies, creating opportunities for more textual communication, or more consciously orchestrating verbal communication, can be effective strategies for SVCs; the use of one strategy over another will depend on the students—first year students may be more resistant to verbally participating than upperclassmen, for example—the topic of the session, and the preferences of the instructor. The challenge for Kara and Bridgette was that WebEx did not readily support their strategy of having students work in groups and allow group-based textual communication. This is problematic because group work seemed to be a key feature of these courses that helped students build relationships together and begin to establish a sense of community through developing social presence with some of their classmates. The WebEx interface also was part of the reason Janice eschewed the use of the text-chat in favor of verbal communication. However, this discouragement can challenge students who do not feel comfortable using the verbal channel to communicate with the professor, thereby increasing transactional distance because an opportunity for dialogue is being cut off. This sense of transactional distance was prevalent among the students I spoke with who participated from studio classrooms, both from ENGL 327W and from ENGL 307T. Thus, while they may have been granted access to technology to participate in the course in a distinct learning space they could inhabit, not having access to a text channel of communication within these spaces led to a sense of more transactional distance between themselves and the instructor and other students.

In considering students' and instructors' experiences in SVCs, we see that Mick and Middlebrook's (2015) claim that synchronous online class lead to greater "feelings of intimacy and real-time engagement" (p. 131) is actually more complicated than their initial comparison between asynchronous and synchronous modalities would appear. While many participants did suggest that synchronous video increased the sense of presence of the instructor and classmates, anxieties related to communicating over the verbal channel; expectations brought from f2f instruction, broadcast education, and asynchronous online classes; and constraints within the WebEx interface itself or in how it was made available to students participating in studio classrooms made dialogue difficult in these three SVCs, which Moore's (1993) theory posited would lead to an increased sense of transactional distance. When students have unequal access to dialogue with the instructor or to their fellow students, as was the case with the two classes delivered in a hybrid structure (ENGL 327W and ENGL 307T), this transactional distance seems to be increased even more so, likely due to the fact that these students recognize their unequal access. The instructors recognized this inequity, but were not able to overcome the constraints of the technology used for the course to address it.

Summary

This chapter provided an analysis of interview data from students and instructors from three undergraduate writing SVCs to answer my second two research questions:

- How do undergraduate students want to and how do their instructors want them to participate and interact in synchronous writing classes, and how do students and instructors feel the WebEx technology supported or hindered these goals?
- How do the choices students make about how they participate and interact in WebEx classes affect their sense of collaboration and community within the course?

For each of the three classes I discussed participants' responses around the three themes of access and autonomy, relationships and presence, and interaction. Within these discussions I presented when participants' responses confirmed my own conclusions from my discourse analysis of class sessions, like the minimal verbal interaction taking place within ENGL 110C

and ENGL 307T. I also presented responses from students and instructors that helped explain and contextualize these patterns, namely learning about students' concern over interrupting each other or anxiety about participating over the microphone and camera.

I also discussed instances where participant responses challenged my own conclusions or offered insights into aspects of the class that I did not see within the boundaries of my role as observer of the public record within the WebEx interface. For example, I was not privy to the textual communication occurring privately within the WebEx interface in ENGL 110C, nor the textual communication occurring outside of the interface within that class. And while my assessment of the limited use of the text-chat within ENGL 327W was accurate, I learned that some of the verbal patterns I observed relating to instructional conversation and student-to-student directed interaction were actually rare occurrences as opposed to the norm of interaction within that class. I was also able to hear differing perspectives on the ENGL 327W instructor's strategy of calling on students directly, seeing that while the instructor worried that the strategy was "mean," it was seen as an effective strategy by students, and was likely a contributing factor to why verbal interaction was more prevalent in this class that the other two.

I then presented a synthesis of the main conclusions drawn from examining the three courses together, including that students generally seem to prefer textual communication and some instructors, Kara and Bridgette, embraced this preference, while Janice worked against it, though was still successful because of the effective communication strategies she utilized. I also discussed the value of group work for relationship and community building. Finally I discussed the challenges based on the interface itself or of the technology setup of the studio classrooms that limited both instructors' ability to run the class in the way they would like to within the interface or that provided unequal access to students to both the instructor and to their peers.

The next, final chapter presents my overall conclusions based on this study, contextualizes these conclusions within an acknowledgement of the limitations of this study, and

offers avenues for future research. It also presents recommendations, both for their use at ODU

specifically and generally for SVCs, based on the findings of my research.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this dissertation I explored three different undergraduate writing synchronous video courses to better understand, in light of OWI Principle 11's call for community building in OWI, how students do or do not collaborate in these types of courses and to learn about the factors that influence collaboration and community building, or the lack of these activities, in this modality. I first sought to establish a working definition of community that could be used both for this project and for OWI scholars more generally that synthesized six different theories of or related to community and explicitly brought concerns of access and inclusivity to the fore. Then, because this project was specifically rooted in examining courses delivered through video using the videoconferencing program WebEx, I considered previous work on the role of video in establishing presence or facilitating collaboration in online instruction, using that previous scholarship as a frame to introduce and analyze the WebEx interface. Equipped with a definition of community and an understanding of the interface through which the courses were taught, I designed a study that took up the call from OWI Principle 15 to conduct research that examines "actual exchanges" in OWI, as well as that which focuses on "participant perceptions" of learning experiences, focusing specifically on SVCs. Triangulating discourse analysis of observed class sessions and thematic analysis of interviews with participants from the three classes, I was able to present a picture of how and why students participated and interacted in certain ways within each class and how their experiences influenced their sense of community and learning within the course.

In this final chapter, I identify the major conclusions drawn from this research study, contextualizing it within previous relevant research. I also discuss the limitations of this study that are relevant for considering these conclusions that I have drawn. I then discuss the opportunities for future research that emerge from considering the findings of this study. I

conclude with two sets of recommendations based on my results; the first set of recommendations are for ODU's distance education program specifically, and the second set are general recommendations for the field of OWI related to SVCs.

Conclusions

This study revealed that the assumption that synchronous online courses provide "feelings of intimacy and real-time engagement" (Mick & Middlebrook, 2015, p. 131) is more complicated than this simple assessment when we consider SVCs. Students and instructors generally gravitated to online learning or teaching to move beyond the constraints of f2f instruction particularly as they related to physical location, and in synchronous video instruction they often felt there was more *opportunity* for engagement that replicated f2f educational paradigms than in asynchronous courses, even if this opportunity was not always realized. The tension between opportunity and the reality of engagement in these classes as well as the complex network of factors that might account for this tension highlighted the need for a specific yet comprehensive definition of community. The Community Framework I put forward in Chapter 2 showed the interconnection between teacher presence, social presence and underlife communication among students, and collaboration and learning as part of cognitive presence. This framework freed me from a simplistic assessment of whether or not "community" broadly, and vaguely defined (as it is currently in OWI Principle 11) came to fruition or not, but instead allowed me to consider whether and how aspects related to these three categories of presence were supported (or not) by pedagogy and technology.

I was able to consider students' and instructors' perceptions of the courses in comparison with the way participation and interaction unfolded in these environments. Most of the students, though having ideas of how the experience could be improved, were generally satisfied with the experience of the course and appreciated the way this modality sought to simulate the experience of a f2f classroom in ways that asynchronous education cannot. Yet,

discourse analysis data suggested that engagement in the form of verbal interaction may be more difficult in this modality than f2f instruction due to students' anxieties related to conversing through the webconferencing technology and not wanting to interrupt others who wish to speak, as well as technological challenges themselves that may be present (issues with microphones, noise feedback, etc.). As was witnessed in the class sessions from ENGL 327W, however, some of the challenges can be mitigated when the instructor explicitly orchestrates verbal interaction and directs specific students when to speak. This finding supports DePew, Spangler, and Spiegel's (2014), assertion that just because a platform affords student-to-student interaction does not mean this interaction will occur; instructors have to specifically design and orchestrate this interaction.

In revealing students' general reticence for verbal participation versus textual communication, this study supports OWI Principle 3, "Appropriate composition teaching/learning strategies should be developed for the unique features of the online instructional environment." Part of the reason I would argue that ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T were able to still be successful courses despite the lack of verbal participation and verbal student-to-student interaction is that the instructors of these courses adapted and adopted different strategies for interaction. Instructional conversations (Goldenberg, 1990) may not have happened verbally in these classes like they did in ENGL 327W, but they may have been happening textually, which was possible because these instructors utilized the unique features of the online instructional environment, namely text-chats both within and outside the main course delivery interface, to facilitate this interaction.

This study also demonstrated the impact of interfaces on learning and teaching, building on the analysis of DePew and Lettner-Rust (2009). The literal interface of WebEx posed challenges within these courses because it could not facilitate group work, which emerged as a key strategy for relationship development and building a sense of community among students by increasing social presence. Also, despite its affordance for multichannel communication, the

inability to easily view text-chat interaction within the WebEx interface while viewing the rest of the interface as well made these channels either fractured and distinct from the main verbal channel (ENGL 307T) or underutilized for interaction (ENGL 110C and ENGL 327W), at least in terms of public, shared interaction. Additionally, the interface of the studio classroom and how this shaped students' access to the WebEx interface emerged as a key factor in students' sense, or perhaps more accurately, lack of sense of teaching and social presence of those not physically present with them. Because some of the affordances for interaction within the WebEx interface were inequitably accessible for students, this limited opportunities for dialogue, which increased transactional distance (Moore, 1993), making collaboration and community building more difficult.

I believe this study also reinforced the idea that SVCs, while sharing features of both f2f and asynchronous instruction, are a unique learning and teaching modality which require specific training for both faculty and students. In my interviews, participants drew from various paradigms to compare or make sense of their experience in the course, and there was often a tension between students' perception of the autonomy associated with the anyplace, anytime paradigm of asynchronous education or the passivity associated with broadcast education — education through a "*television*" screen—that contrasted with the collaborative and interactive pedagogy instructors were trying to enact within the synchronous videoconference. For many of my participants, the instructors of ENGL 327W and ENGL 307T excluded, learning or teaching in this modality was a relatively new experience, and they were still figuring out how they wanted to engage within this modality. Even the experienced instructors I spoke to were still struggling to maximize the affordances for engagement that synchronicity should have made possible amidst the technological challenges or those created by the decisions students made about whether, how, and where from to participate in these interactive video-based courses.

My first two research questions related to observable patterns in interaction and how the WebEx interface may have shaped those interactions, and the data I collected and the

conclusions I drew from it, aligned with previous studies (Hampel and Stickler, 2012; Steffen, 2017, Stewart, 2017; Whithaus and Neff, 2006) that pointed to the stilted nature of verbal interaction in educational videoconference meetings. However, I did witness productive, interactive verbal dialogue within the ENGL 327W, which suggested particular strategies, for instance, calling on students and creating contexts for genuine conversation, can promote verbal interaction in this modality. Thus, the role of teaching presence is incredibly important since instructors can orchestrate conversations that engage students in peer-to-peer interaction. Additionally, the success of textual communication within ENGL 110C and ENGL 307T points to the value of this type of interaction within this modality. In this case, the affordance of the interface for textual communication or the instructor's use of other technologies like Google Docs that facilitated this type of interaction in smaller groups provided opportunity for the development of social presence through interaction in this modality.

My second set of research questions provided context for the patterns I had observed in the three courses. Students' and instructors' responses explaining their experience in SVCs demonstrated the complex network between space, time, identity, experience, technology, pedagogy, and course design that all shaped how these courses are experienced and enacted. Recognizing this complex network supports Cornelius' (2014) characterization of SVCs as "demanding" environments, not just for instructors as she examined but also for students. It also reinforces the interconnected but complex relationship between OWI principle 11, "Online writing teachers and their institutions should develop personalized and interpersonal online communities to foster student success," and OWI Principle 1, "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible," particularly for SVCs. Students and instructors used different technologies, were in different spaces, and were in different types of environments, making the call for the course to be "*universally* inclusive and accessible" difficult. The differences in access to the instructor and various aspects of the course created fractured groups that challenged community building in the courses. The two hybrid SVCs were

particularly prone to this issue. The instructors spoke about strategies they had used to make their classes more inclusive for students, but some decisions, like Janice's decision in ENGL 327W to eschew text-chat communication to promote whole class communication to support community building and provide equal access to private communication with her as the instructor may actually have limited accessibility for distance students since the transactional distance they experience through technological mediation created the perception of less access for these students. Sometimes, however, the relationship between access and community building was much more straightforward, like was the case in ENGL 307T. Students participating from studio classrooms did not have full access to all parts of the course, like the text-chat in WebEx, and thus missed out on the opportunities for relationship and community building through social presence and underlife communication that space afforded. Helping students and instructors recognize the complex network of SVCs and the way that access, communication affordances, and community intersect could potentially help them determine ways to more productively learn or teach in this environment.

Limitations

In considering the conclusions included above, I think it is important to review the limitations of my research design (as previously discussed in Chapter 4) and the data and results of this study. In Chapter 4 I noted my logistical need to widen my scope beyond just wholly online SVCs (ENGL 110C) to also examining hybridly delivered SVCs (ENGL 327W and ENGL 307T). While including these hybridly delivered courses allowed me to examine a more common course delivery method for the institution, the distinct differences among the three courses made comparison difficult. Even the two hybridly delivered courses differed significantly in their format and structure. Additionally, when designing this study, I did not specifically consider these differences when planning participant recruitment. For ENGL 327W, all of the students I interviewed were participating from a distant studio classroom. Thus, I did not get the

perspective from students in the same physical location with the instructor or students'

participating from their own locations and devices, therefore providing a narrow picture of the

experiences of students in this course. For ENGL 307T I was able to speak with a student in a

distant studio classroom and a student participating from his own device; however, speaking

with only two students from a class of 37 and only one student from each of those populations,

there is a danger that I am making generalizing conclusions about students' experiences in the

course based on experiences that were individualistic and not representative, especially since

this class is taken by students for various reasons including major requirements for English

majors or students who simply need a course that satisfies the general studies requirement to

take a course that examines the impact of technologies. The motivation to create a community

may not be high.

Another limitation that emerged after I began to collect and analyze data was that my

observation and discourse analysis was limited to what was publically available within the

WebEx interface or the recordings of the video meetings. I previously acknowledged that I

learned that I did not have access to the public chat for ENGL 307T because the chat logs were

not preserved with the recordings made available by ODU's Center for Learning and Teaching

(CLT). While I adjusted my research protocol after this discovery to be present during the

sessions I observed from ENGL 327W and saved the chat logs myself for this course, I

unfortunately did not have access to the text-chat interactions from ENGL 307T to include with

my analysis and had to rely on discussions about this interaction both within the class sessions I

observed and in my interviews. Additionally, text communication occurring outside the interface,

including chats in Google docs in ENGL 110C, Blackboard communication in ENGL 327W and

interaction in Adobe Connect in ENGL 307T, was not part of my analysis. After studying these

three classes, it became clear that they relied on a rich and complicated patchwork of

technologies for interaction; however, my research design allowed me to view only a small

portion of this interaction. This limitation leads into a discussion of possible directions for future research based on my study and findings.

Future Research

Future studies could build off of this particular study by more intentionally observing and collecting artifacts from all of the types of interaction occurring within and outside of the interface[51]. Through collaboration with an instructor, a researcher could determine the major spaces interaction, particularly student-to-student interaction occurs, and, through discourse analysis, analyze these interactions in tandem with the interaction within the interface. Along with providing a richer and more complete picture of interaction within the course, this approach would also provide the opportunity to compare the different communication channels utilized within the course and the types of interaction or communication generally found on each of the channels. Similarly, a researcher could take a more ethnographic approach, observing an SVC throughout the entire semester, thereby basing observational data not just on two class sessions, but on the entirety of interaction throughout the course of a semester. This would allow a researcher to see how participation and interaction patterns change as students and the instructor better get to know each other and gain more familiarity with the expectations of the course and the course content. While ostensibly these observations could take place asynchronously through the observation of recorded meetings, I found in my experience completing this study that when I was actually present during class sessions, I had a better understanding of the context of what happened and had greater access to all of the communication, namely the text-chat, and was able to see these communication channels unfolding in tandem. Thus, if I were to undertake an ethnographic study like that described

---

[51] A study like this would build on the conclusions of DePew et al. (2014) that it was not a single communication channel, namely the blog's community-supporting affordances, which created a sense of social presence and community, but the network of communication including synchronous chat and backchannel, underlife communication occurring in outside spaces like social media which collectively contributed to the cultivation of a sense of community within the class.

above, I would choose to be present for the synchronous meetings I was observing and analyzing.

Another avenue for research would be to focus on participants' experience of the interface and other technologies utilized within SVC sessions. Instead of just analyzing what can be heard or read (i.e. the discourse patterns of the verbal and text-chat channels) within class sessions, through the use of screenshot or screencast capture, a researcher could collect visual data from online participants themselves that demonstrate how they are experiencing and interacting with the interface on their own device. Data like this could provide richer context for participants' interview data explaining their experience within this course modality as well as an emic view of interface interaction. In a similar vein, researchers could hone in on environmental impacts of students' experience of SVCs or online learning more generally. The data from this study revealed complicated tensions related to physical location, identity, and access that could be pursued more deeply. Future studies could examine the environments students choose to participate in class from and how these choices impact their sense of presence, community, and learning.

This study could also be expanded to include SVCs offered at different institutions. Anecdotally I know that Indiana University, University of Maryland, and Arizona State University offer synchronous online writing classes for undergraduate students. Analyzing classes from these institutions along with ODU would allow a researcher to consider the role institutional context might play in students' and instructors' experience and interaction in SVCs. Additionally, these institutions may use different interfaces or versions of interfaces. These differences would allow a researcher to consider the effectiveness of different videoconferencing platforms for writing SVCs, examining the different affordances and limitations, and considering the impact of these affordances and limitations on interaction and community building. Likewise, it would allow researchers to understand how different writing programs leverage these affordances for their writing course goals, both in their OWI course policies and in the way online writing

instructors are prepared for this teaching environment. Examining courses delivered across different platforms could also lead to more generalizable conclusions about SVCs versus just those delivered through ODU's platform, WebEx Meeting Center.

Finally, one of the challenges of contextualizing the interview responses from participants is that these participants often compared their experience to their f2f learning or teaching experiences. While these comparisons are not surprising and their impressions are helpful, because there is little research on discourse patterns in f2f college writing courses or specific examinations of students' experiences of community in f2f classes, we do not know how accurate these impressions of differences between SVCs and f2f classes are. Direct comparisons of f2f courses and SVCs using the community framework and heuristic developed for this project could help elucidate the unique features of SVCs as well as what they share with f2f instruction, and possibly dispel overly optimistic impressions of interaction and community in f2f instruction in comparison with online instruction. Similar comparison of SVCs with asynchronous classes could also suggest the value of continued experimentation with videoconferencing for online writing courses (OWCs).

Recommendations

Based on the results of my study, I have recommendations for effective instruction in writing SVCs. Because my study focused on courses offered at Old Dominion University (ODU), I have specific recommendations for this institution. I also have more general recommendations for the field that I believe can be extrapolated from my conclusions.

Recommendations for ODU

Some of the issues that impacted transactional distance, students' and instructors' sense of presence, and community building in the SVCs I observed were impacted by issues with the affordances or layout of the WebEx interface, or how students interacted with the

interface if they participated from a studio classroom. Thus I offer the following recommendations for ODU for SVCs:

1. Continue to offer SVCs for undergraduate writing courses

Since beginning this project, there has been a decline in the number of undergraduate writing SVCs being offered, with the institution favoring asynchronous courses instead. While I have highlighted the challenges associated with these courses, many of the students I spoke with felt these courses provided opportunities for learning, particularly because of a sense of increased access to and presence of the instructor that they did not experience in asynchronous courses. SVCs, by virtue of affording the opportunity to see and hear instructors, support the perception of teaching presence in these online classes, something students seemed to really appreciate and tied directly to the quality of their experience and learning. Students' generally favorable assessment of their experience in the course should serve as evidence for the continued offering of courses in this modality. Several participants highlighted the videoconference as a simulation of the traditional classroom and it was this similarity that they found comforting as part of this educational experience, particularly for non-traditional students. The next two recommendations can build off the benefits in promoting teaching presence currently offered by this modality, which highlight why these types of courses should continue, by creating more opportunity for student-to-student interaction and a more universal experience of the course regardless of where students choose to participate from, which will support social and cognitive presence within these classes.

2. Use a software system that allows for breakout groups

The fact that WebEx Meeting Center could not accommodate group work made it difficult for instructors to enact their preferred pedagogy, forcing them to work outside of the interface; having to bring in additional platforms added to the technology load for the instructors and the students, requiring them to learn, be familiar with, and keep up with multiple technologies. This

challenge is particularly problematic when we consider that the results of my study generally

showed the value of group work for collaboration and community building, specifically in

supporting social and cognitive presence. ODU should consider using another WebEx product,

Training Center, which offers the option for breakout rooms ("WebEx Conferencing

Comparison," n.d.) as the course platform for SVCs to better facilitate group work within these

courses. Conversely, the school might consider switching to another platform like Zoom, which

has fewer affordances generally than WebEx products, but has the key features of an easily

visible chat and the ability to have breakout groups which were the features participants noted

they most wanted to facilitate teaching and learning in the videoconferencing environment. If

students are able to more easily meet together and communicate in small groups, this will not

only help them get to know some of their classmates better, promoting social presence, but also

encourage more collaborative interaction than occurs in whole group discussion, opening up

more opportunities for development of cognitive presence and engagement with the material.

3. Redesign studio classrooms to allow individual login to the WebEx interface and provide access to individual desktops or devices for class participation

The studio classrooms both on the main campus and at the satellite centers were designed for

distance broadcast education through ODU's TELETECHNET technology. However, the

affordances of webconferencing are different than teleconferencing. As I discussed in Chapter

3, WebEx Meeting Center is a rich platform with many affordances that can support interaction,

though as noted above there are notable affordances not available. The studio classrooms only

provide students access to the video feed of the conference meeting, meaning students in these

spaces do not have access to many of the features available, namely the text-chat and the

raise-hand button. Studio classrooms can provide ideal environments for students to participate

in online learning because they provide distinct, educationally-coded spaces away from the

potential distractions of home or other personal spaces, and provide reliable access to the

course which students without a personal device or sufficient internet access or speed may lack.

These benefits would be bolstered if students also had individual access to a computer or device that gave them full access to the videoconference interface. Designing these classrooms with individual stations where students could log on to the class meeting and participate through all available means for interaction would provide more equal access to the course for all students regardless of where they were participating from. While students in the same physical location as the instructor may still have greater access to the instructor simply due to proximity, spaces designed around individual access to and participation in the videoconference would at least make experiencing the course sessions and the videoconference interface a more uniform experience for all students, regardless of their location, supporting OWI Principle 1, "Online writing instruction should be universally inclusive and accessible."

General Recommendations

Though the classes I observed were restricted to ODU, I offer the following general recommendations related to offering effective SVCs, both by institutions and by instructors: Institutions should:

1. Continue to offer SVCs or experiment with offering them

Like I suggested for ODU specifically, I also suggest generally the continued offering or beginning experimentation with this modality for OWI. In my first chapter I noted that SVCs were a relatively rare and unique approach to online writing instruction. While asynchronous courses may be the dominant paradigm for online instruction and offer greater access because of their anyplace, anytime affordances, many of the participants I spoke with did not mind sacrificing this anytime feature in favor of preserving a sense of class period and classroom, having more immediate access to their instructor, and being able to see and hear both the instructor and fellow classmates. I think there are certain types of students, perhaps those nervous about online education, who would benefit from the temporal constraints and shared time synchronous classes have to offer. Additionally, some students benefit from the schedule of set course

meetings and the discipline that SVCs provides as opposed to the self-discipline needed for the anytime learning of asynchronous classes. I am not arguing that asynchronous classes should be abandoned for synchronous ones, but simply that I think there is room for both. Videoconferencing platforms are becoming increasingly more reliable and less costly. Institutions should strive to provide modality options for students wishing to learn online so they can choose a modality that best accommodates their needs.

2. Provide training specific to this modality for instructors

With the decision to offer SVCs comes an institutional responsibility to provide sufficient training for faculty. With this recommendation I am drawing on OWI Principle 7, "Writing Program Administrators (WPAs) for OWI programs and their online writing teachers should receive appropriate OWI-focused training, professional development, and assessment for evaluation and promotion purposes." Faculty teaching SVCs need training specific to this modality since it is different than asynchronous online instruction. Broadly, instructors need to be informed about both technological and attitude-based challenges for mediated synchronous verbal discussion, like students forgetting to turn on their microphones, students deciding not to turn on their web cameras, or students' fear of interrupting each other preventing them from speaking up. By learning about these potential issues, they can mitigate these challenges or decide ways to incorporate multi-channel communication to facilitate interaction among students. On a more local level, instructors should receive training in the specific interface used for videoconferencing, learning how to maximize the affordances of the technology, but also becoming knowledgeable enough to help students complete initial troubleshooting when encountering technological issues. Instructors teaching SVCs would also benefit from opportunities to discuss their experiences teaching within this modality with others who are also teaching SVCs, creating a community of practice specific to this modality.

3. Provide orientation to students that cover elements of learning in a videoconferencing environment, including technology use and potential challenges, communication expectations, and environmental factors they should when considering where they will participate from

Institutions are also responsible for preparing students to be successful in this modality. Here I am drawing on OWI Principle 10, "Students should be prepared by the institution and their teachers for the unique technological and pedagogical components of OWI." ODU does provide opportunities for student preparation with a test WebEx class and a guide for these types of classes ("Get started in web conference courses, n.d.); however, perhaps more intentional outreach is needed to encourage students to view all these materials prior to the start of the course since students did not all seem to follow these guidelines. Any institution engaging in SVCs should ensure there is intentional student orientation for videoconferencing learning. Better faculty preparation will also support student preparation. Faculty, as the primary point of contact for the course for students can reinforce concepts from institutional orientations and help students gain comfort and confidence both with the technologies utilized within the course, but also the expectations for how they will participate and interact with the instructor and with their peers.

In addition to institutional practices, there are also instructional practices that will support the success of SVCs.

Instructors should:

1. Reinforce institutions' orientation for students

Continuing to build on OWI Principle 10, instructors of SVCs should also provide orientation to students. This orientation might involve explicit discussion of expectations for communication and interaction within the course, helping students assess the environments and technologies they plan to use for the course, and providing opportunities for them to experiment with using the affordances of the videoconferencing interface.

2. Take responsibility for orchestrating interaction and call on students to facilitate verbal interaction

Instructors wishing to facilitate interactive verbal participation must recognize the challenges and anxieties student face speaking within this environment. Instructors should employ the strategy of directly calling on students to both invite hesitant students into the conversation and to mitigate concerns about interruption. While some instructors may be hesitant to directly call on students for fear of being "mean" or because they desire a freewheeling discussion, within this modality, explicitly orchestrating dialogue by calling on students alleviates concerns students have about when and if to participate driven by not having the visual clues of who wishes to speak that are typically available when speakers are in the same physical space.

3. Make use of the text-chat (both public and private), but establish clear expectations/guidelines for how it will be used and responded to

Instructors should take advantage of the opportunity for multi-channel communication afforded by videoconferencing not equally available in f2f interaction, which can reduce the transactional distance for students by providing more opportunity for dialogue. The public text-chat can provide participation opportunities for students who may feel uncomfortable speaking over the verbal channel, and can create a space for knowledge and resource sharing and underlife activity which can promote both social and potentially cognitive presence. Blair and Hoy (2006) specifically noted the value of opportunities for private communication with the instructor for students, and the private chat can provide equal access to all students to this type of interaction. I, however, recognize the challenge of keeping track of multiple channels simultaneously and thus also recommend that instructors develop and share expectations for when and how they will review and respond to the text-channel within the course. Instructors can also model the types of discourse they hope to see in the public chat by organizing an activity or discussion with the whole class on the chat to help students become more comfortable and to see the value and uses of this communication channel.

4. Have students work in groups

OWI Principle 4 argues that "Appropriate onsite composition theories, pedagogies, and strategies should be migrated and adapted to the online instructional environment." Having students work in small groups is a time honored strategy in f2f writing instruction and may be an even more important strategy in SVCs because it can provide opportunities for interaction beyond the main video and verbal feed of the webconference which may be intimidating for some students. In Chapter 2 I asked, are we looking for a single community with all members of the class or does fostering community through the creation of small groups also support this goal? My research demonstrated the value of building community through small group work which allows students to build relationships with a few classmates at a time. Group work could happen asynchronously through tools like discussion boards and/or email, or could happen synchronously through the use of breakout rooms or collaborative technologies like Google Docs. Group work, especially synchronous group work during class sessions, explicitly puts students into active roles within the class sessions that position the course not as a broadcast to be passively watched (which is the expectation some students might bring with them from asynchronous video instruction) but as an interactive and collaborative learning experience.

Final Thoughts

I started this project by reflecting on my own introduction to online education within my PhD program. I had a rich experience that allowed me to learn and build relationships with students and faculty while maintaining a life that would have made traditional full-time doctoral work a challenge. Through this project I sought to consider whether and how undergraduates' experiences in SVCs were similar to or different from my own, curious if the experience which had been so positive for me, might be equally positive for them, and thus worth continued exploration and expansion. While my study revealed the challenges associated with these courses, I think it did also point to the promise of this modality. I sincerely hope this project is

just the start of exploration and promotion of this modality, and that OWI researchers and

practitioners continue to learn, innovate and find new and exciting ways to make quality writing

instruction available and accessible to more students.

REFERENCES

Acosta-Tello, E. (2015). Enhancing the online class: Effective use of synchronous interactive online instruction. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 17.* Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1102879.pdf

Arbaugh, J. B., Bangert, A. & Cleveland-Innes, M. (2010). Subject matter effects and the community of inquiry (CoI) framework: An exploratory study. *The Internet and Higher Education, 13*(1), 37-44.

Atkinson, J. M. & Heritage, J. (2006). Jefferson's transcript notation. In A. Jaworski and N. Coupland (Eds), *The discourse reader*. 2nd ed. (pp. 158-165). New York, NY: Routledge.

Barker, T.T. & Kemp, F.O. (1990). Network theory: A postmodern pedagogy for the writing classroom. In C. Handa (Ed.) *Computers and community: Teaching composition in the twenty-first century* (pp.1-27) Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook.

Bartholomae, D. (1986). Inventing the university. *Journal of Basic Writing, 5*(1), 4-23.

Bawa, P. (2016). Retention in online courses: Exploring issues and solutions--a literature review. *SAGE Open*, January-March 2016, 1-11.

Bernard, H. R. & Ryan, G. W. (2001). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bizzell, P. (1992). Cognition, convention, and certainty: What we need to know about writing. In *Academic discourse and critical consciousness*. University of Pittsburgh Pre. (Reprinted from Pre/Text 3.3, 1982).

Blair, K. & Hoy, C. (2006). Paying attention to adult learners online: The pedagogy and politics of community. *Computers and Composition, 23*, 32-48.

Blau, S. R., Hall, J. & Strauss, T. (1998). Exploring the tutor/client conversation: A linguistic analysis. *Writing Center Journal, 19*(1), 19–48.

Bloomfield, L. (1933). *Language*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Borgman, J. (n.d.). Clarity in an online course as an extension of onsite practice. *Online Literacies Open Resource*. Retrieved from https://www.glosole.org/clarity-in-an-online-course-as-an-extension-of-onsite-practice.html

Bourelle, T., Rankins-Robertson, S., Bourelle, A. & Roen, D. (2013). Assessing learning in redesigned online first-year composition courses. In *Digital writing assessment and evaluation*. Computers and Composition Digital Press.

Bower, M. & Hedberg, J. G. (2010). A quantitative multimodal discourse analysis of teaching and learning in a web-conferencing environment – The efficacy of student-centered learning designs. *Computers & Education, 54*(2), 462–478.

Broad, B. (2012). Strategies and passions in empirical qualitative research. In L. Nickoson & M. P. Sheridan (Eds.), *Writing studies research in practice: Methods and methodologies* (pp. 197-209). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Brooke, R. (1987). Underlife and writing instruction. *College Composition and Communication*, 38(2), 141-153.

Bruffee, K. (1984). Collaborative learning and the "conversation of mankind." *College English, 46*(7), 635-652.

Carbone, N. (1997). The uses and limits of netiquette guides in attempting civility on the internet. In B. Baldwin & T. Flood (Eds.), *The rhetorical dimensions of cyberspace*. RhetNet Books http://wac.colostate.edu/rhetnet/books.htm

Carnegie, T. A. (2009). Interface as exordium: The rhetoric of interactivity. *Computers and Composition*, 26(3), 164-173.

Cazden, C. B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

CCCC OWI Committee for Effective Practices in Online Writing Instruction. (2013). A position

statement of principles and effective practices for online writing instruction (OWI).

Retrieved from http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Groups/CCCC/OWIPrinciples.pdf

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cicero. (1960). *De Inventione* (H.M. Hubbell, Trans.) Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cisco WebEx web app supported operating systems and browsers. (2018). Retrieved from

Cisco collaboration help website: https://collaborationhelp.cisco.com/article/en-

us/9ehuwu

Cisco WebEx web app version 3.8. (2018). Retrieved from Cisco collaboration help website:

https://collaborationhelp.cisco.com/article/en-us/n1pxgbz

Connect your audio in WebEx. (n.d.) *ODUOnline.* Retrieved from

https://online.odu.edu/uploads/content/ODU_WebEx_Connect_Test_Audio.pdf

Connect your webcam in WebEx. (n.d.) *ODUOnline.* Retrieved from

https://online.odu.edu/uploads/content/ODU_WebEx_Connect_Test_Video.pdf

Cornelius, S. (2014). Facilitating in a demanding environment: Experiences of teaching in virtual

classrooms using web conferencing. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 45*(2),

260-271.

Cox, S., Black, J., Heney, J. & Keith, M. (2015). Promoting teacher presence: Strategies for

effective and efficient feedback to student writing online." *Teaching English in the Two-

Year College, 42*(4), 376-91.

Cunningham, J. M. (2015). Mechanizing people and pedagogy: Establishing social presence in

the online classroom. *Online Learning, 19*(3), 34-47.

Daft, R.L. & Lengel, R.H. (1986). "Organizational information requirements, media richness and

structural design". *Management Science, 32*(5): 554–571.

Davis, K M., Hayward, N., Hunter, K. R. & Wallace, D. L. (1988). The function of talk in the

writing conference: A study of tutorial conversation. *Writing Center Journal, 9*(1), 45-51.

Delanty, G. (2003). *Community.* New York: Routledge.

Denzin, N. (1970). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods.* Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research.* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DePew, K. E. (2007). Through the eyes of researchers, rhetors, and audiences: Triangulating data from the digital writing situation. In Heidi A. McKee and Dànielle Nicole DeVoss (Eds.), *Digital writing research: Technologies, methodologies, and ethical issues* (pp. 49-69). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.

DePew, K. E. & Lettner-Rust, H. (2009). Mediating power: Distance learning interfaces, classroom epistemology, and the gaze. *Computers and Composition, 26*(3), 174–189.

DePew, K. E., Spangler, S. & Spiegel, C. L. (2014). Getting past our assumptions about Web 2.0 and community building: How to design research-based literacy pedagogy. In Marohang Limbu & Binod Gurung (Eds), *Emerging pedagogies in the networked knowledge society: Practices integrating social media and globalization* (pp. 120-143). Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.

Dial-Driver, E. & Sesso, F. (2000). Thinking Outside the (Classroom) Box: The Transition from Traditional to On-Line Learning Communities. Presented at National Council of Teachers of English Annual Meeting 2000.

Dockter, J. (2016). The problem of teaching presence in transactional theories of distance education. *Computers and Composition, 40*, 73-86.

Downs, D. & Wardle, E. (2007). Teaching about writing, righting misconceptions: (Re) envisioning" first-year composition" as" Introduction to Writing Studies". *College Composition and Communication, 58*(4), 552-584.

Education WebEx. (n.d.) Retrieved from http://www.cisco.com/web/strategy/education/higher_ edu_webex.html

English courses. (n.d.) *Old Dominion University*. Retrieved from

> http://catalog.odu.edu/courses/engl/

Fanselow, J. F. (1977). Beyond RASHOMON—Conceptualizing and describing the teaching

> act. *TESOL Quarterly, 11*(1), 16-37.

FAQs (n.d.) Retrieved from https://www.webex.com/faqs.html#carousel-nav1-q4

Foucault, Michel. (1995). Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison. (A. Sheridan, Trans.)

> New York: Vintage Books (Original work published 1975)

Freedman, S. W. & Katz, A. (1987). Pedagogical interaction during the composing process: The

> writing conference. In A. Matsuhashi (Ed.), *Writing in real time: Modeling production
> processes,* (pp. 58-80). New York: Longman.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos. New York:

> Continuum.

Garrison, D. R. & Cleveland-Innes, M. (2005). Facilitating cognitive presence in online learning:

> Interaction is not enough. *The American journal of distance education, 19*(3), 133-148.

Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T. & Archer, W. (1999). Critical Inquiry in a text-based environment.

> Computer conferencing in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education, 2*(2-3),
> 87-105.

Gere, A. R. & Abbott, R. D. (1985). Talking about writing: The language of writing groups.

> *Research in the Teaching of English, 19*, 362-81.

Get started in web conference courses. (n.d.). *ODUOnline.* Retrieved from

> https://online.odu.edu/get-started-in-webex

Gibbons, P. (2003). Mediating language learning: Teacher interactions with ESL students in a

> content- based classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 37*(2), 247-273.

Gibson, J. J. (1977). The theory of affordances. In R.E. Shaw & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Perceiving,
acting and knowing* (pp. 67-82). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gilewicz, M. & Thonus, T. (2003). Close vertical transcription in writing center training and research. *Writing Center Journal, 24*(1), 25-49.

Goldenberg, C. (1991). Instructional conversations and their classroom application. *Educational Practice Report: 2.* Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ ED341253.pdf

Gos, M. W. (2015). Nontraditional Student Access to OWI. In B. L. Hewett & K.E. DePew (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing instruction* (pp. 309-346). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

Grigoryan, A. (2017). Audiovisual commentary as a way to reduce transactional distance and increase teaching presence in online writing instruction: Student perceptions and preferences. *Journal of Response to Writing, 3*(1), 83–128.

Group calls. (n.d.) Retrieved from Skype website: https://www.skype.com/en/features/group-calls/

Guglielmo, L. (2005). Teaching composition online: The quest for classroom community. *International Journal of Technology, Knowledge, and Society, 1*(1), 103-108.

Gumperz, J.J. (1968). The speech community. *International encyclopedia of the social sciences.* New York: Macmillan, pp. 381–6.

Hampel, R. & Stickler, U. (2012). The use of videoconferencing to support multimodal interaction in an online language classroom. *ReCALL, 24*(02), 116–137.

Harris, H., Mechenbier, M., Oswal, S. K. & Stillman-Webb, N. (Eds.). (2017). *The Bedford bibliography of research in online writing instruction.* Retrieved from https://community.macmillan.com/docs/DOC-5039-the-bedford-bibliography-of-research-in-online-writing-instruction

Harris, J. (1989). The idea of community in the study of writing. *College Composition and Communication, 40*(1), 11-22.

Harrison, S. & Dourish, P. (1996). Re-place-ing space: the roles of place and space in collaborative systems. In *Proceedings of the 1996 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative* Work (pp. 67-76). ACM.

Herzberg, B. (1986). "The Politics of Discourse Communities." Presentation at the Conference on College Composition and Communication. New Orleans, March 1986

Hewett, B.L. (2015a). Grounding principles of OWI. In B. L. Hewett & K.E. DePew (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing instruction* (pp. 33-92). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

Hewett, B. (2015b). *Reading to learn and writing to teach: Literacy strategies for online writing instruction.* Macmillan Higher Education.

Hewett, B.L & Ehmann, C. (2004). *Preparing educators for online writing instruction: Principles and processes.* Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Hoven, D. & Palalas, A. (2011). (Re) conceptualizing design approaches for mobile language learning. *CALICO Journal, 28*(3), 699-720.

Huang, R., Kahai, S. & Jestice, R. (2010). The contingent effects of leadership on team collaboration in virtual teams. *Computers in Human Behavior, 26*(5), 1098-1110.

Hubbard, D. (n.d.). Using a blog throughout a research writing course." *OWI Open Resource, Conference on College Composition and Communication.* Retrieved from www.ncte.org/cccc/owi-open-resource/blog-research-writing.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach.* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania

Ingram, J. & Elliott, V. (2016). A critical analysis of the role of wait time in classroom interactions and the effects on student and teacher interactional behaviors, *Cambridge Journal of Education, 46*(1), 37-53.

Jefferson, G. (1988). Notes on a possible metric which provides for a 'standard maximum' silence of approximately one second in conversation. In D. Roger & P. Bull (Eds.),

Conversation: An interdisciplinary perspective (pp. 166-196). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Jones, P., Naugle, K. & Kollof, M. (2013). Teaching presence: Using introductory videos in online and hybrid courses. *Learning Solutions Magazine*. Retreived from https://www.learningsolutionsmag.com/articles/107/teacher-presence-using-introductory-videos-in-online-and-hybrid-courses/pageall

Kazmer, M. (2005). Cats in the classroom: Online learning in hybrid space. *First Monday, 10*(9).

Knutson, D. S. (2001). The young are rude today: Reflections on distance-delivered courses. *Kairos: A Journal for Teachers of Writing in Webbed Environments 6*(2). Retrieved from http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/6.2/coverweb/de/knutson/

Krueger, R. A. (1994). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

LaPointe, D. K. & Gunawardena, C. N. (2007). Developing, testing and refining of a model to understand the relationship between peer interaction and learning outcomes in computer- mediated conferencing. *Distance Education, 25*(1), 83–106.

Laurel, B. (2013). *Computers as theatre*. Boston, MA. Addison-Wesley.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge university press.

Lemke, J. L. (1990). *Talking science: Language, learning, and values*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Love, J. (2000). The pedagogy of disorderly conduct. In J. Inman & D. N. Sewell (Eds.), *Taking flight with OWLs: Examining electronic writing center work* (pp. 181-189). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum

Malcolm X & Haley, A. (1965) *The autobiography of Malcolm X: As told to Alex Haley*. New York: Grove Press.

Manning, M. (2007). Building presence and community in the online class. *PraxisWiki, Kairos, 12(*1). Retrieved from http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/praxis/tiki-index.php?page=Building_Presence

Maroni, B. (2011). Pauses, gaps, and wait time in classroom interaction in primary schools. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43*, 2081-2093

Maximum system capacity and scalability for each system size. (n.d.) Retrieved from Cisco website: https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/td/docs/collaboration/CWMS/b_planningGuide/b_planningGuide_chapter_0100.html

Mehan, H. (1979). *Learning lessons: Social organization in the classroom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Meloncon, L. & Harris, H. (2015). Preparing students for OWI. In B. L. Hewett & K.E. DePew (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing instruction* (pp. 411-438). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

Meloncon, L. & Arduser, L. (2013). Communities of practice approach: A new model for online course development and sustainability. *Online education, 2*, 73-90.

Mick, C. S. & Middlebrook, G. (2015). Asynchronous and synchronous modalities. In B. L Hewett & K. E. Depew (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing* (pp. 129-148). Anderson, SC: Parlor Press.

Miller-Cochran, S.K. (2015). Multilingual Writers and OWI. In B. L. Hewett & K.E. DePew (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing instruction* (pp. 291-307). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

Moore, M. G. (1993). Theory of transactional distance. In D. Keegan (Ed.), *Theoretical principles of distance education* (pp.22-38). New York, NY: Routledge

Moore, N. S. & Filling, M. L. (2012). iFeedback: Using video technology for improving student writing. *Journal of College Literacy & Learning, 38*, 3-14.

Morgan, M. H. (2014). *Speech communities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mortensen, P. L. (1992). Analyzing talk about writing. In G. Kirsch & P. A. Sullivan (Eds),

    Methods and methodology in composition research (pp. 105-129). Carbondale, IL:

    Southern Illinois University Press.

Nathan, R. (2005). *My freshman year: What a professor learned by becoming a student*. Ithaca,

    NY: Cornell University Press.

Norman, D. A. (1999). Affordance, conventions, and design. *interactions, 6*(3), 38-43.

O'Conaill, B., Whittaker, S. & Wilbur, S. (1993). Conversations over video conferences: An

    evaluation of the spoken aspects of video-mediated communication. *Human-computer*

    Interaction, 8(4), 389-428.

ODUOnline at a glance. (2017). Retrieved from ODUOnline webiste:

    https://online.odu.edu/about/at-a-glance

Online Learning Consortium. (2015). Online Report Card – Tracking Online Education in the

    United States. Retrieved from https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/read/ online-report-

    card-tracking-online-education-united-states-2015/

Oswal, S. K. (2015). Physical and Learning Disabilities in OWI. In B. L. Hewett & K.E. DePew

    (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing instruction* (pp.253-289). Fort Collins,

    CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

Pike, K. L. (1967). *Language in relation to a unified theory of the structure of human behavior*

    (2nd ed). The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton.

Prior, P. (2015). Community. In P. Heilker & P. Vandenberg (Eds.), *Keywords in writing studies*.

    Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Ragan, T. J. & White, P. R. (2001). What we have here is a failure to communicate: The

    criticality of writing in online instruction. *Computers and Composition, 18*(4), 399-409.

Rankins-Robertson, S., Bourelle, T., Bourelle, A. & Fisher, D. (2014). Multimodal instruction: Pedagogy and practice for enhancing multimodal composition online. *Kairos, 19*(1). Retireved from http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/19.1/praxis/robertson-et-al/index.html

Rendahl, M. & Breuch, L. A. K. (2013). Toward a complexity of online learning: Learners in online first-year writing. *Computers and Composition, 30*(4), 297-314.

Rheingold, H. (1993). *The virtual community: Homesteading on the electronic frontier.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley. Retrieved from http://www.rheingold.com/vc/book/

Rhodes, V. A. (2014). MIcroblogging as a facilitator of online community in graduate education. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database.

Rodrigo, R. (2015). OWI on the go. In B. L. Hewett & K.E. DePew (Eds.), *Foundational practices of online writing instruction* (pp. 493-516). Fort Collins, CO: The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press.

Romberger, J. E. (2011). Ecofeminist ethics and digital technology: A case study of Microsoft Word. In D.A. Vakoch (Ed.), *Ecofeminism and rhetoric: Critical perspectives on sex, technology, and discourse* (pp.117-143). New York, NY: Berghahn.

Rovai, A. P. (2002). Building sense of community at a distance. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 3*(1), 1-16.

Rowe, M.B. (1974). Wait-time and rewards as instructional variables, there influence on language, logic, and fate control. Part one. Wait-time. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 11*, 81-94.

Russell, D. (1995). Activity theory and its implications for writing instruction. In J. Petraglia (Ed.), *Reconceiving writing, rethinking writing instruction* (pp. 51-77). New York, NY: Routledge.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E.A. & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language, 50*, 696-735

Sinclair, J. McH. & Couthard, R.M. (1975). *Towards an analysis of discourse: The English used by teachers and pupils*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Snart, J. (2013). Video welcome announcements in LMS. In *OWI Open Resource*. Retrieved from Conference on College Composition & Communication website: http://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/owi-open-resource/video-welcome-lms

St. Amant, K. (2017). Foreword. In *Bedford bibliography of research in online writing instruction*. Retrieved from https://community.macmillan.com/docs/DOC-2834-forward-to-the-bibliography-for-online-writing-instruction

Start a poll in a Cisco WebEx meeting. (2017) Retrieved from Cisco collaboration help website: https://collaborationhelp.cisco.com/article/en-us/n0pdj9x

Steffen, V.T. (2017). Contact and interactivity in televised learning: 15 years later. In E. A. Monske and K.L. Blair (Eds.), *Handbook of research on writing and composing in the age of MOOCs* (pp. 137-152). Hershey, PA: IGI Global

Stewart, M. K. (2017). Communities of Inquiry: A Heuristic for Designing and Assessing Interactive Learning Activities in Technology-Mediated FYC. *Computers and Composition, 45*, 67-84.

Stewart, M. K. (2018). Community building and collaborative learning in OWI: A case study of principle 11. *Research in Online Literacy Education, 1*(1). Retrieved from http://roleolor.weebly.com/stewart-community-building-and-collaborative-learning.html

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.

Swan, K. & Shih, L. F. (2005). On the nature and development of social presence in online course discussions. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks, 9*(3), 115-136.

Swartz, D. R. (2003). Toward a community of inquiry: Teaching Cornell Advanced Placement students. In J. Monroe (Ed.), *Local knowledges, local practices: Writing in the disciplines at Cornell* (pp. 155-164). Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press

Take online education to a new level. (n.d.) Retrieved from Cisco WebEx training center:

Education website: https://www.webex.com/content/dam/webex/eopi/Americas/USA/

en_us/documents/pdf/TC/pdf-TC-Education-Overview.pdf

Thompson, I. (2009). Scaffolding in the writing center: A microanalysis of an experienced tutor's

verbal and nonverbal tutoring strategies. *Written Communication, 26*(4), 417-453.

Thompson, I. & Mackiewicz, J. (2014). Questioning in writing center conferences. *Writing Center*

Journal, 33(2), 37-70.

Thompson, R., & Lee, M. J. (2012). Talking with students through screencasting:

Experimentations with video feedback to improve student learning. *The Journal of*

Interactive Technology and Pedagogy, 1(1).

University facts and figures. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.odu.edu/about/facts-and-figures

Veeramoothoo, C. (2017). WebEx: Flexible video conferencing for large-group collaboration.

Retrieved from Digital rhetoric collaborative website:

http://www.digitalrhetoriccollaborative.org/2017/11/27/webex-flexible-video-conferencing-

for-large-group-collaboration/

Vincelette, E. J. (2013). Video Capture for Grading: Multimodal Feedback and the Millennial

Student. In E.G. Smyth & J.X. Volker (Eds.), *Enhancing instruction with visual media:*

Utilizing video and lecture capture (pp. 107-127). IGI Global.

Vincelette, E. J. & Bostic, T. (2013). Show and tell: Student and instructor perceptions of

screencast assessment. *Assessing Writing, 18*(4), 257-277.

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Walsh, S. (2011). *Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action.* New York, NY:

Routledge.

Wang, S. K. & Hsu, H. Y. (2008). Use of the webinar tool (Elluminate) to support training: The

effects of webinar-learning implementation from student-trainers' perspective. *Journal of*

interactive online learning, 7(3), 175-194.

Wang, Y. (2004a). Distance language learning: Interactivity and fourth-generation Internet-based videoconferencing. *CALICO Journal, 21*(2), 373–395.

Wang, Y. (2004b). Supporting synchronous distance language learning with desktop videoconferencing. *Language Learning & Technology, 8*(3), 90–121.

Ward, M. E., Peters, G. & Shelley, K. (2010). Student and faculty perceptions of the quality of online learning experiences. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 1*1(3), 57-77.

Wardle, E. (2009). "Mutt genres" and the goal of FYC: Can we help students write the genres of the university? *College Composition and Communication, 60*(4), 765-789.

Wardle, E. & Downs, D. (2014). *Writing about writing: A college reader*. Macmillan Higher Education.

Waring, H. Z. (2008). Using explicit positive assessment in the language classroom: IRF, feedback, and learning opportunities. *The Modern Language Journal, 92*(4), 577-594.

Waring, H. Z. (2009). Moving out of IRF (Initiation- Response- Feedback): A single case analysis. *Language Learning, 59*(4), 796-824

Warnock, S. (2008). Responding to student writing with audio-visual feedback. In. T. Carter & M.A. Clayton (Eds.), *Writing and the iGeneration: Composition in the computer-mediated classroom* (pp. 201-227). Southlake, TX: Fountainhead Press

Warnock, S. (2009). *Teaching writing online: How and why*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

WebEx conferencing comparison. (n.d.). Retrieved from Old Dominion University website: https://www.odu.edu/facultystaff/teaching/tools/webex/resources

WebEx web app accessibility features. (2018). Retrieved from Cisco collaboration help website: https://collaborationhelp.cisco.com/article/en-us/cfojgdb

Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers: Children learning language and using language to learn.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books Inc.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whitehurst, J. (n.d.) Screencast feedback for clear and effective revisions of high-stakes process assignments. *Online Literacies Open Resource*. Retrieved from https://www.glosole.org/screencast-feedback-for-clear-and-effective-revisions-of-high-stakes-process-assignments.html

Whithaus, C. & Neff, J. M. (2006). Contact and interactivity: Social constructionist pedagogy in a video-based, management writing course. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 15*(4), 431-456.

Williams, R. (1976). *Keywords: a vocabulary of society and culture*. London: Fontana/Croom Helm.

Wilson, S. (1999). Pedagogy, emotion, and the protocol of care. In Blair, Kristine; Pamela Takayoshi (Eds.), *Feminist cyberscapes: Mapping gendered academic spaces* (pp. 133-153). Stamford, CT: Ablex Publishing Corporation

Woodland, R. (1999). 'I plan to be 10': Online literacy and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students. *Computers and Composition 16*(1), 73-88

Wyatt, C. (2103). Accessible writing spaces: Designing virtual spaces that accommodate difference. In. J. Purdy & D. N. DeVoss (Eds.), *Making Space: Writing Instruction, Infrastructure, and Multiliteracies*, edited by James Purdy and Danielle Nicole DeVoss, Michigan Publishing. Retrieved from www.digitalwriting.org/ms/ch4.html.

Yergeau, M., Wozniak, K. & Vandenberg, P. (2008). Expanding the space of f2f: Writing centers and audio-visual-textual conferencing. *Kairos, 13*(1). Retrieved from http://technorhetoric.net/13.1/topoi/yergeau-et-al/

Young, J.R. (2008). When professors create social networks for classes, some students see a "creepy treehouse." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from

https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/when-professors-create-social-networks-

for-classes-some-students-see-a-creepy-treehouse/4176

APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS FOR DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The transcription style used in this dissertation is adapted from Jefferson's Transcription system (Atkinson & Heritage, 2006).

Overlaps between participant are marked with square brackets ([ ]) aligned vertical. Overlaps occurring in quick succession are marked with double brackets ([[ ]]).

A dash (—) indicates when a speaker's turn was cut off or when the speaker starts a statement and then abandons it in favor of another statement.

Short pauses of approximately 1 second with an ellipses (…).

Pauses longer than 1 second between utterances are indicated in italics in parentheses with the corresponding number of seconds: (*15s*).

Undecipherable information, either speaker or utterance, is indicated with empty parentheses ( ).

Backchannel utterances are displayed using close vertical transcription organization (Gilewicz and Thonus, 2003) and in italics:

      Speaker 1: I was saying   that I understand.
      Speaker 2:   *um-hm*

Conventional punctuation (periods, commas, question marks) follow conventions of writing as opposed indicating characteristics of speech delivery or intonation contours.

Integrated text-chat communication is presented chronologically with corresponding verbal contributions in a two column format.

Arrows in the left-hand margin (→) indicate specific lines I am directing readers' attention to.

APPENDIX B

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FOR COI FIGURE

ELSEVIER LICENSE
TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Feb 12, 2019

This Agreement between Ms. Kimberly Fahle ("You") and Elsevier ("Elsevier") consists of your license details and the terms and conditions provided by Elsevier and Copyright Clearance Center.

License Number	4526631017309
License date	Feb 12, 2019
Licensed Content Publisher	Elsevier
Licensed Content Publication	The Internet and Higher Education
Licensed Content Title	Critical Inquiry in a Text-Based Environment: Computer Conferencing in Higher Education
Licensed Content Author	D.Randy Garrison,Terry Anderson,Walter Archer
Licensed Content Date	Spring 1999
Licensed Content Volume	2
Licensed Content Issue	2-3
Licensed Content Pages	19
Start Page	87
End Page	105
Type of Use	reuse in a thesis/dissertation
Portion	figures/tables/illustrations
Number of figures/tables/illustrations	1
Format	electronic
Are you the author of this Elsevier article?	No
Will you be translating?	No
Original figure numbers	Figure 1. Elements of an Educational Experience from
Title of your thesis/dissertation	COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY IN UNDERGRADUATE WRITING SYNCHRONOUS VIDEO COURSES (SVCS)
Expected completion date	May 2019
Estimated size (number of pages)	250

VITA

Kimberly Fahle
441 Country Club Rd
York, PA 17403-3651
kfahle@ycp.edu (717) 815-2087

Education

Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA
    PhD in English, expected completion 2019
    Tracks: Writing, Rhetoric, and Discourse Studies; Technology and Media Studies
    Dissertation: "Community and Collaboration in Synchronous Online Writing Instruction"
University of Delaware
    M.A. in English, 2012.
Virginia Wesleyan College
    B.A. in English and Theatre (*Summa Cum Laude*), 2010.

Academic Appointments

Director of the Writing Center, York College of Pennsylvania	July 2018-present
Coordinator of Writing Services, Virginia Wesleyan University	July 2014-June 2018
Adjunct Instructor, Old Dominion University	August 2016-present
Adjunct Instructor, Tidewater Community College	January 2013-July 2014
Adjunct Instructor and Writing Tutor, Virginia Wesleyan College	August 2012-May 2014
Instructor and Writing Tutor, University of Delaware	August 2010-August 2012

Recent Research Presentations

Fahle, Kimberly, Toy, Bethany, and Rachel Diehl. "Going Literally Where They Live: Writing Center Pop Ups in Dorms." The Mid-Atlantic Writing Center Association Conference (March 2019)

Fahle, Kimberly, Young, Maria Soriano, Tremaglio, Leah, Hantgan, Alysa Robin, and Denise K. Krane. "Rewriting the Script: Finding Empowerment within the Vulnerability of Evolving NTT Job Descriptions." The Conference on College Composition and Communication (March 2019)

Fahle, Kimberly. "Speaking Through a Screen: Discourse in Synchronous Video Courses (SVCs)." Computers and Writing Conference (May 2018)

Fahle, Kimberly. "Look Who's Talking: Classroom Discourse Patterns in the Synchronous Online Writing Classroom." The Conference on College Composition and Communication (March 2018)