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You've Got Mail:

A Sequential Mixed Methods Linguistic Investigation of Faculty and Advisor Email

Kevin A. Manley

A Dissertation to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

College of Education and Human Services

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A Sequential Mixed Methods Linguistic Investigation of Faculty and Advisor Email

by

Kevin A. Manley

A Dissertation to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Education


College of Education and Human Services

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

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Date: 2021.09.20 17:46:19 -05'00' Date: 9/20/21

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Abstract

Email is one of the most prolific forms of communication in the world. As colleges and universities move more student experiences online, faculty members and advisors need to understand how to best communicate with students. In an attempt to understand how faculty and advisors write, and, more importantly, how students read, I developed this two-phase mixed methods investigation. In Phase I, I collected nine writing samples from 19 faculty and advisor participants and dissected the samples with Pennebaker Conglomerate's 2015 Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program. In a transition phase, I leveraged Phase I data to create an instrument for Phase II. The 37 student participants in Phase II offered insight into their communication preferences through the completion of a questionnaire, writing prompts, and focus groups. Through synthesis of the Phase I and Phase II data, I drew conclusions about differences in students' perceptions of professor and advisor emails and made recommendations for how university personnel can better communicate with students via email. While results indicated few differences in faculty and advisor participants, student participants favored social communication with faculty members and focused on impersonal objectives when communicating with advisors. Student participants also vocalized a desire for concise, bulleted communication from both faculty members and advisors.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Whats up! can u read my paper? Thx!!! If a faculty member received such a request in their inbox, their academic hair would likely stand on end. Be it the lazy punctuation, flippant diction, or abundance of exclamation points, something about the informal communication grinds professors' gears. Claiming all faculty members storm into department meetings ranting about their students' inability to compose a coherent email would not be fair—some have more patience for linguistic free-styling. Still, there is dissonance in how faculty members and students communicate via email. The differences could be generational or reflect personal comfort with technology. Whatever the cause, criticizing students for the composition of their email, rather than its content, could be damaging. Yes, students who submit a job application attached to an informal email are not making a wise career decision; however, a pointed, blame-heavy message from a faculty member about written professionalism may not be a productive solution. McCulloch (2019) wrote the internet has changed the English language and challenged all language users to meet one another with compassion and empathy instead of writing another style of English off as bad or incorrect.

The field of corpus linguistics offers a rich toolset through which to appreciate McCulloch's (2019) declaration. Instead of counting words in old books, corpus linguistics concerns itself with real language use, often turning to blogs and online forums to gather contemporary language samples. Through corpus linguistics, this study attempted to understand the differences in how university personnel and students communicate via email. Rather than concluding with insights into language, my study attempted to recommend best practices to help faculty members and advisors better

communicate with their students, instead of being held back by differing genre expectations. Poor communication flows equally. This study sought to identify the differences in communication expectations, and suggest linguistic olive branches faculty members can extend to better communicate with their students.

Purpose

The purpose of this sequential mixed-methods research was to study how undergraduate students in higher education at a private, Midwestern university perceived and responded to the language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. Phase I of the study followed Pennebaker's (2013) model for sociolinguistic analysis and applied a Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count program (Pennebaker et al., 2015) to faculty email to compare how faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty communicated with students. For this study, I gathered research with the 2015 version of the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count program (Pennebaker et al., 2015). For the purposes of this paper, when referring to 2015 edition of the software, I used the abbreviation LIWC2015. Alternatively, when referring to the software in general or to an unspecified version of the program, I abbreviated the name as LIWC. During the Transition Phase, I applied the data from Phase I to construct a series of hypothetical emails, within which I conducted Phase II. In Phase II, using the sample group's perspectives, I examined how students responded to the writing styles and strategies used by their faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. At the study's conclusion, I evaluated the data and considered how the linguistic choices made in the emails of faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty were meaningful to students. Several communication theorists have found students and faculty engage as, if not more, often on the Internet as they do in office hours (Duran et al., 2005; Miller &

Reznik, 2016; Taylor et al., 2011). As communication continues to move online, I hoped this research could identify patterns in language that students found appealing. Such insights into language might determine patterns to guide university employees toward more effective communication practices. Beyond language use, information gleaned from student participants could support professor and advisor communication through timeliness and user interface improvements.

Rationale

Online communication was expected of professors, advisors, and adjuncts—not only as a means of communication, but as a necessity to build trust with a student or advisee (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). As the student/faculty member relationship continued to exist digitally, a need existed to approach email as a genre and then study the linguistic construction of such a genre, just as a poetry student would study the language of a sonnet. A trove of sociolinguistics research existed to support a linguistic dive (Pennebaker, 2013; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011; Whalen & Pexman, 2009), and several researchers attempted to explain why students and faculty write email (Leach & Wang, 2015; Wrench & Punyanunt, 2004). Few sources bridged the two bodies of work. The scarce research that did treated students' writing style as incorrect or lacking (Blackburne & Nardone, 2018), and did not consider how professors' emails impacted the students. Within that even smaller body of research, most studies focused solely on the impact of tone (Bolkan & Holmgren, 2012; Finn et al., 2011). To help expand a limited body of research, this study applied sociolinguistic research techniques to study if and how the language of professorial emails impacted students in the schools of education and science at a private Midwestern university.

Since its creation, email has become a dominant form of communication in industry and in academia (Miller & Reznik, 2016). Despite the prevalence of email in higher education, at the time of writing, sparse research had been conducted regarding the construction of the emails themselves. A few studies had investigated pragmatics and politeness in email (Bolkan & Holmgren, 2012; Lam, 2016), yet the significance of the words had received little, if any, focus. Little attention had also been paid to how faculty members adapted their communication to match their various duties. As Mitchell (2020) wrote, college faculty members often accept several roles and responsibilities during their career—two of the most common being advisor and teacher. Studies had been conducted on how faculty members interacted with students as advisors (Leach & Wang, 2015) and how faculty members interacted with students as professors (Duran et al., 2005), but neither study considered the direct impact of faculty members' language use. Additionally, I could not locate any studies which attempted to discern whether faculty members communicated differently to their advisees and their students as they code-switched between their advisor and professor roles. Furthermore, little research existed that compared the language used by fulltime faculty to the language used by adjunct faculty when communicating with students.

I hoped to add to the current literature by addressing the gap in understanding the linguistic significance of email through synthesis of sociolinguistics and educational and communication theory. By joining Pennebaker's (2013) linguistic analysis with trends in communication email theory and catalyzing those theories through Astin's (1984) student involvement theory, I hoped to give faculty a new tool for reaching their students. Through this marriage, I explored faculty communication tactics to analyze potential

significant linguistic shifts between faculty communicating as professors and faculty communicating as advisors, which I hoped would assist faculty in making more intentional communication decisions. As adjunct faculty could also communicate differently, I examined adjunct faculty language use in addition to fulltime faculty and advisor emails. Some theorists attempted to push the burden of learning a new discourse onto students (Blackburne & Nardone, 2018), but my research sought to shoulder some of the responsibility to encourage equitable and generative communication.

Brief Overview

My study occurred in two sequential phases with an intermediary transition phase. In Phase I, I collected emails from fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty contributors. To allow the Phase I data to guide Phase II, I constructed a new instrument in the Transition Phase. Finally, in Phase II, a set of student participants completed a questionnaire and focus group to offer insight into how they perceive and respond to emails from professors and advisors.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Phase I Hypotheses

H1: According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of positive emotion language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

H2: According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of power language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

H3: According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of social language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

H4: According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of analytic language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

H5: According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of personal pronouns used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

H6: According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of impersonal pronouns used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

Phase I Research Question

R1: How does the linguistic composition of fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty emails differ?

Phase II Hypotheses

H7: According to the measure, there is a difference in the amount of positive language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

H8: According to the measure, there is a difference in the amount of power language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

H9: According to the measure, there is a difference in the social language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

H10: According to the measure, there is a difference in the amount of analytic language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

H11: According to the measure, there is a difference in the number of personal pronouns students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

H12: According to the measure, there is a difference in the number of impersonal pronouns students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

H13: According to the measure, there is a difference in the type of tense language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

Phase II Research Questions

R2: How do students perceive emails written by professors and advisors?

R3: How does a professor or an advisor's communication style make a student more or less receptive to communication?

R4: What, if any, linguistic components of faculty or advisor emails are most memorable to students?

R5: If students found some linguistic components in R4 more memorable than others, why were those linguistic components of professor or advisor email more memorable?

Limitations

Passed in 1974, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) offered students more privacy under the law. FERPA is a vital law; however, it can complicate research. For this study to offer a thorough, holistic answer to R1, I would have had to evaluate complete sets of faculty, advisor, and adjunct emails. Yet I believed such complete access to privileged, wild language would have been unethical. Even if a

thorough response to R1 could yield more effective communication strategies, it would be unacceptable to sacrifice the privacy that FERPA affords the student-professor/advisor relationship. Instead, I implemented a review and redaction procedure for the data and only collected a small sample from each participant. Instead of enormous blocks of complete emails, I studied small chunks of carefully redacted samples. While the data I collected did not capture every facet of participants' communication habits, I was able to respect FERPA regulations by implementing the redaction procedure and limiting myself to collecting a limited sample of writing from each participant. FERPA compliance also forced me to select a single research target. To protect participants' identities, I chose to forgo detailed demographic collection in favor of more robust writing samples. This study only collected and analyzed words, which likely stunted the potential depth of its conclusions to protect the privacy of its participants.

Despite employing a conservative instrument, data collection still spanned months. From the original 168 participation solicitations for Phase I of the study, only four fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty returned writing samples. Similar studies (Blackburne & Nardone, 2018; Lam, 2016) required at least 160 writing samples to yield usable data. As I could not draw conclusions from the 36 emails collected from the first solicitation, I expanded the study from one academic school within the university to three. After another seven months of solicitation, the study yielded 171 writing samples, which permitted me to continue with the investigation.

Unfortunately, the delay in recruiting Phase I participants disrupted other facets of the study. First, undergraduate research assistants recruited for the study completed their affiliate-course or graduated from the university, which necessitated recruiting and

training new assistants, which further delayed the study's progress. Second, while I worked to overcome Phase I delays, the COVID-19 pandemic struck the globe. Individuals who had committed to participating in the study had to reconsider their participation because they did not have time to offer to extracurricular projects. As I gathered some data before the pandemic and some data after the pandemic started, the participants' altered life experiences could have impacted the data. Even after I collected the 171 samples required for Phase I, COVID-19 then delayed the implementation of Phase II by forcing data collection to occur online. Instead of conducting focus groups in person as planned, I recalibrated research tools and created and validated an online instrument. While the validity tests showed the online instrument to be acceptable, the sudden change may have blocked intended data redundancies.

Despite the limitations the project faced, this study still offered a unique interdisciplinary approach to student-focused research. As word counting technology continues to develop, future researchers may be able to negotiate a more fulfilling treaty between data, FERPA regulations, and participant privacy.

Definitions of Terms

Adjunct Faculty- Adjunct faculty, often shortened to *adjunct*, refers to part-time, contract-based teachers of a college or university. As applied in this study, adjunct faculty typically operated with year-to-year contracts that relied heavily on end of course feedback. Adjunct faculty members' duties were often teaching focused; they seldom received advising duties or research obligations (Stenerson et al., 2010).

Code Switching- Code switching, as used in sociolinguistics, referred to humans' ability to change how they use language to better relate to an individual or situation

(Weston & Gardner-Chloros, 2015). A common example was how a public-school teacher shifted between speaking to a child and to another teacher—the speaker would not use the same words, tone, or speech patterns. In effective code switching, an individual changes their tone, syntax, and word-choice to better align with their desired audience (Weston & Gardner-Chloros, 2015). While similar, code switching should not be confused with borrowing or creative blends. In blending and borrowing, an individual lifted certain words or traits from one register and integrates it into their own way of speaking (Stockwell, 2009; Weston & Gardner-Chloros, 2015.) Code switching offered a more complete shift to another communication style.

Email- This study used email to refer exclusively to the electronic communication exchanged to virtual inboxes exiting at a domain as specified by an @ symbol (Schaefermeyer & Sewell, 1988). Electronic communication exchanged via other networked means, such as a social media platform like Twitter or Facebook, was not be considered email and not investigated in this study (Sajithra & Patil, 2013).

Advisor- Kennemer and Hurt (2013) explained that advisors serve as students' guides through the institution and mentor “students in developing overall educational and career plans” (para. 2). Advisors often worked with students for several years and can have connections that last well beyond graduation (Kennemer & Hurt, 2013).

Fulltime Faculty- The Boston University Office of the Provost considered fulltime faculty to be any individual with a title of lecturer or above who taught fulltime at the university (Boston University Council, 2009). Boston University was not the only institution to make distinctions between professorial rank, such as assistant and associate

professors; however, this study considered all fulltime faculty participants as a single fulltime faculty category.

Function Words- Function words referred to the small, almost invisible parts of speech required to make English a useable language. Function words typically included pronouns, articles, and prepositions (Pennebaker, 2013). Other small, unnoticed words, such as conjunctions, were also considered function words. If larger, meaning laden words impacted what someone said, function words were how they said it. Some researchers (Dino et al., 2009; Pennebaker, 2013) believed disagreements could have as much to do with function word use as with meatier content focused words. Function word analysis was one of LIWC's strengths (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). What follows are three categories of function words that will be relevant to this study.

Function Words: Analytic Language- Analytic language was a branch of function words that focused on identifying analysis (Pennebaker, 2013). Insight words might have included categorizing words (but, except), causal words (reason, perhaps), or insight words (realize, know) (Pennebaker, 2013). High percentage of analytic words showed an individual was attempting to understand something (Pennebaker, 2013).

Function Words: Emotional Language- Emotional language, another branch of function words, could have been direct, such as words like rage correlating to an angry speaker, or indirect, such as sad individual using more first-person singular pronouns (Pennebaker, 2013). This study used LIWC2015's (Pennebaker et al., 2015) analysis of emotional language to discuss the tones different institutional emails may have on students and seek to understand the mental state of students who are responding to emails. For example, research indicated an individual who used second-person pronouns

at an above average rate may have been experiencing anger (Pennebaker, 2013).

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) further differentiated between positive and negative emotion language.

Function Words: Power Dynamic Language- Power dynamics, a third type of function words, existed between different levels of professors and between professors and students (Bolkan & Holmgren, 2012; Lam, 2016). Pennebaker (2013) found individuals with different levels of power in a social situation used language differently. Those in a more subservient role tended to use first-person singular pronouns, whereas individuals with more authority relied on second person plural pronouns. In addition, the more subservient individual in the conversation tended to employ more emotional language, whereas the more dominant individual often applied more analytic language (Pennebaker, 2013).

Function Words: Social Language- A fourth branch of function words, social language, represented words that sought to develop a connection between speaker and listener (Pennebaker, 2013). Higher percentages of social language indicated a focus on the relationship between the communicator and audience (Pennebaker, 2013). The focus could have indicated an existing relationship, or it may have pointed to a desire for a change in the relationship.

Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count- Pennebaker and several dozen of his graduate students spent a decade developing LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). This study used the 2015 version of LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015); the program had access to dictionaries that had been validated through hundreds of global research projects (Pennebaker, 2013; Tausczik & Pennebaker,

2011). LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) received an input and then counted and sorted the words from the input into linguistic categories, such as function words, emotional language, and analytic language (Pennebaker, 2013). After LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) output the data, researchers then used the data to identify consistencies and differences in how samples used language. The tool expedited linguistic analysis; however, it may have had difficulty discerning linguistic nuances, such as sarcasm. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) was also unable to classify language outside of its dictionary, so informal communicators, such as emojis, abbreviations, and “lols” likely went undetected. The designer recommended using large samples to curb potential incorrect coding caused by sarcasm or other non-definition language use (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011).

Linguistics/Sociolinguistics- Linguistics, as referenced in this study, was the scientific study of language whereas sociolinguistics referred to the study of how language impacts humans’ social constructions and interactions (Pennebaker, 2013). The disciplines were heavily related and constantly fluctuating. Pennebaker (2013) wrote as language evolves, so too must linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Linguistics—Corpus Linguistics- Corpus Linguistics was a subbranch of linguistics that concerned itself with real world samples of text. Griffiths and Cummings (2017) wrote that users of language were often able to wield words without dwelling on what the specifics of their words meant. Practitioners of corpus linguistics sought meaning in those unintentional specifics (Griffiths & Cummings, 2017). By studying language in its natural habitat, such as on a message board or in emails, corpus linguistics researchers hoped to glean a more sincere understanding of their sample population than

self-aware, polished writing samples would have allowed. Corpus linguistics is the field biology of linguistic research.

Summary

Fries (1952) wrote, “I believe fundamentally education as distinct from training” (p. 296). This research did not synthesize an email panacea. The results could not be plugged into a training workshop and forgotten about. Rather, this research sought to encourage fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty to hold a mirror to their writing and consider what each word and punctuation mark mean to students. Beyond understanding their own writing, this study encouraged all university stakeholders to engage with students’ writing and attempt to understand the meaning laced within every word.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Theoretical Frame

Powell (2006) described community building as teaching's most essential obligation and referred to teaching as "an opportunity to listen and hear, [and] to enter the conversation" (p. 572). The conversations Powell described burst onto new platforms almost daily, so teachers must be prepared to "enter the conversation anywhere"—be it in person or online. Commitment is not enough and responsibility to a learning community is not fulfilled when a teacher enters the conversation; Astin (1984) and Powell (2006) described how effective teachers provided a continuous and present force in students' lives and educations. Further research showed that teachers who served their classrooms as equals, rather than as idols, positively impacted student growth and student satisfaction (Astin, 1984; Chickering & Reissner, 1993; Wessels, 2015). Astin (1984) stated students who experienced more interactive relationships with faculty showed higher satisfaction with their education and were more likely to be engaged with their educational experiences. According to Astin (1984), both the quality and quantity of teachers' involvement with their students gave the students' experiences substance. Having a conversation with a student was not enough; to achieve the greatest potential a relationship, teachers needed to consistently make themselves available to their students in meaningful ways (Astin, 1984).

Communication evolves daily, and Astin (1984) and Powell (2006) described how professors could create meaningful in-person communities and connections with their students before the rise of the smart phone or social media. Time did not change the message, just the medium. Brooks and Young (2016) claimed faculty needed to be as

involved with their students online as Astin (1984) claimed they should be in person. Miller and Reznik (2016) reflected upon how more classrooms move online every year, and Brooks and Young (2016) described the high expectations students in their study had for their professors' online communication. The students in Brooks and Young's (2016) study expected prompt and thorough communication, and if their faculty hoped to continue to have substantial impact on their students through involvement, as Astin (1984) theorized, the professors needed to develop effective electronic communication skills. Through analysis of faculty and advisor emails and how students perceived those emails, this study sought to understand how Astin's (1984) foundational theories can still resonate in the digital era.

History of Email

By the end of 20th century, email had risen to a prominent communication medium. Email may have grown in used, yet when compared to written language, email was still in its infancy. Despite its youth, email continued to evolve rapidly, and, with it, communication expectations. Early versions of email date back to the late 1960s.

Email Technology History

The earliest electronic relative of email was first seen in 1969. Researchers from the United State Department of Defense found their unsatisfactory inter-team communication procedures stifled their processes and products (Schaefermeyer & Sewell, 1988). To circumvent time and space, the research teams began leaving notes in storage space on a shared computer regarding their results, a space they named ARPANET after their department—The Advanced Research Projects Agency (Sajithra & Patil, 2013; Schaefermeyer & Sewell, 1988). As APERNET became more advanced, the engineers

developed notes they could share between computers they had hardwired into the same network (Schaefermeyer & Sewell, 1988).

A few years later, Ray Tomlinson, known as the father of email, had a breakthrough when he realized computers could be given a unique address (as cited in Spicer, 2016). In 1971, Tomlinson began configuring network computers to be housed at a specific place in a network; emails could be addressed simply by addressing them to “name@location” (as cited in Spicer, 2016). In this way, electronic mail, then shortened to email, did not have to be kept in boxes on a single hard drive. After Tomlinson’s landmark development, more academics began networking their systems to efficiently communicate their research findings (Sajithra & Patil, 2013). Two graduate students at Duke University, Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis, expanded Tomlinson’s discovery. They believed a central service provider could host the other recipients and communicate with other service providers, which could then communicate with the machines to which it was providing service (as cited in Sajithra & Patil, 2013). The pair first networked Duke University to the University of North Carolina. Their teams then tried to spread the link to other users; however, the system was messy and required dedicated administrators who needed to invite new members to a server, much like how a host must admit new members into a Zoom meeting (as cited in Sajithra & Patil, 2013). An engineering student, Eric Thomson, would eventually solve Truscott and Ellis’s dilemma.

Thomson created automated mailing lists in 1986, which allowed more stakeholders to use email and removed the necessity for an administrative gatekeeper (as cited in Sajithra & Patil, 2013). In 1988, Jarkko Oikarinen built upon Thomson’s idea by creating Internet Relay Chat, which reduced the time required for an email to navigate a

server and reach its destination (Sajithra & Patil, 2013). Oikarinen's success paved the way for the email boom in the late 80's and early 90's and eventually led to the rise of instant messenger, which later begat social media (as cited in Sajithra & Patil, 2013).

Email Culture History

As the technology necessary to implement electronic communication evolved, so too did the culture and linguistics of electronic communication. For example, in the 1970s, Roy Trubshaw realized he could use the networking potential of ListSers to develop a roleplaying game that would pay homage to *Zork*, a text-based dungeon adventure video game (as cited in Edisimwan et al., 2011). Trubshaw and his peers at the University of Essex developed MUD, the Multi-User-Dungeon. MUD allowed players to co-create a text-based, interactive roleplaying world in which they could share a collaborative role-playing experience. While the more gaming-focused aspects of MUD eventually evolved into graphics-based experiences, such as *World of Warcraft* or *EVE Online*, MUD also offered a less formal version of messaging than previous business or academic focused ListSers (as cited in Edisimwan et al., 2011). MUD users unknowingly developed their own linguistic culture, which morphed and evolved with daily use. MUD's chat rooms would pave the way for social networking. Technological advances in the 1990s and 2000s birthed several new online communication tools. Early social networking sites, such as Six Degrees, and blogging platforms, like Blogger, saw their advent (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Edisimwan et al., 2011). These websites would eventually evolve into the platforms upon which communicators in the early 21st century relied, such as Twitter, SnapChat, and Facebook (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Edisimwan et al., 2011).

Just as MUD users had constructed their own vernacular and linguistic culture, each of MUD's contemporaries maintained an identity that shaped its users' communication (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Edisimwan et al., 2011). Developer features and community use synthesized a unique lexicon for each social networking site's lexicon. For example, MySpace prioritized page customization and music sharing, so young users flocked to the platform to build their own online identity (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Later, image-sharing services, such as SnapChat and Instagram, would dominate youth communication (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). In the image-prioritizing platforms, users could share an image and then respond to the image with short text or another image (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). These two platforms had developed a lexicon dependent upon the blended space between image and text, rather than just text. Users of Instagram and SnapChat became adept at communicating within the confines of large word art on a photo (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). To return to education, when adult communicators who grew up with text-based communication began holding a younger generation whose practiced vernacular blended image and text to the pragmatic standards of classic ListServ messages, miscommunications were unavoidable.

Email In Education

Business birthed email, but higher education reared it for research. Since its adoption by the masses, several individuals studied the rapport email created between students and faculty; much of the research involving email and higher education focused on email as a genre. For example, one common conclusion reached by different researchers found students responded better to faculty who answered their emails within 48 hours (LaBarbera, 2013; Young et al., 2011). LaBarbera (2013) concluded faculty

who responded to students' questions within 48 hours left more lasting impressions of connectedness with their students. Students who received timely feedback felt supported by their professors (LaBarbera, 2013; Young et al, 2011). In general, students in LaBarbera's (2013) research showed a positive correlation between the time they believed their professor invested in communication and the strength of their relationship with that faculty member. Time spent could be paradoxical. Students felt most connected to professors who responded to emails quickly, yet students also showed closer connections to professors whose responses obviously had taken time construct (LaBarbera, 2013). Students wanted quick yet personal emails from their professors (LaBarbera, 2013). Studies further concluded email provided an effective means for professors and students to develop impactful relationships as emails could have yielded a channel for instant interaction and feedback (LaBarbera, 2013; Young et al., 2011).

Students were likely to connect with faculty members who engaged with technology—be it email, social media, or even PowerPoint. Ledbetter and Finn's (2018) study concluded students did not respect professors who did not use technology as much as they respected professors who filled their lessons with technology. Of the 338 interviewed students, most students found professors who used PowerPoint in class and communicated via email to be stronger in character and be more competent in their subject area (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). Furthermore, students viewed teachers who used no technology in the classrooms as less caring and less credible (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). When coupled with Young et al.'s (2011) research, technology use appeared vital in how students rated and perceived their faculty; professors needed to use technology to connect with students (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). Students expected comfort electronic

communication to be bilateral—faculty needed to use technology completely and honestly to reach their students.

Other studies found that while some faculty members understood the importance of technology in the classroom, students could often detect insincere technology application (Bowman & Akcaoglu, 2014; Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). Students expected their professors to use technology as a genuine communication channel. Bowman and Akcaoglu's (2014) research showcased an example of sincere use; they concluded students were more likely to view a professor highly if the professor disclosed personal feelings and thoughts on social media. Admittedly, disclosing all personal opinions and insecurities on social media would be unprofessional (Kezar et al., 2017), yet owning up to a few, genuine opinions, such as a minor disappointment, could humanize a professor to students (Bowman & Akcaoglu, 2014). Just as research illustrated that people more easily communicate with others whose writing more closely resembles their own (Lam, 2016), Bowman and Akcaoglu's (2014) conclusions indicated the idea that professors who wished to reach their students electronically needed to be able to adapt to how students expressed themselves digitally.

Aforementioned conclusions claimed students placed value in professors who responded quickly to electronic communication and thoroughly integrated technology into the classroom, yet faculty tended to focus on the construction of student emails (Blackburne & Nardone, 2017; Duran et al., 2005; Stephens et al., 2009). Stephens et al. (2009) studied 152 instructors and found students who sent overly casual emails received poorer evaluations from their professors. Instructors were more likely to view a student who sent casual emails as less credible, and instructors were less willing to comply with

requests made via casual email (Stephens et al., 2009). Stephens et al. (2009) also discussed the hierarchy of complaints about student emails their instructors in their study held, with the chief complaints being students who did not sign their emails and students who sent unclear requests. Both grievances suggested a departure from what the instructors deemed essential to email form (Duran et al., 2005; Stephens et al., 2009).

Some faculty members expressed concerns regarding the form of student emails, yet higher education's adoption of email had been received multilaterally (Duran et al., 2005). Of the 88 faculty members who participated in Duran et al.'s (2005) study, 33% viewed email entirely positively while 15% of participants viewed email entirely negatively—the other 52% offered a blended response. At its most effective, email allowed faculty opportunities to interact with their more introverted students and helped students ask clarifying questions about course material; email had also allowed faculty to contact students who they felt might be struggling (Duran et al., 2005). Alternatively, some professors believed email had led to poorer student performance on assignments and had decreased the quality of face-to-face interactions (Duran et al., 2005). Some researchers had even found student tone to be different via email, with students taking a more self-serving, impatient tone via email (Stephens et al., 2009). Professors seemed to want to integrate new technology into their pedagogy, yet there appeared to be dissonance between how faculty and students communicated via email.

Other research claimed faculty and students employed different strategies when making requests through email (Bolkan & Holmgren, 2012; Lam, 2016). Bolkan and Holmgren (2012) concluded faculty were more willing to assist students who employed a politeness strategy in their email; however, Lam (2016) wrote professors and students

often relied on different pragmatics when making requests. Lam (2016) found students were more likely to use supportive moves, such as facework—polite language like *please* and *thanks a lot*—and apologies, whereas faculty members tended to make direct requests of their students and their colleagues. Furthermore, Lam (2016) concluded faculty made more direct and indirect *want* statements of one another while students often hid their requests in a *would like* statement. Lam's (2016) conclusions reinforced Bolkan and Holmgren's (2012) study regarding the necessity of politeness, and both studies expanded upon Stephens et al.'s (2009) conclusion that professors thought students do not ask direct requests. All three studies showed faculty wanted to interact with student email and responded well to polite statements; however, there was a disconnect between how students wrote and how professors wanted to be written to (Bolkan & Holmgren, 2012; Lam, 2016; Stephens et al., 2009). Other research acknowledged but did not address the disconnect.

The Future of Communication

Students may not have been satisfied with traditional email office hours and weekday email communication anymore. From 2010 to 2020, many scholars pointed to the rise of student consumerism—the idea that students are making decisions as consumers rather than learners—as a dramatic change in higher education (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010; Zhu & Anagondahalli, 2017). Being the faces of their institutions, professors possessed the most visible struggles with student consumerism. In a study regarding student expectations in education, Singleton-Jackson et al. (2010) noticed a stark change. In decades prior to their research, students sought clarity and wisdom from their professors; however, Singleton-Jackson et al. (2010) and Zhu and Anagondahalli

(2016) interviewed students who viewed their professors as paid experts whose job it was to answer questions and assign grades. Aligning with the new mindset, students in Singleton-Jackson et al.'s (2016) study most valued accessibility in a professor. Some students believed their role was as important as the professor's in learning, but Singleton-Jackson et al. (2010) believed the majority of students with whom they spoke sought a customer service professor who existed to attend to student issues.

Students were demanding more of their professors' time, but their expectations also seeped into instructional design. Rather than submit to traditional lectures or discussions, consumerist students expected meaningful interactions from their teachers (Singleton-Jackson et al., 2010). Singleton-Jackson et al. (2010) found students craved perceptible value from their dollar. To the students, lecturing and discussion were archaic and cheap; consumer students wanted an engaged, unique value for their tuition. While the demand that education transcend canned seemed like a positive change, other student consumer mindsets were less constructive. Many students viewed their professor not as a tool for personal development or enlightenment, but as a grade-giving obstacle that must be overcome (Hubbell, 2015). Some universities had adapted their mission statements and goals to reflect student consumerism, while others stood by classic intrinsic-value mission statements (Woodall et al., 2014). No matter their position on student consumerism, the expectations students placed upon their university were changing, and schools needed to understand how their students were communicating and be able to adapt to it.

Life After Email

Despite new forms of communication, The Radicati Group (2019) claimed email

would continue to have a place in common communication for the immediate future. Even with the rise of synchronous electronic communication, such as virtual meeting rooms and interoffice chat software, in 2019, email was still one of the most prevalent forms of communication in the world. One study projected over 30.4 billion emails would be sent in 2020 (The Radicati Group, 2019). Despite the number of emails that stuffed the inboxes of the world, some technology experts opined email to be an outdated and failing form of communication (Brandon, 2016; Jacobs & Rothman, 2015). Regardless of the integration of new technology, such as SMS and chatbots, Sharpe and Norton (2017) found that students still preferred to use email to query the library. Even when they tried to offer more cutting-edge services, students relied on email to contact university librarians (Sharpe & Norton, 2017). For many, email blended privacy, intimacy, and convenience.

In their 2016 report, Adestra, a global marketing firm, found several of their participants worried about privacy concerns social media created and thus rejected it in their professional lives. Even though consumers had more asynchronous communication options available than they did the previous decade, the report found the participants still preferred email communication (Adestra, 2016). In fact, the survey found users were 7% more likely to use their smart technology to access email than they were to access social media (Adestra, 2016 p. 8). Purcell and Raine's (2014) data showed 61% of American workers cited email as being very important, while less than 25% of this same sample rated smartphones as essential (p. 6). Even though the studies showed social media was on the rise in participants' private lives, email was still a dominant form of communication. Horrigan and Raine (2002) said it best almost two decades ago; "email

has gone from the remarkable to the reliable” (p. 3).

Even though many students and consumers valued the privacy and familiarity of email, schools needed to be aware that email could not be an exclusive tool. Multiple studies described how faculty needed to be prepared to meet students within new technology (Fryer et al., 2019; Sharpe & Norton, 2017). More businesses were relying on non-traditional electronic communication platforms (Purcell & Raine, 2014), so faculty members needed to be able to both adapt to the change and help their students prepare for future communication expectations. Some institutions even implemented chatbots to meet the age of electronic communication. Chatbots offered personalized learning experiences for students, particularly for classes with communication-based assessments, that professors did not always have time to provide (Fryer, Nakao, & Thompson, 2019). Communication technology evolved, so fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty had to adapt to communicate effectively the new technology. Be it the lexicon developed in MUD or the blended image and text communication born out of Instagram, technology had proven its ability to shape how individuals communicated. Purcell and Raine (2014) and Adestra (2016) foretold emails continued dominance in electronic communication, yet Alhabash and Ma (2017) demonstrated how language was involved. In tandem, these sources seemed to suggest that while email was a consent medium, the vernacular of electronic communication was evolving; therefore, professors needed to adapt to the students’ communication needs and make intentional choices when writing to yield more effective electronic messages.

Linguistic Analysis

Moments of effective communication likely involved focused applications of semantics and pragmatics of speech. From a carefully placed first-person plural pronoun to build comradery to a passionate future-tense vow of love at a wedding alter, the linguistic nuances were likely as bold as they were unintentional. For this study, the best place to look for significance in communication to students was in real-world emails, so this project developed as a corpus linguistics study. As Griffiths and Cummings (2017) wrote, “Competent users of a language generally use it without giving much thought to the details of what is going on. Linguists in general operate on the assumption that there are interesting things to discover in those details” (p. 3). This study pivoted around three dimensions of linguistics: content words, function words, and pragmatics.

Content Words

Consider the classic cliché opening line, “It was a dark and stormy night.” Upon reading the trite introduction, many readers likely imaged an ominous, rain-shrouded evening. Maybe the wind howled around them. Maybe a vampiric castle loomed in the distance. Whatever the reader imagined, the content words “dark,” “stormy,” and “night” worked together to build a vivid mental image. The content words held responsibility for the complexity that made human communication interesting. Even though Tausczik and Pennebaker (2013) found function words accounted for 55% of the language humans use, the same study wrote the entire English function word lexicon consisted of about 450 words (p. 29). These 450 words were vital for shaping expression; however, content words narrowed focus and allowed complex expression. Take, for example, Shakespeare’s (n.d.) immortal line in Hamlet—“To be or not to be—that is the question”

(3.1.64). Hamlet's infamous line contained nine function words and one content word. One could explore how Hamlet framed his entire emotional turmoil upon a single negation in a simple phrase, but that would be a digression. Shakespeare's to be or not to be penetrated across centuries into the 21st century vernacular, and the depth behind *Hamlet* and its eponymous prince came from the marriage of function and content words. "To be or not to be" were perhaps the most transcendental collection of function words in English, but an audience would have struggled to understand the function words' depth without the surrounding content words in the play. Without knowing of Claudius's schemes, Ophelia's desperation, or Hamlet's earlier conflicts, Hamlet's function words could not hum at full resonance and would become little more than snappy existential musing.

Due to their important relationship to content words, this study focused on three categories of content words: positive/negative emotion language, social language, and cognitive processing language. Pennebaker (2013) wrote content words projected the intent behind a writer's words, and Srivastava and Roychoudhury (2020) developed a program that could match users to their online writing with 91.2% accuracy. The frequency of positive or negative emotion language could have indicated the degree of optimism in a writer's life, their use of social language could have illuminated their relationship to their reader, and cognitive processing language could have been indicative of intellectual or self-reflective thought (Pennebaker, 2013). Table 1 listed some of the content words coded in this study.

Table 1*Examples of Content Words Used by Phase 1 Contributors*

Positive Emotion	Negative Emotion	Social	Cognitive Processing
Better	Alone	Apologize	Answer
Hopeful	Argue	Help	Everyone
Perfect	Idiotic	Relate	However
Sure	Mistake	Share	Relate
:)	Worrying	Talked	Perfect

Note. Extracted from LIWC2015 (Pennebaker Conglomerates (n.d.) dictionary

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) coded “Perfect” as both a positive emotion and a cognitive processing word. As in life, words in this study occupied a variety of roles, and the interplay between content and function words often made the difference between the “perfect” describing a subjectively desirable object or an objectively flawless execution of a concept.

Function Words

Content words were important, but some linguists had argued function words were more revealing. Pennebaker (2013) defined function words as the nearly invisible components of language that made it usable. While speakers often did not think about the language they used, again, research showed function words accounted for 55% of English speakers’ language use (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Tausczik and Pennebaker (2011) stated function words “reflect how people are communicating” (p. 29) and not just what they were saying, which made function words vital to understanding. A writer may have crafted meaning from meatier content words; however, function words were the backbone of the language and were necessary for expression. Multiple studies have claimed that language depends on function words (Osborne & Maxwell, 2015; Pennebaker, 2013).

The function words this study charted were the small, forgettable words elementary schools forced students to chart; they were typically composed of pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs, adverbs, and negations (Osborne & Maxwell, 2015; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Each word would have been difficult to define on its own, yet each played a vital role in the composition and meaning of the sentence in which it resided. Osborne and Maxwell (2015) stated that while individuals often believed content words were superior to function words, classic sentence diagramming showed that content word meaning was derived from function words, rather than the contrary. Take the sentence, “Are they flying planes?” as example. One may have assumed the word “flying” or “planes” contained the most meaning; however, Osborne and Maxwell (2015) described how the meaning of the sentence changed based upon the identity of the “to be” verb, “are.” If “are” was used as a standard verb, the sentence could only have had one meaning--the speakers must have been referring to airborne aircraft; however, if “are” was used as a function auxiliary verb, the sentence could also have been referencing individuals who were piloting airplanes (Osborne & Maxwell, 2015). The content phrase, flying planes, was useful for understanding the sentence, the question’s true meaning pivoted around the application of “are” as a verb or as a function auxiliary verb.

Just as a flexible “to be” verb could change a subject from a pilot to a plane, function words directed meaning in sentences. Personal pronouns were other important function words. Personal pronouns proved universal and pervaded most languages. Gardelle and Sorlin (2015) wrote some languages used more nominal forms of pronouns, yet most, if not all, languages employed some form of pronoun. While pronoun

deployment might not have meant the same thing in every language, the function words' prevalence suggested they could offer insight into the communicators they served (Gardelle & Sorlin, 2015). Pronouns provided a frame of reference (Pennebaker, 2013). Through the use of pronouns, an individual could communicate their position in relation to a topic, and a listener could glean more significance from the speaker than if the speaker had only employed full noun forms for all of their communication (Gardelle & Sorlin, 2015).

Consider an email that claimed "I need an extension on my essay" against "I need you to give me an extension on my essay." The student in the first example treated the professor in question as an assumed second person who could have granted the extension, and the student may have felt that they were being polite by not directing a person to whom they were subservient in the situation to grant them a favor (Cornish, 1999; Gardelle & Sorlin, 2015). Alternatively, the second email was more formal, but by evoking a second person pronoun, the student asserted a more dominate role in the conversation, which could have proven burdensome to their request (Pennebaker, 2013). As Cornish (1999) wrote, pronouns gave a listener the ability to ascertain much about the deictic focus of the speaker. Thus, the differences in pronoun clauses were subtle and more acrobatic than traditional noun phrases.

Function Words-Emotion Words. Just as important as the ideas words conveyed were the emotions they evoked. Pennebaker (2013) found communicators disclosed cues to their emotional state based upon the words they used. Overtly emotional content words such as sad, furious, or overjoyed tended to be obvious tells, but Pennebaker (2013) found function words could offer as much insight. For example, a sad

or depressed individual often articulated more past and future focused language and first-person pronouns. Alternatively, angry individuals used high rates of second and third-person pronouns, which provided a subconscious shift of focus and blame away from themselves, and spoke in present tense. While Pennebaker (2013) found the connection between language and emotion somewhat consistent, Ben-David et al. (2019) studied the impact age had on an audience's perception of language emotion. Older speakers and receivers were more likely to notice emotional subtext in the semantics of language; however, they were also more likely to over-project emotions into language and create unintended meaning in language (Ben-David et al., 2019). By contrast, younger communicators were more likely to miss emotions in semantics, but they were also less likely to misinterpret a communicator's emotional intent (Ben-David et al., 2019). As professors and undergraduate students often have a difference in age, there may have been room for emotional misinterpretation in their communication.

Function Words-Power Dynamic Words. Professors and students in this study may or may not have differed in age, but their relationships balanced upon stark power differences. Professors and advisors gave grades, wrote letters of recommendation, and commanded authority at the front of their classrooms. While some faculty played upon the imbalance of power more than others, Pennebaker (2013) claimed subjects in his studies naturally settled into power roles in communication—though roles were sometimes fluid. The higher status individual in an interaction tended to use fewer first-person pronouns and whereas lower status individuals tend to use more first-person pronouns (Pennebaker, 2013). Kacwicz et al. (2013) further found that, no matter how mundane the social relationship, a hierarchy almost always emerged. In one of Kacwicz

et al.'s (2013) studies, when students chatted in a basic get-to-know-you exercise, at least one of the students always took a dominate role in the conversation, and the less dominate individual shifted their pronoun use as the power dynamic became more concrete. For my study, I looked for power dynamics expressed in language to understand how students subconsciously perceived their relationship to their professors.

Power Words-Pragmatics. Whereas communication and emotion words involved the semantics of language—the meanings of words and phrases—pragmatics proved just as important to communication. If semantics represented the study of what people said, pragmatics encompassed the study of how they said it (Griffiths & Cummings, 2017). Pragmatics involved the meaning of speech contained in more than the meaning of the words; it involved their arrangement, references in the conversation, and nonverbal cues. Grice (1975) developed a set of standards through which scholars considered pragmatics. According to Grice (1975), there were certain rules of engagement in conversation and communication and breaking from those rules often meant a converser was either not behaving in good faith or was implying meaning through departure from Gricean protocol. It was important to remember that communicators performing in good faith kept their responses relevant, truthful, clear, and appropriately complex (Grice, 1975).

Gricean protocol could also be applied to electronic communication. As emails often represented short one-sided messages wherein a participant could not rely on pragmatic tells, such as tone or facial expression, it was vital that conversation partners believed the other was behaving in good faith. But what did “good faith” mean in electronic communication? As Bolkan and Holmgren (2012) found, even a concept as

crucial as politeness is up to interpretation. Through a pragmatic lens, my study assumed that professors, advisors, adjunct professors, and students all engaged in electronic communication with the intent to behave in good faith, and the data that follow attempted to discern differences in the participants' interpretation of what good faith means.

Just as people could have a complicated vocabulary shaped by age or gender, the power dynamics between two conversing individuals impacted their use of language (Pennebaker, 2013). Sakai and Carpenter (2011) studied patient/doctor interactions and found differences in the language used by the doctor, who held power in the conversation, and the patients and their families, who did not hold as much authority. When researchers forced a group of strangers into problem solving exercises, one individual inevitably seized authority and led the group (Kacewicz et al., 2013). In all 41 random sample groups, the researchers could effortlessly point to an individual who stepped forward as leader whose traits and word use could be studied (Kacewicz et al., 2013). The existence of social hierarchy in humans was not surprising; however, what may interest some is that research showed leaders and followers used different content and function words (Pennebaker, 2013; Sakai & Carpenter, 2011). The variation seemed to arise from differences in focus.

Pennebaker (2013) claimed an outward focus drove leaders as they tended to think about the goal or the mission. As such, leaders used more first-person plural pronouns, like "we" or "us" (Kacewicz et al., 2013; Pennebaker, 2013). Kacewicz et al. (2013) found individuals who led their groups used first person plural pronouns at rates about 25% higher than those who folded into the group as followers. In addition to their pronoun use, Pennebaker (2013) found leaders of higher status were more likely to

interrupt other speakers, be louder in conversation, and stand closer to one another. Sakai and Carpenter's (2011) work yielded concurring results; they claimed doctors spent 80% more time speaking than their patients and their patients' families. Research claimed those with more power in a relationship focused outward and were more dominant in conversation.

As for followers, Pennebaker (2013) believed individuals of lower status focused inward. Individuals with less authority were often aware of their lack of power, which shifted their focus to themselves and yielded self-recognizing language (Kacewicz et al, 2013; Pennebaker, 2013). Less powerful individuals in studies relied heavily on first-person singular pronouns, like "I" and "me." Kacewicz et al. (2013) found that the followers in their study used first person plural pronouns nearly 24% more frequently than their leaders. Pennebaker (2013) claimed the disparity may have arisen because while leaders were sure in their authority and could focus on the task at hand, followers had to work to ensure their voice was heard. Further defending this point, Kacewicz et al. (2013) concluded leaders were more likely to use relaxed language, while followers used more direct, work-related language. Kacewicz et al. (2013) explained the impact was minor in casual language, but the differences were more pronounced in work language. Sakai and Carpenter (2011) concluded medical patients perceived themselves as more active conversation participants; most patients the researchers studied believed they had spoken more in their conversation with their doctor than they had. Sakai and Carpenter's (2011) conclusion defended claims that less powerful individuals focused on increasing their authority in interactions, as the patients constructed revised narratives that placed themselves as a more dominate participant in previous conversations.

Style Matching

No matter how dominant an individual may be in a conversation, Pennebaker (2013) noted individuals tended to adapt to one-another's communication style as they spoke or wrote to one another. Speakers made subtle changes: they employed similar function words, switched tenses, or adjusted their tone to match their partner (Pennebaker, 2013). Most research referred to adaption as linguistic style matching (LSM). Aafjes-van Doorn et al. (2020) concluded counselors could engage in LSM to build trust and better understand their clients. Furthermore, Heuer et al. (2020) found that teams with higher percentage LSM matches enjoyed great social well-being, job performance, and inter-personal support. Pennebaker (2013) claimed LSM tended to occur naturally in conversation, and research indicated higher percentages of LSM created stronger senses of connectedness. The counselors in Aafjes-van Doorn et al.'s (2020) study engaged in style matching to develop trust with their clients; faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty might be able to use LSM to better engage with their students. Style matching seemed to provide an effective means through which conversations partners could develop connections while supporting one another.

Faculty/Advisor/Adjunct Roles and Goals

Fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty all occupied important, yet different roles in academia. Given the different roles each group of individuals held in students' lives, the current study sought to trace their language use and how it impacted students. Literature surrounding each of the three roles provided an instrumental basis for hypothesis development.

Fulltime Faculty

In the 21st century, fulltime faculty members filled kaleidoscopic job descriptions. In addition to their teaching duties, institutes expected fulltime faculty members to serve as advisors or mentors, meet their institution's research standards, give their time to various committees and institutional directives, and be able to frame all other duties within the context of a teaching philosophy (Gregoy & Burbage, 2017). To be competitive in their field, and thus eligible for promotion or tenure, faculty faced overwhelming pressure to publish in top-tier journals, obtain funding for their research and institution, and prove their worth as recognized scholars in their fields (Sweitzer, 2008). Lankveld et al. (2016) found faculty built their professorial identity upon five feelings: appreciation for their teaching, a sense of connectedness, a sense of competence, a sense of commitment, and feeling secure in teaching as a future career trajectory.

Appreciation for Teaching. To summarize Lankveld et al. (2016), professors were people, and institutions needed to remember their faculty members' humanity to better retain effective professors. As with any other employee, fulltime faculty members who felt appreciated valued their work more highly and offered better performance (White, 2015). This being said, faculty could identify contrived attempts to manufacture appreciation. When a college or a university honored employees for something not based on intentionality, such as years of service, White (2015) suggested the gesture amounted to nothing more than a professional participation trophy. Instead, faculty indicated desire for candid recognition, personalized acts of appreciation, grants, and specific teaching awards (Lankveld et al., 2016; White, 2015). As faculty also responded well to recognition from students, providing students the opportunity to honor their faculty could

validate faculty members struggling with developing a professional identity (Lankveld et al., 2016).

Sense of Connectedness. To build their professional identities, faculty needed to feel appreciated, but they also needed to have a sense of connection (Lankveld et al., 2016). Sweitzer (2008) hypothesized new generations of professors could build academic communities beyond the confines of campus through social networking. Previous cohorts of faculty used landlines and email to maintain professional connections with their on-campus colleagues and professionals they met at academic gatherings, but Sweitzer (2008) predicted generations of faculty in the 21st century and beyond would have opportunities to connect with ideas and individuals with which academia had never previously collaborated. Seemingly contrary to Lankveld et al.'s (2016) claims and Sweitzer's (2008) predictions, Kuntz (2012) found their faculty participants' work was becoming less collaborative. Faculty members noted that whenever an institution needed to expand but lacked real-estate, public spaces were often the first things converted to private offices (Kuntz, 2012). As shared space was replaced with closable office doors, and as technological advances allowed more faculty to take their research home with them, some fulltime faculty claimed their work was becoming more isolated. Kuntz (2012) noticed how faculty differentiated between their work, their writing and research, and their job's work, such as teaching duties and committee commitments. Berebitsky and Ellis (2018) worried that as the barriers between home and work eroded, so would faculty members' ability to compartmentalize personal and work stress, which, when coupled with the feelings of stress Kunrz (2012) described, could have a dire impact on faculty mental health.

Regardless of the uncertainty surrounding collaboration, there was hope for the future of fulltime faculty connections. For example, using electronic communication, a faculty member in Kentucky could conduct a collaborative study with a top expert in France and an industry leader in Hong Kong. Khoo et al. (2020) provided an example wherein the four authors taught in a blended classroom between Germany and South Africa and discussed how the experience gave them and their students valuable insight into state of mind outside of their home institution's. In fact, as Khoo et al. (2020) demonstrated, the word "colleagues" may come to hold new meaning as professors have the opportunity to connect new perspectives to their research and teaching.

Faculty Competence. Faculty competence in Lankveld et al.'s study (2016) took two forms: competence as a lecturer and competence as a researcher. Unfortunately, competence as a lecturer had historically been difficult to maintain, even more so for less privileged faculty members. Just as race, age, and gender impacted students' identities, professors' identities emerged from several blended characteristics. Professors from more privileged demographics tended to more easily establish authority in the classroom and did not have their credentials questioned as readily as their less privileged colleagues (Chesler & Young 2007). In addition, younger faculty felt stronger senses of imposter syndrome than their established colleagues, feelings which may have been further exacerbated in faculty from less privileged backgrounds (Chesler & Young, 2007; Lankveld et al., 2016). To be able to develop a professional identity, Chesler and Young (2007) believed faculty needed to be able to feel competent in their role and establish authority within their discipline.

Faculty Commitment. Commitment in higher education referred to professors' ability to hold a personal stake in their teaching and in their research, and genuine commitment could not be possible without academic freedom (Lankveld et al., 2016). Butler (2017) wrote academic freedom, "allows faculty to pursue lines of research and modes of thought without interference from government or other external authorities" (p. 1). Within academic freedom, professors could commit to their individual research interests without having to serve another's agenda. Academic freedom granted a professor the ability to have a stake in their duties and develop the commitment necessary to their professional identity (Butler, 2017; Lankveld et al., 2016).

Amar and Brownstein (2017) and Byrne (2015) expanded upon the social implications of academic freedom. When an institution encouraged students and faculty to answer to inquiry, rather than respond to power, the students' and professors' experiences nudged their discipline toward truth (Byrne, 2015). From a legal standpoint, Amar and Brownstein (2017) discussed how academic freedom was not just the right to pursue academic interests, it provided freedom from prosecution based upon the conclusions those pursuits may have yielded. The means to interrogate power offered by academic freedom allowed fulltime faculty to fully commit to their ideology and hold authority accountable (Amar & Brownstein, 2017; Byrne, 2015; Lankveld et al., 2016). While adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty should both enjoy academic freedom, adjunct faculty's at-will employment could have developed differences in their use of power language. Even if a university promised a contingent faculty member, such as an adjunct professor, academic freedom, their future employment, and thus their commitment to

their work, held no guarantee (Rice, 2019). The same sense of uneasiness may manifest in faculty members from institutions that do not award tenure.

Future of the professoriate. Finally, professors only felt secure in their identity as teacher if they could see a future for themselves in the profession (Lankveld et al., 2016). A neoliberal ideological revolution, the displacement of physical scholastic communities, and internet searches eclipsing expertise made the future of the 21st century scholar and professor seem bleak (Benegal, 2018; Elmore, 2016; Kuntz, 2012). But some experts claimed securing the future of the professoriate would be a matter of adaptation, not extermination. Blocher (2012) wrote carefully researched expertise and social discourse were essential to the future of education and democracy, and, as Benegal (2018) added, those who could shine skepticism upon untested truth were essential to combating ignorance, and hence, professors would continue to be essential. To allow their critics to accept their role in society, professors needed to continue to adapt; furthermore, they had to meet their students and society in the middle, lest they be viewed as serving an elitist or liberal agenda (Cornwell, 2016).

As Cornwell (2016) claimed, refusals to simplify discourse harmed the academy's ethos, as those outside of academia viewed the high-brow institutions as elite snobs who used incomprehensible research to further their own agenda. Fulltime faculty members needed to consider Cornwell's (2016) claims and understand how the language they used when writing their students impacted how their students received the communication. Benegal (2018) and Elmore (2016) wrote that much of the future of higher education is up to faculty, as they must work to overcome the Dunning-Krueger effect through effective connection with their students and by demonstrating the benefits of inclusive,

research-based education and decision making. Based upon research into ethos and student perception, the future image of higher education seemed more than partially dependent on how faculty members chose to engage with the world outside of academia.

Advisors

Lankveld et al. (2016) offered a theory within which to understand fulltime faculty, but academic advising is multidimensional and can change based upon an individual advisor or an institution's policies. Bahr (2008) wrote "advising refers to a complex and diverse family of phenomena that varies considerably across colleges, rather than to a single, undifferentiated process" (p. 726). In Bahr's (2008) perspective, advisors could not operate from a single book of theory as advising between different schools and different students proved dynamic. The fluctuating expectations universities and students placed upon advisors further complicated the role (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015; Bahr, 2008; Vianden, 2016). While advisors' responsibilities oscillated between institutions, the field of academic advising maintained some consistent expectations that inform how advisors communicated with students. Successful academic advisors typically built connections with students; translated curriculum; and gave personalized career, educational, or life guidance.

Students expected their advisor to value them as individuals. Vianden (2016) found advisees wanted advisors who were sincere and would connect with them on both a professional and a personal level. Donaldson et al. (2016) corroborated Vianden's (2016) claim; one of their participants discussed how she liked knowing that her advisor cared about her and she was not personally starting over every time they met. Vianden (2016) further concluded unresponsive advisors or advisors who give inaccurate information

most frustrated student participants. Students demanded personal connections with advisors, which left advisors to juggle personal connections with their expectation to maintain an authoritative position (Lowenstein, 1999; Vianden, 2016).

In addition to being an approachable social figure in students' lives, advisors were often expected to bridge institutional curriculum to students (Donaldson et al., 2016; Tinto, 2015). Tinto (2015) diagramed how self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and perception of curriculum synthesized into student motivation. Administrators wrote the curriculum; however, it was often the duty of advisors to help students understand how that curriculum related to their goals (Lowenstein, 1999; Tinto, 2015). Students, particularly underclassmen and first-generation college students, often lacked the background necessary to understand how each piece of the curriculum moved them toward their goal. It was up to advisors to help them understand why their work was important and how each academic requirement jig sawed into their achievements (Fullick et al., 2013; Lowenstein, 1999; Tinto, 2015). Being a social piece of students' lives, advisors stood as an obvious resource with whom students could converse for guidance in translating complicated university curriculum or policy.

Research indicated students held a final common expectation for advisors; they wanted advisors to offer educational and career direction (Fullick et al., 2013; Vianden, 2016). Fullick et al. (2013) concluded students often desired both career and educational advice from their advisor, and the student's final rating of their advisor's ability to give such advice was often predicted by the student's initial expectations of how much guidance they would receive. Students were more likely to rate their advisors highly if, from the beginning of the relationship, the student expected their advisor to give them

career and educational guidance (Fullick et al., 2013). Alternatively, students often expressed the sharpest dissatisfaction with advisors who gave incorrect academic information and advisors who did not offer the amount or type of advice students expected (Donaldson et al., 2016; Fullick et al., 2013). Fullick et al.'s (2013) conclusions found advisors needed to be proactive when establishing expectations with their advisees. Advisees who knew what to expect from their advisor and were satisfied with those expectations were more likely to have a healthy relationship with their advisor (Fullick et al., 2013). Advisors needed to be proactive when engaging with students and helping students develop an optimistic view of their experiences.

Code Switching. At the institution at which I conducted my study, instructional faculty also doubled as academic advisors, and within these dual roles, the schools expected advisors to be capable of code switching to meet the needs of their students and their advisees. Code switching, as used in sociolinguistics, referred to humans' ability to change how they use language to better relate to an individual or situation (Weston & Gardner-Chloros, 2015). A teacher who varied their communication tactics from speaking to a student to speaking to a parent or colleague engaged in code switching. In effective code switching, an individual changes their tone, syntax, and word-choice to better align with their desired audience (Weston & Gardner-Chloros, 2015). While similar, my study did not use code switching synonymously with borrowing or creative blends. In blending and borrowing, an individual lifted certain words or traits from one register and integrated them into their own way of speaking (Stockwell, 2009; Weston & Gardner-Chloros, 2015). Code switching offered a more complete shift to another communication style, shifts which those who occupied dual professor/advisor roles may

have subconsciously employed to meet the varied expectations of the students and advisees with whom they worked.

Adjunct Faculty

In 1975, 55.8% of faculty members in American higher education held fulltime tenured or fulltime tenure track positions (Curits, 2014). By 2011, the number of tenure and tenure-track faculty had plummeted to 29.2%. In lieu of fulltime, tenured faculty, part-time or fulltime adjunct faculty members filled 70.8% of faculty positions in American colleges and university in the early 2010s (American Association of University Professors [AAUP], 2014; Curtis, 2014). The dramatic shift alarmed both scholars and journalists; several attempted to explain the dramatic shift (Langen, 2011; Stenerson et al., 2010). Stenerson et al. (2010) claimed shriveling budgets and increased student spending had left schools with no other option but to bridge financial gaps with adjunct faculty. Others believed adjunct faculty brought real world experience to students that research-focused fulltime faculty lack (Langen, 2011). No matter the reason for their prevalence in higher education, adjunct faculty often maintained different relationships with their employers than fulltime faculty did.

Langen (2011) found colleges and universities often assessed adjunct faculty less often and less thoroughly than fulltime faculty, and Buffardi (2019) wrote that adjunct faculty often had to create their own assessment opportunities. After surveying and studying 26 institutions, Langen (2011) discovered nearly 20% of studied colleges and universities did not require regularly scheduled evaluations of their adjunct faculty, and around 7% of the schools did not require any adjunct faculty evaluations. When the institutions did evaluate their adjunct faculty, they primarily relied upon formalized

student feedback, followed by classroom observations (Langen, 2011). Just as troubling, the adjunct faculty in Buffardi's (2019) study stated their institution did not teach them how to assess their courses. Only adjunct faculty who had sought out a fulltime faculty assessment mentor felt comfortable self-assessing their classes and their teaching (Buffardi, 2019). Many schools reported seldom using instructor self-evaluation and several only partially relied upon peer evaluation, and 19% of schools did not provide any sort of job training for adjunct faculty (Langen, 2011; Lester, 2011). Furthermore, several institutions did not require adjunct faculty to engage in self-reflection or professional development (Langen, 2011). As peer-feedback was not a common assessment strategy; adjunct faculty could have struggled to integrate into their scholarly community. Research indicated colleges and universities disenfranchised their adjunct faculty members in more ways than just disconnection from feedback channels (AAUP, 2014; Lester, 2011).

In 2014 the AAUP found adjunct faculty did not have the opportunity to participate equally in their own evaluation, nor were they typically allowed to participate in university governing committees. The AAUP (2014) reported 63.7% of surveyed schools did not allow adjunct faculty to serve in university governance. When they could not directly participate in governance, adjunct faculty members had their academic freedom shackled. Lester (2016) also found 42% of the surveyed adjunct faculty lived more than 50 mi (80.47 km) from the university at which they worked. Adjunct faculty often felt isolated and some had claimed their colleagues did not even know them well enough to provide a letter of recommendation (Meixner et al., 2010; Thirolf & Woods, 2017). The isolation plunged beyond just colleagues; Meixner et al. (2010) surveyed 85 adjunct

faculty members; a majority of participants cited connections to their department, but, upon elaboration, did not feel a sense of belonging to the university or college. By not being involved in governance, not having a say in their assessment, and potentially living a great distance from their campuses, adjunct faculty members lived different experiences than fulltime faculty members.

Different experiences did not end at governance either; research indicated adjunct faculty members often lacked the same professional development opportunities as fulltime faculty members (Meixner et al., 2010). All nine adjunct faculty members Thirolf and Woods (2017) interviewed expressed want for more professional development. While several universities maintained budgets for fulltime faculty members' professional development expenses, adjunct faculty seldom received the same level of support (Meixner et al., 2010). Adjunct faculty in studies expressed desire for support with everything from course construction to assisting students with developmental needs to using enterprise technology (Meixner et al., 2010; Thirolf & Woods, 2017). As adjunct faculty members often lacked the resources for professional development and could not connect with their institution, several adjunct faculty members cited worries with engaging their students (Meixner et al., 2010). Participating in meaningful professional development like their fulltime colleagues was rare for adjunct faculty members, but adjunct faculty members are further burdened by lower wages and conditional employment.

Colleges and universities frequently employed adjunct faculty as at-will employees (AAUP, 2014). Being at-will employees or limited-term contract employees, adjunct faculty did not have a guarantee of a renewed contract and were at risk of near

immediate dismissal (AAUP, 2014; Rebore, 2015). As a supervisor could terminate their adjunct faculty for almost any reason, an adjunct faculty member did not enjoy the same level of academic freedom enjoyed by tenured faculty (AAUP, 2014; Stenerson et al., 2010). Unless they bargained a strong contract, adjunct faculty members could not develop a course around their own academic interests or voice contrary opinions without risking their position (AAUP, 2014; Thirolf & Woods, 2017). In their qualitative study, Thirolf and Woods (2017) found adjunct faculty wanted to have a voice in their system but felt isolated and in danger when they spoke out. When they could speak through an adjunct liaison, adjunct faculty felt more heard and more comfortable vocalizing questions or grievances. Without a liaison, adjunct faculty can only be as outgoing as their contract allows.

Inequality was rampant in higher education as adjunct faculty members struggled to earn the same rights as fulltime professors, and some researchers claimed having too many adjunct faculty members damaged programs' reputation. Yorke (2014) found a negative correlation between the number of adjunct faculty teaching in an art and design program and its student ratings. After looking at data from over 60 universities, Yorke (2014) concluded university art or design departments that employed more adjunct faculty scored lower in student ratings than counterparts that employed more fulltime faculty. Alternatively, Thyer et al. (2011) found no difference in how students rated adjunct and fulltime faculty members. After sampling the survey data from 294 post-course evaluations, Thyer et al. (2011) found no significant differences in ratings between adjunct and fulltime faculty in social work departments; they concluded students in their social work program did not claim a discernable difference between experiences with an

adjunct faculty or fulltime faculty member. The difference between Yorke (2014) and Thyer et al. (2011) could have demonstrated differences between departmental expectations, or they might have illustrated how the effectiveness of adjunct faculty varied between schools.

Linguistic Connection

Speakers of high and low power demonstrated differences in their language use, but what might power differences mean for faculty and students? As mentioned, faculty members and students must negotiate an inherent power imbalance. Erçetin and Çakir (2016) concluded professors tended to use expert power to draw authority in the classroom. The faculty participants in Erçetin and Çakir's (2016) study were likely to use their subject area and teaching knowledge to derive authority, rather than threatening punishment (coercive power), having genuinely higher social standing (legitimate power), promising rewards (reward power), or having a good personal relationship (referral power). As previously discussed, expertise was less important to students than ever before, and, as the internet had allowed more individuals to feel more informed, the traditional expert power used by faculty may not have sufficed. Faculty expertise continued to be down-played; however adjunct faculty continued to hold even less power in their institutions, and advisors negotiated alternative sources of power with students.

Linguistic Analysis-Nuts and Bolts

The specific instrument with which this study analyzed language was Pennebaker et al.'s (2015) LIWC2015 program. In the 1980s, Pennebaker and his colleagues were studying connections between an individual's emotional state and their writing (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Traditional linguistic analysis, such as the Gottschalk method, was

time consuming and necessitated the training and validation of several intermediate judges who would sort sample language to prevent research bias (Gottschalk & Lolas, 1989; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Researchers relied upon professional coders to sort linguistic data (Gottschalk & Lolas, 1989; Koestner et al., 1991; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011), yet differences in training or opinion made reproducing results difficult. Having to rely upon professionally trained individuals could also make research more expensive or time consuming.

To provide more consistency in psycholinguistic research, Stone and his colleagues began developing electronic text analysis programs, which they named The General Inquirer (Stone et al., 1962). The program made linguistic analysis easier; however, The General Inquirer still struggled to validate its answers (as cited in Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). As advanced as The General Inquirer was for the time, other researchers could not edit its algorithms, the program could not capture non-verbal cues, and the program could not sort a word into more than one potential category (Psathas, 1966; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Future programs corrected some of The General Inquirer's weaknesses; however, even the updated programs often failed to sort emotional words (as cited in Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Pennebaker and his colleagues wanted to glimpse into the emotional state of their participants, not just the number of words they used; they needed a program that counted words like a psychologist rather than a linguist (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Pennebaker and his research team claimed, "our goal was to create a program that simply looked for and counted words in psychology-relevant categories across multiple text files" (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011, p. 27). To meet their need, the team created the first version of the LIWC program (Tausczik & Pennebaker,

2011).

Just as its name and history suggested, LIWC's primary function was counting and sorting words into predetermined categories within three dictionaries (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). After the program's creation in the early nineties, Pennebaker made several new versions and updates, the largest of which were in 1997, 2007, and 2015. My study relied upon the 2015 version, which could sort over 6000 words and stems (Pennebaker Conglomerates, n.d.). LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) could identify emotional connotations of words, such as anger or sadness; function words, like personal pronouns and auxiliary verbs; personal drives, such as power or risk; social words, like gender related phrases; time focus, such as present or past focused language; relativity, such as language focused on motion; personal perceptions, such as seeing and feeling; biological words, like phrases relating to sex or health; and process words, such as insight-focused language (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) boasted an impressive vocabulary, yet all that the program could do was count and sort words, individual researchers still held responsibility for all data applications. The complex LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) program offered a solution to the simple, time-consuming problem of counting and sorting words for research purposes.

To assist researchers with drawing conclusions based upon language, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) operated through text uploads. Researchers input language either through a text document, such as a .docx or .txt or a spreadsheet from an electronic questionnaire, such as a .xlsx file. The program then counted the contents of the file, sorted the words within, and returned findings based in percentages (Pennebaker et al., 2015). Each percentage represented how many and what types of words appeared in the

passage. For example, John Dewey famously wrote, “I believe that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living” (1897, para. 8). LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) categorized 73.36% of Dewey’s (1897) language as analytic and 58.82% of the words as function words. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) also logged 11.76% of the words as health terms and 5.88% as insight language. These four results only provided a glimpse of LIWC2015’s (Pennebaker et al., 2015) analysis; the program analyzed 89 other linguistic dimensions of Dewey’s quote

Given that researchers created LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) as a specific tool for a specific research team, one could call its authenticity into question. Dozens of researchers have relied upon a LIWC iteration and have published research reliant the software’s data, and Tausczik and Pennebaker (2011) cited over 100 studies that have used a version of LIWC to reach their conclusions. In their study, Dino et al. (2009) mentioned LIWC allowed them to research online communication and easily identify significant differences in language in electronic writing. Tausczik and Pennebaker (2011) further defended LIWC’s validity through the use of Cronbach’s α . The researchers used data regarding the average frequency of words in English and the frequency of article word from thousands of samples as analyzed by LIWC and compared the results using Cronbach’s α (Tausczik and Pennebaker, 2011). The test demonstrated LIWC’s sample to be statistically close enough to measured use of articles in English to validate the instruments results; Pennebaker and his team then repeated the test for all of LIWC’s categories (Tausczik and Pennebaker, 2011). Pietraszkiewicz et al. (2019) investigated the validity of two of LIWC2015’s dictionaries through a rigorous four-part study. The research team supported LIWC2015’s reliability as a research instrument and wrote that

if text analysis continued to play a larger role in psychological research, researchers would need to rely on software like LIWC2015 to make the coding of large data samples possible (Pietraszkiewicz et al., 2019).

As LIWC proved to be a valid instrument for social research, researchers applied LIWC to a variety of research problems. Researchers such as Dino et al. (2009) used LIWC to study groups of online text from social media sites and blogs. Other studies, such as Newman et al. (2016) and Chung and Pennebaker (2007) uploaded interview transcripts to LIWC to better understand participant's language use. Closer to my study's completion, Holzman et al. (2019) studied narcissism with LIWC and found a link between the use of sports words, second person pronouns, and swear words to narcissism. Relevant to the current study, Oberlander and Gill (2006) uploaded emails to LIWC to count the words used by recent university graduates and if the words could determine students' psychological state. Oberlander and Gill (2006) evaluated 210 emails, which contained over 65000 words, and found they had enough data to conduct meaningful word tagging and likelihood statistics. In each example, LIWC provided instant data, which would have previously taken researchers hundreds of hours to code and validate.

Application to Current Study

LIWC2015 permitted this research to occur. The program made it possible review the language used by faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty and connect them to the lived experiences and needs of the participants. While LIWC2015 still has flaws, such as an inability to detect sarcasm or discern between singular and plural "they/them" pronouns, the software is still a research asset. Language is too complicated and rapidly evolving to permit a perfect word counting program; however, the current research would

not have been possible without LIWC2015's instantaneous evaluation. The heavily validated dictionaries within LIWC2015 provided the foundation upon which this two-phase mixed methods study gathered, evaluated, and discussed data.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this sequential mixed-methods research was to study how undergraduate students in higher education at a private, Midwestern university perceived and responded to the language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. In Phase I of the study, I followed Pennebaker's (2013) model for sociolinguistic analysis and applied a Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015) (Pennebaker et al., 2015) program to faculty email to compare how fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty communicated with students. During the Transition Phase, I used the data from Phase I to construct a series of hypothetical emails, which I then presented to a student sample group. In Phase II, using the sample group's perspectives, I examined how students responded to the writing styles and strategies used by their fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. At the study's conclusion, I evaluated the data and considered how the linguistic choices made in the emails of fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty were meaningful to students. Several communication theorists have claimed student and faculty engagement was moving out of the office and onto the internet (Duran, et al. 2005; Miller & Reznik, 2016; Taylor et al., 2011). I hoped to identify patterns in language that resonated with students. Furthermore, I sought to determine patterns to guide university employees toward more effective communication practices.

At the time of this study, little research gauged student opinion of faculty writing or offered insight to help faculty communicate more effectively to students. Studies explained how sociolinguistics factored into common communication (Pennebaker, 2013; Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011; Whalen et al., 2009) and some explained how faculty and

students used email (Leach & Wang, 2015; Wrench & Punyanunt, 2004), yet few scholars attempted to synthesize the two ideas. The few studies in publication privileged faculty writing and focused solely on tone (Blackburne & Nardone, 2018; Bolkan & Holmgren, 2012; Finn et al., 2011). My study hoped to bridge a gap in research by using sociolinguistic principles to help faculty and advisors craft more meaningful electronic communication.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Phase I Null Hypotheses (NH)

NH1: According to the measure, there is no difference in the percentage of positive emotion language used between advisors and fulltime faculty.

NH2: According to the measure, there is no difference in the percentage of power language used by fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty.

NH3: According to the measure, there is no difference in the percentage of social language that is used by advisors and adjunct faculty.

NH4: According to the measure, there is no difference in the percentage of analytic language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

NH5: According to the measure, there is no difference in the percentage of personal pronouns used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

NH6: According to the measure, there is no difference in the percentage of impersonal pronouns used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty.

Phase I Research Question

R1: How does the linguistic composition of fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty emails differ?

Phase II Null Hypotheses

NH7: According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of positive language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

NH8: According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of power language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

NH9: According to the measure, there is no difference in the social language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

NH10: According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of analytic language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

NH11: According to the measure, there is no difference in the number of personal pronouns students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

NH12: According to the measure, there is no difference in the number of impersonal pronouns students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

NH13: According to the measure, there is no difference in the type of tense language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor.

Phase II Research Questions

R2: How do students perceive emails written by professors and advisors?

R3: How does a professor or an advisor's communication style make a student more or less receptive to communication?

R4: What, if any, linguistic components of faculty or advisor emails are most memorable to students?

R5: If students found some linguistic components in R4 more memorable than others, why were those linguistic components of professor or advisor email more memorable?

Connection to Previous Research

The Phase I research questions and null hypotheses questioned how fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty communicated with students, and Phase II research questions and null hypotheses then interrogated how students interpreted and responded to communication from their faculty and advisors. First, Null Hypothesis 1 and Null Hypothesis 7 related to positive language use. Positive emotion language helped build optimistic thought (Pennebaker, 2013). Vianden (2016) and Tinto (2015) discussed how students craved a sincere and optimistic advisor who also pushed them to develop as an individual, so advisors may instinctually have used different rates of positive emotion language than their faculty peers to help their students develop an optimistic view of their education. From the student perspective, the need for optimism may have encouraged students to deploy different levels of positive language in communication to their advisor than they did when they communicated with their instructional faculty. Pennebaker (2013), Vianden (2016) and Tinto's (2015) results set the foundation for Null Hypothesis 1 and Null Hypothesis 7.

Null Hypothesis 2 and Null Hypothesis 8 related to power dynamic language use. Given adjunct faculty members' lack of representation in their careers, I thought it

prudent to study the differences in faculty and adjunct language use in relation to power dynamics. As adjunct faculty members guarded against their at-will employment status, their language use may have differed from that of their fulltime faculty members counterparts. Prior research attempted to determine any differences students' perceptions of adjunct faculty against fulltime faculty, yet these studies proved inconclusive (Thyer et al., 2011; Yorke, 2014). Since adjunct faculty members lived different professorial lives than fulltime faculty members (AAUP, 2014; Langen, 2016), their power dynamic language use could have reflected those differences, and those differences might have impacted communication with students and encouraged students to respond with unique percentage of power dynamic language use.

In consideration of Null Hypothesis 3, Null Hypothesis 4, Null Hypothesis 9, and Null Hypothesis 10 Lankveld et al. (2016) outlined the need for competence in faculty member development. Such need could have encouraged fulltime faculty participants in this study to use differing levels of social language or analytic language, which led me to develop the related null hypotheses. Erçetin and Çakir (2016) wrote that faculty members relied upon the expert power generated by their subject matter expertise to establish authority. If true, the claim would mean faculty likely engaged in less social communication and more frequent thoughtful subject matter discussions with students. When an individual engaged in critical thought and discussion, their use of analytic language increased (Pennebaker, 2013). To meet the needs of their competency demands, fulltime faculty members may have used different levels of social language with their students. In turn, students could have written with different percentages of analytic language to engage with their expert-power-based fulltime faculty member.

The next four null hypotheses, Null Hypothesis 5, Null Hypothesis 6, Null Hypothesis 11, and Null Hypothesis 12, questioned pronoun use. If Kacewicz et al. (2013) and Sakai and Carpenter's (2011) research drew accurate conclusions and faculty were always the more powerful party in the student-faculty relationship, then faculty should generally use more second and third person pronouns, and students should use more first-person pronouns. Furthermore, Pennebaker (2013) suggested an individual's personal and impersonal pronoun use could highlight their focus of their attention. If students held different expectations for their faculty members and their advisors, their communication to their faculty members may have contacted different percentages of personal or impersonal pronouns than the communication to their advisors.

The final null hypothesis, Null Hypothesis 13, studied tense use. I based the primary consideration for Null Hypothesis 13 on linguistic research. Again, research indicated tense use paralleled to a communicator's focus (Pennebaker, 2013). Students typically engaged in different temporal relationships with their advisor than with their fulltime faculty or adjunct faculty. By its conclusion, the student-advisor relationship often spanned several terms and may have involved long-distance planning. Alternatively, fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty typically engaged with students on a semester-by-semester basis. Due to the nature of their contracts, adjunct faculty members may have even less time with individual students. The differences in temporal relationships may have pushed students to rely upon different verb tenses when communicating with their faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisors.

The Phase II research questions, 2, 3, 4, and 5 existed to cover any gaps I failed to account for in hypothesis creation. The four categories allowed me to listen to student

feedback and data without necessarily needing to assign findings to a designated hypothesis. I believed higher education needed to understand students' opinions on email communication, what made students willing to read or engage with an email, and what, if any, linguistic components were associated with students' likelihood to retain information from emails. Through research questions 2, 3, 4, and 5, I sought to capture a more holistic view of student participants' needs and experiences.

Methodology

Student perception dwelled within the heart of this study; however, receiving student feedback on genuine faculty and advisor emails required a collection of faculty emails. Conducting a sequential study provided candid emails in the first half of the study that I repurposed for the second half of the study so student participants could respond to genuine writing samples. The study took place over three phases: Phase I, Transition Phase, and Phase II. The following pages and the study flowchart (Appendix A) described each phase in detail.

Phase I

I solicited participation from fulltime faculty members, advisors, and adjunct faculty through an email request. Interested parties completed a short survey to express interest and provide contact information. After two weeks, a neutral research moderator collected information from the interest survey and sent each of the potential participants the following documents: instructions for submitting their emails to the study, a guide for identifying and redacting personal identifiers in the emails (Appendix B), an informed consent document, and a participant letter (F for Fulltime Faculty, V for Advisor, or A for Adjunct Faculty). The instructions asked each participant to submit nine redacted emails

via an online questionnaire instrument (Appendix C). The participants then had two weeks to submit their informed consent document and redacted emails.

Once the submission window closed, two independent consent reviewers reviewed all submissions. The two readers received a training manual (Appendix D) and received instructions to redact any information they felt unsure about. Data analysis did not begin until both content reviewers approved every submission. I relied upon LIWC2015 to count and analyze the data submitted in Phase I of the study.

Transition Phase

Researchers like Srivastava and Roychoudhury (2020) claimed to be able to identify writers based on their writing sample with 91.2% accuracy. To protect the identities of the Phase I participants and their students, I synthesized the data from Phase I into new synthetic emails for Phase II of the study. Table 2 lists each category, the percentage of words or phrases an email had to contain to check for this category, and the number of emails that fell within each category.

Table 2*Linguistic Categories of Emails Synthesized in Transition Phase*

Category	Minimum Percentage	Emails w Category
<i>Tone</i>		15
Positive	8%	3
Negative	8%	3
Power Dynamics	8%	3
Social	20%	3
Cognitive Processing	20%	3
<i>Pronoun</i>		15
I	8%	3
We	5%	3
You	10%	3
(S)he	5%	3
They	5%	3
<i>Average Word Length</i>		15
11 six letter words or less	-	8
20 six letter words or more	-	7
<i>Average Sentence Length</i>		15
7 words or less	-	7
20 words or more	-	8
<i>Tense</i>		15
Past	5%	5
Present	20%	5
Future	5%	5

Note. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) calculated all percentages and categories.

Each Category was contained within LIWC2015's (Pennebaker et al., 2015) standard dictionaries.

Upon evaluation of the Phase I data, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) provided a list of sorted words and the percentages participants had used those words in their writing. Addressing differences in emotion language (null hypotheses 1 and 7), power dynamic language (null hypotheses 2 and 8), social language (null hypotheses 3 and 9), analytic language (null hypotheses 4 and 10), pronoun use (null hypotheses 5, 6,

11, and 12), and tense (Null Hypothesis 13) required 15 artificial emails. I crafted each email with a specific tone, dominate pronoun, word length, sentence length, and tense. Furthermore, I composed each email using only the words and phrases the Phase I participants provided.

Each percentage referenced in Table 2 correlated to the LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) data from Phase I. For example, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) coded the social language emails in Phase I with the highest percentages of use per email at around 20%. Table 2 also made apparent that each email generated in the Transition Phase represented a single tone, a single pronoun, a single word length, a single sentence length, and a single tense. To be able to triangulate data in Phase II, each email varied its represented categories. Appendix E charted the categories represented by each email.

After drafting each email, I used LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) to review the percentages of language in the email. If an email failed to meet the criteria represented on Table 2, I revised it until it qualified. Once I had drafted the emails, I created a short quiz based upon their content (Appendix F). Finally, students in the university's research participant pool read the drafted emails and responded to the quiz. I used these responses to test the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach's adjustment and tune the emails and questions before initiating Phase II data collection.

Phase II

I originally intended to conduct Phase II as an in-person study; however, the COVID-19 pandemic presented a challenge for participants' safety. Participants completed the study online via Qualtrics. After the survey, participants could have opted

into a brief focus group about faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty email. The focus group met on Zoom for a short 45-min discussion, which I recorded and coded.

Participants

I conducted this study using three different sets of participants: Phase I contributors, Transition Phase participants, and Phase II participants. As evidenced in Blackburne and Nardone (2018) and Whaley et al. (2009), a worthwhile linguistic analysis of Phase I contributors' submissions would require at least 168 samples of writing. Collecting writing samples from a single class of students (Miller & Reznik, 2016; Young et al., 2011), from public records (Pennebaker, 2013), or a from single colleague (Lam, 2016), would have yielded faster data; however, none of these samples would have offered a diverse cross-section of fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty writing. Instead, I asked a wide variety of contributors to submit nine writing samples each, and to generate a dynamic sample of emails. Each of the contributors' nine emails fell within a different prompt (Appendix C). To reach the necessary 168 writing samples, Phase I required nine writing samples from 19 different contributors. The final contributor count included eight fulltime faculty, seven advisors, and four adjunct faculty; these contributors collectively submitted 171 total writing samples. Phase I participants included fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty from a private Midwestern University.

In the Transition Phase, participants completed a series of potential Phase II instruments through the host university's student participant pool. Eight students participated in the Transition Phase, and I used their results to test the reliability of the

Phase II instruments. A later section of Chapter Three will discuss the results of the Transition Phase reliability tests.

Whereas the purpose of Phase I focused on gauging the linguistic nuances of faculty and advisors at a single institution, Phase II questioned how students responded to those writing habits. As such, Phase II participation did not need to be restricted to the host university, and while this study recruited student participants at the host university, participant solicitation also occurred on via Reddit and an advisor association listserv. To qualify as a participant, an interested individual only needed to fulfill two criteria: be an undergraduate student and be able to read and respond to English email communication. Some research suggested that spoken language was more effective at communicating concepts than written language (Korostyshevskiy, 2018), so this study excluded text-to-speech and other spoken language software.

Previous studies indicated responsive linguistic analyses required 30 participants (Queen & Boland, 2015; Tagliamonte, 2016). Other methodologies studied around 80 participants (Boland & Queen, 2016; Volckaert-Legrier et al., 2009); however, most of the publications with larger sample sizes employed student-initiated email as their primary data point. Tagliamonte (2016) and Queen and Boland (2015) researched student responses and perspective, which more accurately resembled my study's methodology. The smaller sample size allowed Tagliamonte (2016) and Queen and Boland (2015) ample time to code the dense results, yet still yielded enough potential variance to create applicable statistics. Qualitatively, a focus group of 30 students yielded a variety of perspectives. Tagliamonte's (2016) smallest sample consisted of 21 students, and the sample yielded useful linguistic breakdowns, fixed regressions, and distributions. As

Tagliamonte (2016) could still apply statistics, 21 proved a reasonable minimum sample size for my study. Phase II of the current study met Tagliamonte's (2016) smaller sample examples and included questionnaire responses from 31 students. The same students provided 60 writing samples; one student participant chose not to contribute writing samples. Six students composed the final focus group at the conclusion of Phase II.

Reliability

Two instruments gathered most of the data in this study: LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) and the synthesized emails/quiz. As discussed in Chapter Two, several researchers conducted studies using LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015), and Pennebaker and his research assistants tested and revised LIWC2015's dictionaries every few years to support the program's reliability. Pietraszkiewicz et al. (2019) conducted a four-part study to test LIWC2015's reliability and concluded the program provided sound linguistic output. The research team further concluded that future substantial linguistic analysis would need to rely on programs like LIWC2015 to be able to code the massive amounts of text available to researchers through the internet.

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) offered this study an easy-to-use pre-reliability tested option for collecting linguistic data. While LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) could count and sort words, it could not gather the data necessary to test this study's hypotheses. Given the study sought to understand the relationship between Phase I and Phase II participants, the study could not use a pre-written instrument. As described in the previous section, this study used data from Phase I to create the Phase II emails, and I used Cronbach's alpha and Kuder and Richardson Formula 20 (KR20) tests to

evaluate the reliability of the emails/comprehension quiz the Phase II participants completed.

Cortina (1993) offered guidance on applying Cronbach's alpha to research. Researchers should apply the alpha to unidimensional studies and aim for numbers greater than 0.7 (Cortina, 1993). According to Cortina (1993) if an instrument used too many metrics, Cronbach's alpha tended to skew smaller, but if the study had a large sample, the number tended to skew larger. Despite its flaws, as long as a researcher maintained awareness of the bias present within the calculation, Cronbach's alpha could have provided an effective reliability test.

The study used a small testing sample and generated an alpha for the five aforementioned email categories: tone, pronouns, average word length, average sentence length, and tense. Table 3 lists the Cronbach alphas for the Phase II instrument.

Table 3

Cronbach Alphas of Phase II Email Categories

Category	α
Tone	0.923
Pronouns	0.884
Word Length	0.912
Sentence Length	0.927
Tense	0.835

Note. Researchers often aim for alphas of 0.7 or greater (Cortina, 1993)

Each alpha in this study exceeded Cortina's (1993) 0.7 recommendation, which offered some assurance to the instrument's reliability. The sample sizes in this test were small, yet each category achieved an acceptable alpha score. Still, Schrepp (2020) warned against sole reliance on Cronbach's alpha, stating that sample size could skew the coefficient. To provide a secondary reliability check, I conducted a KR20 test.

Created in 1937 by Kuder and Richardson, researchers used the KR20 as metric to evaluate the consistency and reliability of questions within multiple-choice tests. The Phase II instrument was a multiple-choice test, so KR20 test seemed to be an appropriate metric. As with Cronbach's alpha, KR20 offered a score between 0 and 1; a score of 0 claimed little correlation between test questions and whereas a score closer to 1 usually indicated tighter question correlation (Kuder & Richardson, 1937). The Phase II instrument received a 0.792 KR20 score. Paired with the acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficients, the KR20 score once again reassured me of the instrument's reliability. The high reliability scores encouraged me to continue the study.

Analysis Strategy

To interrogate the hypotheses and research questions in this study, I relied upon three techniques. First, in Phase I, I conducted one-way analyses of variance on the LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) results of the faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty emails to test for significant differences in the percentages of positive language used by each participant. Within each analysis of variance (ANOVA), I treated each linguistic category, the email author—fulltime faculty, advisor, or adjunct faculty—served as the independent variable. Each test allowed me to test for statistically significant differences in percentages of language used between Phase I contributors.

In Phase I, I compared three datasets; however, several of the Phase II hypotheses compared two sets of data. For these instances, I conducted a two-tailed related samples t-test to compare the percentage of a given linguistic category used by students when addressing their professor and their advisor. Finally, in Phase II, I coded and compared qualitative feedback offered by focus group participants to illustrate participants'

perspectives on email communication from their professors and advisors. Blending t-tests, one-way ANOVAs, and qualitative responses offered a more holistic view of how email communication impacted the participants.

Summary

This sequential mixed-methods study sought to understand how fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty members write and how students read. I began the study by gathering a collection of emails from faculty members, then created a reliable collection of 15 emails from the original sample, and finally distributed the synthesized emails and a quiz to a sample of undergraduate students. The study concluded with a small focus group of undergraduate students. The quantitative aspects of the mixed-methods approach allowed me to obtain statistical data related to the linguistic make-up of the emails and what the students remember. Meanwhile, the qualitative components gleaned a glimpse into the experience of students as they read their instructor and advisors' electronic communication. Chapter Four will discuss the data obtained from the mixed-methods study.

Chapter Four: Results

Overview

Two sequential phases comprised this study. In Phase I, fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty submitted redacted email samples. Two content reviewers removed potential identifiers from the Phase I data and then submitted the redacted data to me for analysis. I evaluated the Phase I data using the LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) program and, based on the data, generated the Phase II instrument—a collection of 15 synthetic emails and a brief quiz. Undergraduate student participants read the 15 emails and completed the online quiz. Finally, Phase II participants had the option to opt into a brief focus group where they virtually met and discussed the Phase II instrument and their opinions and perceptions of fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty emails.

Phase I

Through the hypotheses and research question in Phase I of this study, I assessed the linguistic composition of fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty email communication. I collected redacted email samples from each of the Phase I contributors to serve as my Phase I data and then utilized LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) to evaluate each sample. Student opinions did not inform Phase I; all conclusions represented data collected from Phase I contributor submissions. To protect the identity of all contributors and their students, independent content reviewers redacted personal identifiers from the data before submitting them to me for evaluation.

Phase I, Null Hypotheses

I conducted one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) on the LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) results of the fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty

emails submitted in Phase I of the study to check for significant differences in the percentages of positive language used by each participant. Within each analysis of variance I treated each linguistic category, the email author—fulltime faculty, advisor, or adjunct faculty—served as the independent variable. Each test allowed me to test for statistically significant differences in percentages of language used between Phase I contributors.

Null Hypothesis 1. According to the measure, there is no difference in the positive emotion language between fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. I conducted a one-way ANOVA using the Phase I contributor category, hereafter referred to as Phase I Groups, as the independent variable to test for differences in the percentage of positive language used between Phase I Groups. The data did not represent a statistically significant difference in positive emotion language use between fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty, $F(2,16) = .59, p = 0.567$. As the data did not yield sufficient evidence to reject Null Hypothesis 1, post hoc tests to determine which Phase I contributor categories differed from one another were not necessary.

As discussed in Chapter Two, positive language could have been indicative of an individual's level of optimism or if they perceived a topic or a conversation partner favorably (Pennebaker, 2013). LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) coded words like “better” and “hopeful” as positive language. As LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) expressed each result as a percentage, each individual email received a value from 0 to 100. A score of 0 indicated a contributor did not use any positive language whereas a score of 100 indicated exclusive use of positive language. Table 4 illustrates the mean

positive emotion language used by each Phase I contributor category and the variance within each participant category.

Table 4

Mean Positive Emotion Language in Phase I Contributor Emails

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean (%)	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	3.946	0.618	0.786
Advisor	7	4.316	1.588	1.260
Adjunct Faculty	4	4.538	0.201	0.449

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

Null Hypothesis 2. According to the measure, there is no difference in power language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. I conducted a one-way ANOVA using the Phase I Groups as the levels of my independent variable to test for differences in the percentage of power language use. The data did not represent a statistically significant difference in power language use between fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty, $F(2,16) = .39, p = 0.685$. As the data did not reject Null Hypothesis 2, there was not a need to conduct further testing upon group differences.

Kacewicz et al. (2013) concluded power hierarchies almost always emerged in communication between individuals, and language can give insight into the social standing of the conversation participants. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) coded words like “allow,” “approve,” and “judge” as high-power language. Pennebaker (2013) wrote increased use of first-person plural pronouns, like “us” and “we,” indicated the communicator likely had more power than the other conversation participants. As with positive emotion language, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) scored the power language content of each email as a percentage of words, which meant possible scores could range from 0-100. Scores of 0 indicated a contributor did not include any power

dynamic language in their email, while a score of 100 indicated their writing only included power dynamic language. Reference Table 5 for the variance and the mean power language used by each participant group.

Table 5

Mean Power Dynamic Language in Phase I Contributor Emails

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean (%)	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	2.074	0.723	0.850
Advisor	7	2.353	0.920	0.959
Adjunct Faculty	4	2.560	1.211	1.100

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

Null Hypothesis 3. According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of social language that is used by advisors and adjunct faculty. I conducted a one-way ANOVA using the Phase I Groups as my independent variable levels to test for differences in the percentage of social language use. The data did not represent a statistically significant difference in social language use between fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty, $F(2,16) = 1.69, p = 0.216$. Null Hypothesis 3 could not be rejected, so further tests to examine differences between contributor categories would be fruitless.

Use of social language often illuminated the relationship between speakers (Pennebaker, 2013). A high social language score demonstrated social familiarity between participants, which could have been indicative of less formal or friendlier relationships. Whereas power dynamic language highlighted authority in a group, social language related to comfort and engagement. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) coded words like “apologize,” “share,” and “let’s” as social language. Again, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) offered each score as a percentage of language used from 0 to

100. A percentage of 0 indicated the contributor did not use any social language in their submissions whereas a score of 100 meant the contributors' submissions contained only social language. Mean social language use and inter-categorical variance for each contributor group can be observed on Table 6.

Table 6

Mean Social Language in Phase I Fulltime Faculty, Advisor, and Adjunct Faculty Emails

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean (%)	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	11.685	3.343	1.828
Advisor	7	12.877	4.115	2.028
Adjunct Faculty	4	13.772	4.015	2.004

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

Null Hypothesis 4. According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of analytic language used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. I conducted a one-way ANOVA using the Phase I Groups as the levels of my independent variable to test for differences in the percentage of analytic language use. The data did not represent a statistically significant difference in social language use between fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty, $F(2,16) < 0.001$, $p = 0.996$. The results failed to reject Null Hypothesis 4, so further testing would have been superfluous.

To generate an analytic language use percentage, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) synthesized cognitive processing language, such as accurate and depending, with insight language, like examine and mindful. Pennebaker (2013) explained analytic language use increased when individuals engaged in complicated thinking or problem solving; thus, I expected fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty to engage in higher percentages of analytic language use. The data did not support my belief. As indicated on

Table 7, the three different Phase I Groups used comparable percentages of analytic language.

Table 7

Mean Analytic Language in Phase I Contributor Emails

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean (%)	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	53.277	97.137	9.856
Advisor	7	52.905	143.704	11.988
Adjunct Faculty	4	52.673	219.339	14.810

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

Null Hypothesis 5. According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of personal pronouns used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. I conducted a one-way ANOVA using the Phase I Groups as the independent variable levels to test for differences in the percentage of personal pronoun use. The data did not represent a statistically significant difference in social language use between fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty, $F(2,16) = 0.18$, $p = 0.833$. I did not test Null Hypothesis 5 further as the data did not reject the null hypothesis.

Personal pronoun use expressed a communicator's focus on people strengths (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2011). Pennebaker (2013) described how heightened use of individual pronouns paralleled to a communicator's focus. For example, greater use of "I" pronouns aligned with an inward focus, while more "you" pronouns showcased a focus on audience. As fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty occupy different roles in students' lives, I expected the three Phase I Groups would have implemented differing percentages of personal pronoun use in their writing. The data did not support such an idea. As illustrated in Table 8, the three Phase I Groups used similar percentages of personal pronouns in their submissions.

Table 8*Mean Personal Pronoun Use in Phase I Contributor Emails*

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean (%)	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	12.198	6.474	2.544
Advisor	7	12.083	4.062	2.015
Adjunct Faculty	4	11.379	4.117	2.029

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

Null Hypothesis 6. According to the measure, there is a difference in the percentage of impersonal pronouns used by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. I conducted a one-way ANOVA using the Phase I Groups as the independent variable to test for differences in the percentage of impersonal pronoun use. The data did not represent a statistically significant difference in social language use between fulltime faculty, advisors, or adjunct faculty, $F(2,16) = 0.62$, $p = 0.552$. The data did not require further tests to pinpoint differences in Phase I contributor categories as the results could not reject Null Hypothesis 6.

While Null Hypothesis 5 examined personal pronoun use, Null Hypothesis 6 focused on impersonal pronoun use. Personal pronouns indicated a communicators attention focused on persons, whereas impersonal pronouns indicated objects or ideas occupied a speaker's mind (Pennebaker, 2013). Impersonal pronouns, most often represented by "it," could represent more abstract thought, so I assumed the three Phase I contributor categories would use differing percentages of impersonal pronouns. The data did not support my assumption. Instead, as Table 9 indicates, the three groups used comparable percentages of impersonal pronouns in their writing.

Table 9*Mean Impersonal Pronoun Use in Phase I Contributor Emails*

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean (%)	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	4.170	1.174	1.083
Advisor	7	4.644	1.016	1.008
Adjunct Faculty	4	4.934	2.875	1.695

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

Phase I, Research Question

The data did not contain statistically significant differences in the participant groups' email submission; the six measured hypotheses only examined six specific linguistic categories: positive language, power dynamic language, social language, analytic language, personal pronoun use, and impersonal pronoun use. These six hypotheses encompassed my initial instincts; however, LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) assessed 93 linguistic dimensions of each email submission. As a few examples, the categories covered email structure with categories like word count and word length, pronoun use, tone, and tense. The data did not contain enough evidence to reject Null Hypothesis 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, yet LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) offered 87 other lenses through which to study the data.

Research Question 1. How does the linguistic composition of fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty emails differ? To test for unpredicted differences in contributors' language use, I calculated the mean and variance for each participant group within all of LIWC2015's (Pennebaker et al., 2015) 93 linguistic dimensions. For the means that seemed to have some potential variance between the participant groups, I conducted a one-way ANOVA. Of the other 87 categories not captured within Null Hypotheses 1 through 6, none of them yielded an ANOVA result that alluded to

statistically significant difference between contributor groups. Despite the data not indicating significant dissimilarities in the data, a few categories contained more disparity between sample groups: clout score, authentic score, present tense verbs, and personal pronoun use.

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) combined a few results from several categories, such as pronoun use, power language, and social language to generate a clout score. The result offered some indicator as to the authority the communicator had or lacked over the recipient. Thus, a high clout score meant the communicator wrote from a higher hierarchical position. Within the study, the fulltime faculty contributor group scored a lower mean clout score than the other two participant groups. To test clout, I conducted a one-way ANOVA using Phase I contributors as the independent variable to test for differences in percentage of clout language use. While it was closer than other categories, the data did not represent a statistically significant difference in clout language use between the Phase I contributor categories, $F(2,16) = 3.480$, $p = 0.056$. As the test neared statistical significance, I also tested the effect size, $\eta^2 = 0.303$. The large effect size indicated a bigger sample may have yielded a statistically significant difference in clout language use. Furthermore, a Tukey test indicted if a larger sample yielded a statistically significant difference, it would most likely be between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty ($q_s = 10.559$, $q_\alpha = 13.589$), with adjunct faculty writing with the greater percentage of clout. The mean cloud language use charted on Table 10 supported the effect size and Tukey values.

Table 10*Mean Clout Score in Phase I Contributor Emails*

Group	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	74.304	60.394	7.771
Advisor	7	82.287	65.819	8.113
Adjunct Faculty	4	84.863	23.124	4.809

Note. All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

The contributor categories' clout scores nearly reached a statistically significant difference in email linguistic composition, and the authentic language score came even closer to a significant difference. Just as LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) calculated an algorithmic score called clout to reflect a writer's authority, the "authentic" calculation combined several categories. First-person pronoun usage and relativity language added to an email's authentic score, which LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) generated to gauge how self-revealing, candid, or forward a writer had been in their communication. A higher authentic percentage meant a writer was more present and genuine in their communication. Fulltime faculty wrote using the highest mean authentic language use, as shown on Table 11.

Table 11*Mean Authentic Score in Phase I Contributor Emails*

Groups	Count (<i>n</i>)	Mean	Variance	<i>SD</i>
Fulltime Faculty	8	50.713	100.988	10.049
Advisor	7	38.493	59.582	7.719
Adjunct Faculty	4	39.661	127.809	11.305

Note. All scores calculated out of 100 via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015)

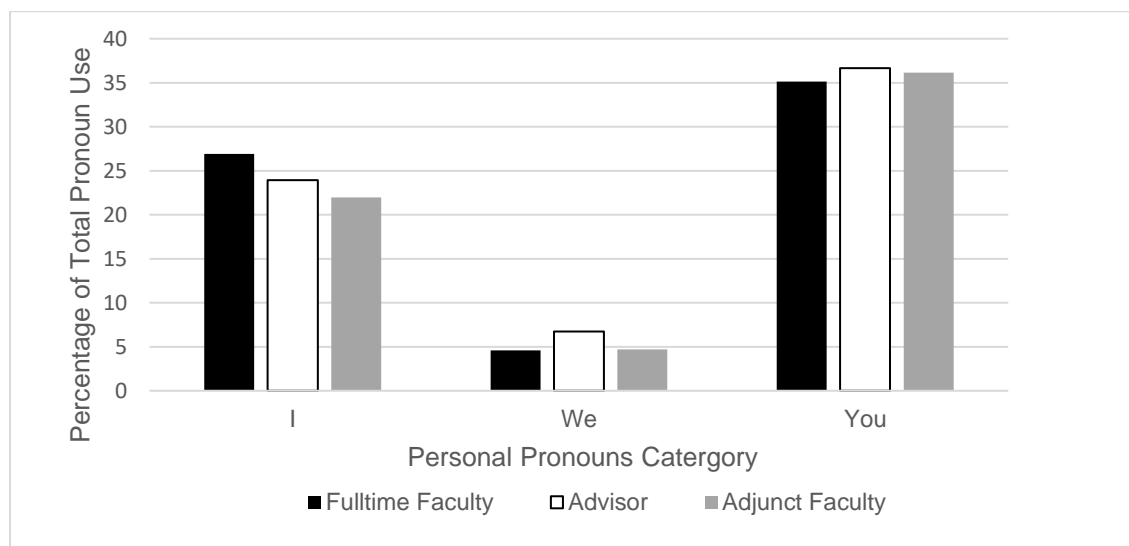
To test for differences in authentic language between contributor categories, I conducted a one-way ANOVA using Phase I contributors as the independent variable to test for differences in percentage of authentic language use. As with clout, the data did

not represent a statistically significant difference in authentic language use between the Phase I contributors, $F(2,16) = 3.580$, $p = 0.052$. As the test neared statistical significance, I also tested the effect size, $\eta^2 = 0.309$. As expressed by the large effect size, the data may have indicated a statically significant difference in authentic language use if this study had been conducted with a greater sample size. The large effect size also made further ad hoc analysis appropriate. A Tukey test indicated, should a statistically difference in authentic language be found with a larger sample size, the data would likely indicate fulltime faculty used more authentic language than adjunct faculty ($q_s = 11.051$, $q_\alpha = 13.589$) and advisors ($q_s = 12.220$, $q_\alpha = 13.589$).

No other linguistic dimensions in Phase I of the study came as close to revealing significant difference between participant groups as the clout and authentic scores. Still, subtle differences in pronoun and present tense use were worth discussing. As expressed in Null Hypothesis 5 all three participant groups used a similar percentage of personal pronouns in their writing sample, each participant group scored slightly higher than the others in a single pronoun category. Figure 1 illustrates each Phase I contributor category's type personal pronoun use as a percentage of all of the personal pronouns with which they wrote.

Figure 1

Percentage of Personal Pronoun Used by Each Participant Category



Note. All percentages calculated as quotient of each contributor category's mean personal pronoun category percentage and mean total pronoun use. Original values calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015).

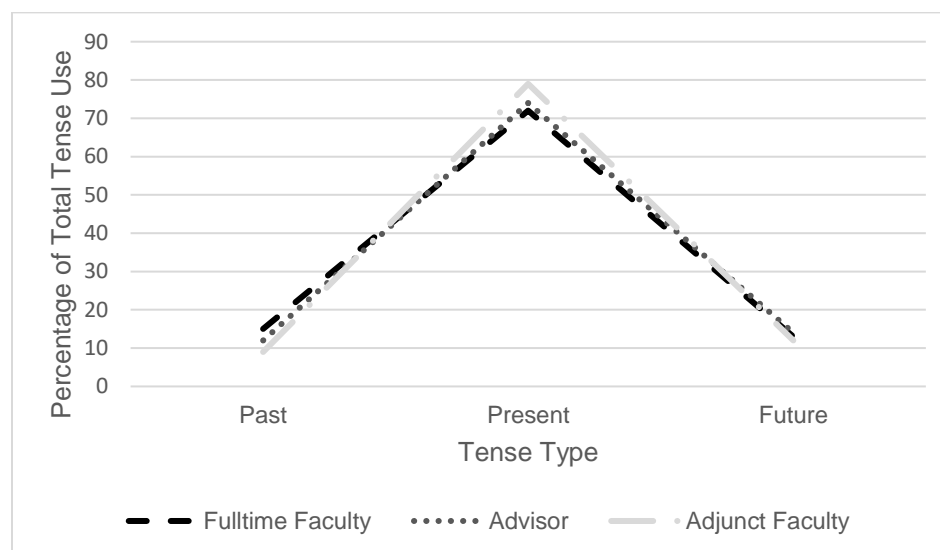
The advisor contributors used the pronoun “you” with slightly more frequency, the adjunct faculty participants used marginally more “we” pronouns, and the fulltime faculty participants used slightly more “I” pronouns in their writing. For “I” pronouns, $F(2,16) = 2.44$, $p = 0.119$. For “you” pronouns, $F(2,16) = 1.25$, $p = 0.313$. For “we” pronouns, $F(2,16) = 0.27$, $p = 0.766$.

Finally, a small difference in present tense pronoun use existed within the study. All three groups of contributors used almost identical percentages of past and future tense verbs; however, on average, adjunct faculty contributors seemed to use marginally more present tense verbs. As with the personal pronoun use, differences in fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty tense use were slight. All three contributor categories used substantially more present tense verbs than past or future tense verbs; however, the

adjunct participant group used numerically more present tense verbs. The peak in Figure 2 highlights the small difference in present tense verbs present in the data.

Figure 2

Percentage of Verb Tenses Used by Each Participant Category



Note. All percentages calculated as quotient of each contributor category's mean tense type use percentage and mean total tense language use. Original values calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015).

Despite the numerical difference, a one-way ANOVA tests using the Phase I contributor categories as the independent variable and present tense language use as the dependent variable found any difference to be statistically non-significant, $F(2,16) = 0.62$, $p = 0.550$. Furthermore, the effect size did support the that a larger sample size could result in statistically different findings, $\eta^2 = 0.072$. As the use of past and future tense did not vary numerically between groups, I did not calculate any inferential statistics on the data. The lack of statistically significant variance in the present tense ANOVA and the noticeably similar means and small variance in past and future tense use

could have meant no difference exist in language use, or have been the result of a flaw in the study or sampling.

Phase I Summary

The Phase I data yielded few measurable differences and no significant variation between the three contributor groups. A few linguistic categories came close to containing significant difference between contributor categories, but the data did not include any statistically significant differences between them. The only two linguistic dimensions that approached a statistically significant difference between the Phase I contributors were clout language and authentic language. Adjunct faculty contributors' submissions contained marginally more clout language, and fulltime faculty contributors submitted emails containing slightly more authentic language. This study could not conclude that any statistically significant linguistic differences existed in the Phase I participant groups' writing samples. Phase I exclusively studied writing samples fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty contributors. Phase II focused on students; within the phase, I attempted to understand how students perceived and responded to writing like that found within Phase I.

Phase II

The hypotheses and research questions in Phase II of the study queried students. I relied upon data from Phase I to gauge student response, memory, and opinion of common writing strategies employed by faculty and advisors in Phase I. Initially, I had intended to compare student responses to fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty, yet previous results forced me to revise my plan. Data from Phase I indicated the differences may not be stark enough to be meaningful to students, so I collapsed the

fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty groups and only tested for differences between professors and advisors. Data collection methods included a questionnaire ($n = 31$), writing samples ($n = 60$), and a focus group ($n = 6$). One participant only completed the questionnaire quiz and did not submit emails.

Phase II, Null Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 7. According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of positive language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a two-tailed related samples t -test comparing the percentage of positive emotion language with which student participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. The results of the analysis revealed students used more positive emotion language when writing to the professor ($M = 5.82$, $SD = 2.53$) than when writing to the advisor ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 2.99$), $t(58) = 2.51$, $p = 0.015$. The present difference supported rejection of Null Hypothesis 7. The rejection of Null Hypothesis 7 with a positive t -value suggested students may have used significantly more positive emotion language when writing to the professor in the study than to the advisor.

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) coded words which carried an uplifting or supportive tone, such as “appreciate” or “perfect,” as positive emotion language. As greater positive language use indicated a more optimistic disposition (Pennebaker, 2013), I hypothesized students would use differing amounts of positive language when communicating with their advisor than with a professor. As Tinto (2015) concluded students craved optimism from their advisor, I believed students would reflect the desired optimism in their writing. The data supported my hypothesized difference. The positive

significant *t*-value statistic indicated students used more positive emotion language when communicating with the professor in the study.

Null Hypothesis 8. According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of power language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a two-tailed related samples *t*-test comparing the percentage of power language with which student participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. The results of the analysis revealed students used more power language when writing to the professor ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.95$) than when writing to the advisor ($M = 2.16$, $SD = 1.71$), $t(58) = 2.94$, $p = 0.005$. Due to the difference in power language use, the data suggested rejecting Null Hypothesis 8.

Whereas positive emotion language signaled an optimistic state of mind in the communicator, power dynamics offered insight in the students' relationship with their emails' recipients. Kacewicz et al. (2013) found that power dynamics always emerged in communication and greater use of power dynamic language indicted attempts to attain more power in the relationship. I hypothesized students would use differing levels of power language with the professor in the study than with the advisor. The data supported my belief; furthermore, the positive *t*-value indicated the students participants used more power language when communicating with the professor in the study.

Null Hypothesis 9. According to the measure, there is no difference in the social language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a two-tailed related samples *t*-test comparing the percentage of social language with which student

participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. The results of the analysis revealed students used more social language when writing to the professor ($M = 9.94$, $SD = 4.01$) than when writing to the advisor ($M = 7.89$, $SD = 3.43$), $t(58) = 2.13$, $p = 0.04$. An increased use of social language when writing to the professor in the study gave credence to the rejection of Null Hypothesis 9.

Power language reflected the hierarchy between the communicator and listener, but social language, words like “apologize” or “let’s,” could indicate closer social connections between conversation partners. Given that students in Vienden’s (2016) study expected their advisors to treat them as individuals, I hypothesized students would engage in different social experiences with the professor and their advisor. Tinto (2015) also concluded advisees expected to have a sincere connection with their advisor, which I believed would manifest as social language. While the data supported my idea that students engaged with different amounts of social language with the professor and the advisor, students used higher percentages of social language with the professor, as supported by the positive t -value statistic.

Null Hypothesis 10. According to the measure, there is no difference in the amount of analytic language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a two-tailed related samples t -test comparing the percentage of analytic language with which student participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. The results of the analysis did not provide sufficient evidence to reject Null Hypothesis 10; students used comparable percentages of analytic language when writing to the professor ($M =$

40.1, $SD = 21.66$) and when writing to the advisor ($M = 32.83$, $SD = 28.20$), $t(58) = 1.12$, $p = 0.267$.

Just as I expected students to employ differing percentages of social language when engaging professors or advisors, I also expected students deploy unequal percentages of analytic language. Research indicated analytic language use—words like “appreciate,” “question,” and “thought”—represented complex mental processing (Pennebaker, 2013). Believing students would engage in different conversation topics with professors than advisors, I hypothesized the differences would manifest in students’ written communication. The data did not support my belief.

Null Hypothesis 11. According to the measure, there is no difference in the number of personal pronouns students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a two-tailed related samples t -test comparing the percentage of personal pronouns with which student participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. The results of the analysis revealed students used more personal pronouns when writing to the professor ($M = 17.28$, $SD = 2.53$) than when writing to the advisor ($M = 11.76$, $SD = 3.42$), $t(58) = 7.11$, $p < 0.0001$. The existence of a difference in personal pronoun use supported the rejection of Null Hypothesis 11.

The results of the statistical analysis performed to test null hypotheses 7, 8, 9, and 10 offered insight into the Phase II communicators’ relationship with their audience; however, writers also have a relationship with the topic being discussed. Personal pronouns are telling parts of speech and can offer insight into how communicators feel about ideas in the discussion. According to Pennebaker (2013), a communicator’s

personal pronoun use is more telling than the content of their speech or writing. For example, an individual who used several “I” pronouns was focused on themselves or their personal contribution whereas an individual who used more “they” pronouns was likely more focused on third-party individuals. Personal pronouns reflected people, whereas impersonal pronouns, like “it,” represented ideas or objects. For this reason, I believed students would devote attention to people at differing levels when communicating with their professor than with their advisors, and, thus, not use the same number of personal pronouns when communicating with the two audiences.

Null Hypothesis 12. According to the measure, there is no difference in the number of impersonal pronouns students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a two-tailed related samples *t*-test comparing the percentage of impersonal pronoun use with which student participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. The negative *t*-value statistic from the analysis revealed students used fewer impersonal pronouns when writing to the professor ($M = 4.86, SD = 2.79$) than when writing to the advisor ($M = 7.90, SD = 4.21$), $t(58) = -3.30, p = 0.003$. Given two-tailed *t*-test demonstrated a difference in impersonal pronoun use, the results supported rejecting Null Hypothesis 12.

In Null Hypothesis 11, the data indicated students in the sample wrote with a higher percentage of personal pronouns, which suggested the students may have been more concerned about people in their discussion with faculty. As previously mentioned, while personal pronoun used in writing represented focus on people, impersonal pronoun used demonstrated focus on ideas or objects. The rejection of Null Hypothesis 12 showed

students did not privilege objects the same in communication with professors and advisors. Instead, students used greater numbers of impersonal pronouns when communication with the advisor in the study than with the professor.

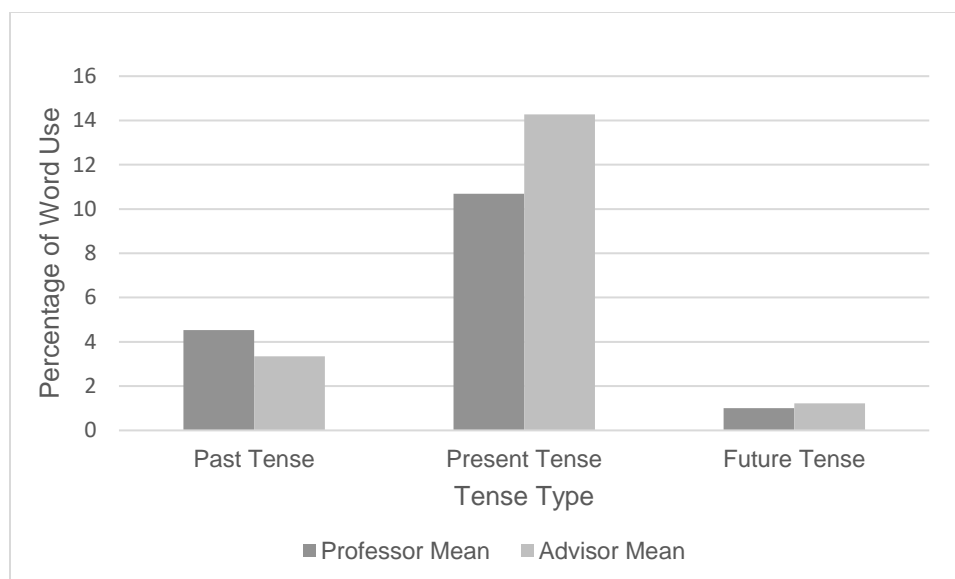
Null Hypothesis 13. According to the measure, there is no difference in the type of tense language students use when they respond to an email from a professor than when they respond to an email from an advisor. To test the hypothesis, I conducted a series of two-tailed related samples *t*-test comparing the percentage of past tense, present tense, and future tense language with which student participants composed emails to a professor and an advisor. For past tense use, the results did not provide sufficient evidence to reject Null Hypothesis 13 and revealed students used comparable percentages of past tense language when writing to the professor ($M = 4.53, SD = 2.84$) and when writing to the advisor ($M = 3.34, SD = 3.05$), $t(58) = 1.57, p = 0.121$. For present tense use, the negative *t*-value statistic in the analysis revealed students used less present tense language when writing to the professor ($M = 10.69, SD = 3.50$) than when writing to the advisor ($M = 14.28, SD = 4.33$), $t(58) = -3.54, p = 0.001$. Finally, for future tense use, the results of the analysis failed to reject Null Hypothesis 13 and revealed students used comparable percentages of future tense language when writing to the professor ($M = 1.01, SD = 1.27$) and when writing to the advisor ($M = 1.22, SD = 1.38$), $t(58) = -0.61, p = 0.542$.

Similar to pronoun use, a communicator's tense could communicate hidden insight into their intentions or beliefs. At its most simple, tense showcased a communicator's focus. For example, an individual who relied upon past tense was likely reflecting upon previous events, while an individual who communicated in future tense was focused on what could be (Pennebaker, 2013). Tense could also have indicated a

communicator's mental state. For example, Pennebaker (2013) concluded upset individuals communicated in present tense as they transfixed on a perceived slight impacting their current situation. As research showed tense provided subtle indications of differences in mindset, I hypothesized students would use different tenses when communicating with faculty and advisors. The data collected in Phase II offered a partial refutation of my hypothesis. The results indicated students used more present tense verbs when communicating with the advisor in the study than with the professor in the study. Figure 3 emphasizes the differences in student verb tense use.

Figure 3

Student Use of Verb Tense



Note: All percentages calculated via LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015).

Students relied upon more present tense verbs in general; however, they wrote with significantly more present tense verbs when communicating with the advisor in the study than with the professor. Student participants appeared to use marginally more future tense verbs when communicating with their advisor as well. While students used

more past tense verbs when communicating with the professor in the study, the difference was not significant. Like Figure 1, Figure 3 illustrated the large frequency of present tense verbs in student communication.

Phase II, Research Questions

Research Question 2. How do students perceive emails written by professors and advisors? Data from Phase I did not yield significant differences between emails composed by professors and advisors. Conversations require multiple participants, so understanding how professors and advisors wrote only illuminated one perspective. To better dissect professor and advisor electronic communication, the study needed to evaluate the student-perspective. While in Phase I the linguistic analysis did not reveal any statistically significant differences, recipients of the contributors' emails likely brought their own expectations to the conversation. Research Question 2 relied on insight from a student focus group to form its conclusion.

Research Question 2 Theming. Pertaining to Research Question 2 and students participants' feelings about emails from professors and advisors, I coded the data into six categories including: email's function in communication, email's relation to other communication tools, preferences for professor or advisor emails, communication style matching, email form and tone, and addressing. The first theme, email's function in communication, included comments about how and why students used email. Building upon the first theme, the second theme contained participant feedback comparing email to other communication methods, such as Zoom or texting. Third, the preferences for professor or advisor emails, contained insight into what the participants valued in the emails they received and how the emails between professors and advisors did or did not

differ. The fourth theme, communication style matching, grouped comments in which the student participants expressed a desire to match the professor and advisors' communication style. Within the penultimate category, email form and tone, I coded comments related to the content or form of professor and advisor emails and how students felt about the emails. Finally, I coded responses in the final theme, addressing, if the comments related to how professors and advisors compose the subject or the salutation line of their email.

Email's Function in Communication. Phase II participant responses within the first theme all expressed how students felt about email as a genre. Gauging how students perceived of email as a genre was useful to examining how they perceived email communication from faculty members and advisors. When asked how they use email, one student in the focus group replied, "I use mine for my sorority. I'm on the officer board, so I have to send reports." She then went on to discuss how her email is reserved for, "anything school related." Another student echoed the sentiment by saying they, "use [email] for classes, job, and for everything I want to do and have to sign up for." Two other students agreed with the feelings of the first two students and added that email is for professional communication, for signing up for spammy websites, and for online shopping, like Amazon and Chegg.

Email's Relation to Other Communication Tools. Responses coded into the second theme all compared email to other communication tools. After discussing what they used email for, students in the focus group offered insight into how they communicated in their personal lives. One student, who had iterated how email is for professional use, said they relied upon programs like SnapChat and Instagram for all

personal communication and could not imagine ever communicating with a professor or advisor on a platform other than email. Another participant concurred and added What's App and Facebook Messenger to the list of programs acceptable for social communication. One student made an interesting remark about their high school teachers. The student said while they were still in high school, they used programs like Instagram to communicate with their teachers, but they thought it would be inappropriate to use the same tools with their professors. When asked for further information, they said they felt like their relationship with their college professors and their advisor should be more professional than their relationship with their high school teachers.

In addition to soliciting opinions on email as a genre, I asked students if they preferred any communication methods to email from their professors or advisors. One student said they preferred email in all circumstances as it allowed her to go back and reference and think about important information at her convenience. Every other student preferred video conversation to emailing, and two students even said they prefer in-person, face-to-face communication over all other media. In reference to face-to-face communication, a student said, "emailing is a good way to tell something clearly, but I prefer smoothly to clearly...face-to-face is the best way to communicate smoothly." Another said, "I don't really like Zooms and emails; I would rather see the facial expressions and be face-to-face talking." Two students also added that texting was too "aggressive." One of the students elaborated, "I save text messages for more casual and friend conversations." As a final note, the institution at which this study took place contracted Canvas as its learning management system. Over half of the students in the study said they deleted notifications from Canvas, often without reading them, because,

“it’s basically just telling me my assignment was graded.” The same group believed they would receive an email if a message was important.

Preferences for Professor or Advisor Emails. I coded focus group participants’ responses addressing similarities and differences in professor and advisors’ emails in the third theme. Focus group participants made it apparent that they believed email was for professional or transactional communication. When I asked about differences in how students wrote to their advisors or to their professors, the students struggled to respond. In a session, one student succinctly stated, “the difference between my professor and my advisor isn’t big.” Instead of offering differences between how they write to their professors and how they write to their advisors, participants listed common traits of advisors’ emails and of professors’ emails. In reference to their advisors’ email, participants cited low expectations of proactivity.

One student said, “I just don’t see the advisor position, and I have two advisors...I always initiate important meetings and conversations.” Another echoed the sentiment and added [in response to an email about how to find an internship], “if my advisors tell me that, I will [have] tears of joy....I am always used to being the one who has to reach out to them and be like ‘hey, I want to get my classes.’” Other students added comments about feeling like their advisors helped them react to problems rather than emailing them proactively.

Shifting focus to professors’ emails, participants mostly vented frustrations about response time. A participant said, “I have one professor, I think he has responded to maybe 1 out of 10 emails I have ever sent him. I just try to get everything in class from him.” Another student responded and said that while they had experienced disappointing

responses from some professors, “I had one where I don’t know how late they stayed up. I feel like I send emails late...but some will respond at, like, 11:00pm.” Finally, a participant admitted they get frustrated by emails addressed to the whole class, “when it’s [the email] ‘dear class,’ I’m like, ‘nope, I’ll hear about it in class probably.’”

When asked about differences in advisor and professor communication, participants could not directly point to differences; however, their responses offered a similar theme. Frustrations with advisor communication arose when communication was not proactive, and disappointment with professor communication manifested from slow response times. Students provided further insight into three categories: form, tone, and content.

Communication Style Matching. Responses in which students expressed a desire to learn from or imitate professor or advisor emails filled the fourth theme. Interestingly, a few students expressed desire to learn from how university employees wrote emails. Specifically, students discussed how emails were arranged or constructed. One student claimed, “the only reason I know how to layout an email is because I emailed so many coaches.” An international student in the focus group added that, “email is practice for international students.” The two students agreed they had learned much from reading faculty and advisor emails and expected to continue to grow from email experiences. Another student claimed faculty and advisors had taught them the usefulness of the high-importance flag. A fourth student agreed they had learned much from their faculty members’ emails but offered a caveat:

Also, what I find kind of confusing is that in every syllabus, the professor says that every

communication via email has to be professional, and you have to be like hello professor sincerely student or whatever and write in a professional manner, but then some professors, whenever they reply to you, they don't do it. They just talk like we're talking right now. So it's weird to keep your professionalism when they say like, "oh, I just don't know how to do this hahaha."

The participant believed their faculty and advisors should do more to provide a strong example of proper email form.

Email Form and Tone. The final theme for Research Question 2 contained focus group participants' direct comments about their preferences for how professors and advisors should write emails. Just as the student in the previous example expected their faculty and advisors to use professional form from which they could learn, participants also cited unanimous desire for a professional email tone. One of the example emails in the study bludgeoned the email recipients with wild accusations of plagiarism—the students in the focus group agreed the email was unacceptable. Instead, the students preferred an email which made similar accusations but relied on positive language. As one student said about the positive email, "it started out bad...and I like how it ended." Despite agreeing that they preferred positive language, participants disagreed on the importance of tone. A student claimed emails with poor tone are off-putting or, "feel like a threat," others said, "some [emails] should get straight to the point," and, "I have seen that many professors focus more on the tone of the email instead of the message." Students remained in disagreement on the importance of tone in email.

Student participants also commented on email content. Most participants' content related comments expressed frustration that other aspects of email discouraged them from

receiving the content they sought. Be it long messages—“some emails I don’t, like, I don’t read it all the way through. I’ll just read the first few things”—or being overwhelmed by abundant messages—“I try to read everything...because I don’t want to miss out on it, but I know that a lot of people don’t”—students felt like they could not get all of the content they wanted. Participants seemed exhausted by the volume of information they received, so, while well intending, they would move on if a message did not seem relevant or helpful. In reference to a weekly student-focused newsletter, one student admitted, “yeah, I skim through it because there might be stuff I am interested in, which is how I found my internship—I guess I should read it more often.” Responses from the focus group indicated the participants were well-meaning but overwhelmed. Small amendments to how faculty and advisors write could help important content cut through the digital noise in students’ lives.

Addressing. The final category, addressing, included a series of direct comments in which students expressed how professors and advisors should begin emails or compose subject lines. The participants discussed how even the sender and recipient of emails from the university impacted their perception of the communication. The participants all agreed they wanted to see their name in the subject line. Spoke one student, “if I see my name especially. That’s the one where I’m like ‘oh, okay.’” Participants discussed how they merely skimmed emails that are addressed to “class” or “advisees.” One student did admit seeing phrases like “extra credit” in the preview line overwrote their disdain for emails addressed to the entire class. When asked about senders, participants said they were more likely to open messages from authority figures like directors, deans, the president, or their boss; however, students disagreed on if their professor qualified as an

authority figure. Alternatively, all of the focus group participants cited daily reminder emails or emails with “do-not-reply” email addresses as the worst emails they received. For example, this study took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the host university sent a daily reminder self-evaluation message. Several participants admitted to having never fully read the message. “When I see them [the COVID-19 message] I’m like ‘ugh!’ ”

Focus group students made it apparent that they wanted to receive email communication from faculty and advisors. While some students preferred face-to-face communication, participants agreed email provided a vital communication link. Students appreciated professors who responded promptly and advisors who made first contact. Even though they sometimes did not read everything, the students were adamant that they had good intentions and wanted to garner content from emails. The group offered insight into unhelpful email tones and key email formatting that they believed would help faculty and advisors better reach them through email. Given all of the comments, one key to communicating with students seems to be the short preview line featured in most inboxes. Based on what the students have said, if they see their name and an interesting key phrase in the box, they are more likely to perceive the email favorably and consider it worth reading.

Focus group participants comments made it apparent that students view email as a professional tool and are prepared to use it as such. While the participants could not express common differences in the composition of professor and advisor emails, they explained the emails should be positive in nature. The focus group participants also cited a desire to learn from how their professors and advisors write, which made off-putting

tones even more dangerous. Finally, the students explained emails should be addressed with their name to maximize impact. Based on the participants' comments, students want to use email; however, they demand professors and advisors who model effective communication practices, such as positive tone and tantalizing introductions.

Research Question 3. How does a professor or an advisor's communication style make a student more or less receptive to the communication? Research Question 2 focused on individual components of faculty and advisor emails students found useful or off-putting. To build upon the finds, Research Question 3 aimed to gather more specific information—what makes a student receptive to communication? Specifically, Research Question 3 sought to understand which elements in an email made students more likely to engage with the genre. Obviously, emails need to be interesting. As one student explained when asked what makes an email effective, “there's intrigue in them.” Beyond intrigue, Research Question 3 studied specific strategies to get students to open and read emails. Once again, all data were drawn from a student focus group.

Research Question 3 Theming. Within the content of Research Question 3, participants' responses clustered into four specific categories: length, grammar, subject lines, and timeliness. Participants indicated effectively wielding the four aforementioned themes were essential to capturing student attention. The first theme, length, related to both the number of words in a sentence and the number of sentences in a paragraph. Grammar, the second theme, contained responses focused on the grammatical composition of professor and advisors' use of grammar. Third, the subject line's theme focused on how email subject lines made students more or less receptive to communication. Finally, within timeliness, I grouped comments expressing opinions

about the timeframe in which professors and advisors should return email communication.

Length. The first category, length, is straightforward. Students in the focus group indicated they preferred shorter emails. As one student said, “I like lists. Like, bulleted lists.” Long emails in the study did not connect with participants, and one claimed, “each of those made me not relate to real life emails...it wasn’t short and sweet and quick to the point.” The participants felt long emails, “miss the clarity of information,” or, “go around too much instead of putting together the main point in a simple way.” Each participant agreed the emails that most draw their attention were concise and focused, and they concluded emails communicating multiple pieces of essential information should bullet each key point.

Grammar. The second point the students discussed was grammar. One participant championed grammar as the most essential component of effective emails. “I believe what makes an email good is the grammar being there, no misspelling of the words,” they claimed, “remember the basic grammar you learn in general education.” While none of the other participants agreed to grammar being the most essential component of email, others concurred they were less likely to engage with an email with poor grammar. To reiterate a point from Research Question 2, an international student said they rely on emails to learn conversational grammar, so they need to be able to trust the grammar in emails.

Subject Lines. Third, participants discussed the importance of effective subject lines. For some of the participants, their decision to open an email relied entirely upon the subject. “Important emails, they need to have a good subject heading, the subject that

comes in,” one participant explained, “and then a good first line to grasp what the entire email is going to be so that you continue reading it.” A second student built upon this insight and said, “the title [should be] something really catchy. Depending on what title or subject you give to the email, that is what is going to make the student want to read the email.” When pressed for what made a subject “good,” the focus group disagreed. Some students said specific subjects are better while others would rather have generic words like “important” or “open ASAP” in important emails’ subject lines. After one participant claimed, “when I get emails that say urgent...that says to me that I need to read that now,” another participant pointed out “the only problem is you can overuse it...I don’t think it’s useful because [the recipient] is going to think you’re impatient.” Participants agreed subjects are important and agreed that the worst subject lines are spam headlines. The group also agreed emails with subject lines like, “Don’t miss out, win \$100” always landed, unread, in the deleted bin. While the focus group did not yield a unanimous answer, the key idea seemed to be that subject lines should be focused and intentional. Students tended to ignore insincere, recycled lines and subjects that sounded like spam.

Timeliness. Finally, student participants offered a lengthy discussion on the timeframe in which they expected university personnel to return their emails. As mentioned under Research Question 2, a common complaint among students is that professors take too long to respond to emails. Chapter 2 briefly discussed research concluding that students expected a response within 48 hours. No participants agreed with LaBarbera (2013) or Young et al. (2011). The participants believed 48 hours was only an acceptable turnaround time for complicated questions necessitating research. Around half of the participants said they would expect a reply within 24 hours.

Participants offered feedback like, “I understand [professors] have a life or they are busy doing other things, but I think it does not take that long to reply to an email,” or “if it’s a question about an assignment, within 24 hours, 12 if they can.” Other students cited 12 hours as their standard, “most students, they email or they try to contact their professor because they need help...if they professor replies three days later, they will probably not even be able to do the assignment.” One student even said they would like to receive a reply within five waking hours. No matter their timeframe expectation, all of the participants agreed having to follow up on an unanswered email makes them lose respect for the class and professor. “One of my pet peeves is having to follow-up with a professor or with someone else because it has been like 3 or 4 days and they have not answered my question.” This focus group seemed to indicate research on email response time may no longer reflect the attitudes of students in 2021.

Students offered four essential tools for capturing their attention via email. They agreed the perfect email was short and bulleted, composed with thoughtful grammar, led with a sincere subject, and would be answered in a timely manner—likely within 12-24 hours. Each trait seemed obvious, but the focus groups all indicated professors and advisors who took the time to address all four areas would be more likely to reach them.

Research Question 4. What, if any, linguistic components of professor or advisor emails are most memorable to students? Communicators who composed effective subjects and maintain acceptable response times were more likely to engage students more; however, could the linguistic composition of the email impact how well a student retains the message's content? The appreciate the extent of participants’ memory, instead of theming qualitative comments like in Research Question 2 and Research Question 3, I

blended quantitative and qualitative methods to explore Research Question 4. For the quantitative piece, student participants offered insight into this question by completing a 31-question quiz following a sample of 15 emails. Each email contained different combinations of linguistic variables based upon five categories: tone, pronoun use, average word length, average sentence length, and tense. See Appendix G for the full linguistic breakdown of email content and Appendix H for the full questionnaire emails. On the qualitative side, a student focus group offered insight into the emails they found most memorable. The blended questionnaire results and participant comments allowed me to appreciate which emails participants remembered and which emails participants believed they remembered.

I collected quiz data from 31 participants. Each question offered four possible choices with one correct answer per question. Upon data collection, I determined how many correct answers related to each linguistic category: tone, pronouns, sentence length, word length, and tense. For variables with three or more categories—tone, pronouns, and tense—I then calculated one-way ANOVA results using linguistic email components as the independent variable and quiz questions answered correctly as the dependent variable. For linguistic component independent variables with only two categories—sentence length and word length—I conducted a two-tailed related samples *t*-test with questions answered correctly as the dependent variable.

The first category, tone, contained five categories: positive word use, negative word use, power dynamic word use, social language use, and analytic language use. The data indicated student participants answered more questions correctly when emails presented the information through negative emotion tone. Despite the range in means

outlined in Table 12, one-way ANOVA testing indicated lack of a statistically significant difference in linguistic tone and student memory $F(4,25) = 1.32, p = 0.288$.

Table 12

Mean Quiz Responses-Tone

Tonal Group	Email Count	Mean	Variance	SD
Positive	6	17.333	73.867	8.595
Negative	6	25.667	15.067	3.882
Power	6	19.333	41.867	6.470
Social	6	21.000	51.200	7.155
Analytic	6	18.667	53.867	7.339

While the questionnaire data did not yield strong differences in the information students based upon email tone, focus group participants overwhelmingly preferred emails with a positive emotion tone, especially over the emails with negative emotion and power dynamic tones. When discussing the positive emotion email, one student said they felt like the professor in the email genuinely wanted to help them. Students agreed and added the email with large amounts of negative emotion language was antagonistic and off-putting. The student comments seemed to contradict what the data said they were most likely to remember. Students preferred positive emotion over negative emotion and power dynamic language; however, while not quite significant, the questionnaire data suggested students might be more likely to remember information presented with a negative emotional tone.

The second category, personal pronoun use, offered five categories: I, we, you, (s)he, and they. At a glance, “you” and “they” words seemed to prompt higher scores than the other three categories, 23 and 24.67 respectively. Again, high variance plagued the other categories, which curbed the likelihood of statistically significant variance. As the category contained more than three variables, I conducted a one-way ANOVA test

using personal pronoun categories as the independent variable to test for differences in student memory $F(4,25) = 1.58, p = 0.210$. Despite the apparent differences in mean notated on Table 13, ANOVA results indicated a lack of difference in student memory based upon pronoun use in email.

Table 13

Mean Quiz Responses-Personal Pronoun

Pronoun Group	Email Count	Mean	Variance	SD
I	6	16.333	90.667	9.522
We	6	17.833	58.167	7.627
You	6	23.000	21.200	4.604
S(he)	6	20.167	33.367	5.776
They	6	24.667	24.667	4.967

Relating to pronouns, focus group participants discussed how inclusive and specific pronouns made them more likely to read and retain email information. For personal pronouns, students preferred personal pronouns that included them—like “you”—and spoke less favorably of personal pronouns that excluded them, like “he,” “she,” and “they.” In addition, students discussed how they instinctively rejected exclusive pronouns. For example, one email used the phrase “men and women,” which a participant mentioned could invalidate potential readers. The student said, “We’ve moved past that these days. It’s community, chapter, everyone. That’s not cool anymore.” Another added, “I really liked how one email said ‘class’ so you know it’s referring to the whole class.” The focus group participants were aware of social justice issues and cited serial inclusion as a favorable trait for email writers.

The third category, sentence length, included two possibilities. The first category was average sentence length of seven words; the second was average sentence length of 20 or more words. As this variable only included two options, I conducted a two-tailed

related samples *t*-test comparing the sentence length of emails to the number of questions about the emails students correctly answered. The results indicated students answered a comparable number of questions for sentences of an average of seven words ($M = 20.07$, $SD = 7.75$) and for sentences of 20 or more words ($M = 17.58$, $SD = 8.31$), $t(24) = 0.79$, $p = 0.437$.

Focus group participants seemed to disagree with the data. Participants stated the longest emails in the study made them want to stop reading. As one stated, “Most students will not read those long emails, so that’s a huge problem.” Others added they tended to ignore and forget to return to long emails—“I read the subject and go ‘maybe later,’ but then I don’t usually get back to it.” Students in the focus group could not identify a specific desired sentence length; however, they all concurred the message and sentences should be as short as possible. While the questionnaire data did not yield a significant difference in how varying sentences lengths impacted student memory, students claimed email and sentence length impacted their likelihood to read or respond to a message.

Word length represented the fourth category tested in the quiz. The emails either contained 11 or fewer six-letter words or 22 or more-six-letter words. Again, as the variable only included two options, I conducted a two-tailed related samples *t*-test comparing the average length of words in emails to the number of questions about the emails students correctly answered. The results indicated students answered a comparable number of questions for emails containing 11 or fewer words of six-letters or more ($M = 22.38$, $SD = 5.86$) and for emails containing 22 or more words of six-letters of more ($M = 18.14$, $SD = 7.77$), $t(28) = 1.70$, $p = 0.1$.

The fifth and final variable, tense, relied upon three categories. Sample emails used past, present, or future tense. As the category contained more than three variables, I conducted a one-way ANOVA test using email tense as the independent variable to test for differences in student memory $F(2,27) = 0.07, p = 0.929$. As illustrated by the similar means on Table 14, ANOVA results did not support a difference in email tense and the number of questions student participants answered correctly.

Table 14

Mean Quiz Responses-Tense

Tense Group	Count	Mean	Variance	SD
Past	10	20.900	52.989	7.279
Present	10	20.600	46.044	6.786
Future	10	19.700	58.900	7.675

No matter what linguistic components their professors or advisors used, students said they relied on style matching in email. Several participants said their first email to a new professor or advisor was formal, and then they tried to match the professor's style. One student said, "if they are informal, I will try to match that unconsciously." Based on focus group responses, students seemed to write what they read, so professors and advisors should model the linguistic and formal communication they wish to receive. The questionnaire data did not seem to yield significant differences in student information retention, so professors and advisors should consider modeling emails that students preferred to read—short, positive emails.

Based upon the questionnaire responses, student participants answered a handful more questions correctly when the associated emails used higher percentages of negative emotion language, you pronouns, and they pronouns. In the focus group, student participants cited a preference for short, positive emotion emails directed at them.

Disparity existed between the questionnaire and focus group data; however, focus group participants' preference for emails directed at themselves paralleled to the questionnaire data. What participants remembered and thought they remembered differed in several ways; however, second person pronouns emerged as an effective tool to spur student interest and memory.

Research Question 5. If students found some linguistic components in R4 more memorable than others, why were those linguistic components of professor or advisor emails more memorable? Research Question 4 did not uncover any similarities between linguistic characteristics and student participants' information retention. Despite the lack of significant findings in the questionnaire, students in the focus group offered insight regarding why some specific linguistic components are more meaningful to them.

Research Question 5 Theming. To theme responses in Research Question 5, I used four categories: email length, preferred pronouns, respect, and communication style matching. Email length focused on the length, or perceived length, of emails. Within the second theme, preferred pronouns, I grouped comments in which students discussed how they want to be addressed in emails. The third theme, respect, showcased emails in which students explained they wish to be respected as an equal communication partner. Finally, as in Research Question 2, communication style matching contained comments in which students expressed a desire to learn from professor and advisors emails; however, the comments coded within Research Question 5 offered deeper insight into the desire.

Email Length. Within the comments grouped into the first theme, student participants discussed how they have a myriad of sources battling for their attention. Due to limits on their cognitive bandwidth, participants stated short emails from faculty and

advisors cut through the noise to reach them. “Nothing really long,” one student attested, “it makes it hard to remember the stuff that was in the email. It makes it really hard and can be boring.” Another agreed and, about a long email, said, “it was four paragraphs and just trying to read it made my brain confused because of how much content it had in it to just say one simple thing.” The participants agreed short emails helped them identify key details in the emails. As previously mentioned, bulleted lists were even better. If the email lists each key point with a bullet, one student claimed, “it’s more to the point, and I’m more likely to look at it and read it through.” A concurring student concluded, “I saw [the bullet points], and I thought this is the perfect. For me, this is the perfect email. It has all of the information I need.” Short emails were inviting to students as they present relevant information in a digestible manner.

Preferred Pronouns. The second insight focus group participants offered into why certain language was more effective in email involved pronoun direction. Students claimed to respond better to “we” and “you” pronouns or to seeing their name in the email. Addressing an email that relied on “they” pronouns, a student criticized, “It didn’t seem directed. Say I was the person receiving all of these, it didn’t seem directed at me specifically.” A second participant added, “If [the email] is directed toward me, I will remember it more.” If faculty and advisor emails used pronouns aimed at the student, the students felt more included in the email. Participants agreed seeing their name in the email was even more effective. One participant explained, “I will open more emails that say [participant’s name] on them...if it says [participant’s name], I’m like ‘aahhh, I’m in trouble—I gotta read that.’” The same participant then explained how faculty and advisors should employ on mail merge to send easy, personalized emails—“I think [mail

merge] is a great tool for any professor to make it more personalized for each student.” As discussed in Chapter 2, pronoun use can indicate where a speaker’s focus is. The focus group participants indicated they were more engaged when pronouns and emails were directed at them, which could indicate professors and advisors will have more email success if messages keep students as their focal point.

Respect. A common theme within student responses related to their desire for professor and advisors to show respect in email, respect both for the students as a people and for the students’ time. In addition to desiring language that centered them in the communication, student participants indicated language in emails should be respectful. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) did not have a dictionary for respect language; however, it coded words like “respect,” “honor,” and “appreciate” as positive emotion language. Student participants could not define respect in email either. A participant claimed that respectful emails were “to the point, specific, and everything,” and added, “the person receiving it is going to be way more open to doing whatever I am demanding or wanting.” Even though they could not define respectful emails, a participant confided, “I have seen more of the emails that call students out than respectful emails.” Based on the joint commentary from LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) and the focus group participants, positive emotion language seemed to be the linguistic tool nearest to respect.

Communication Style Matching. Finally, students expressed such a strong desire to engage in email style matching that it was essential to return to the topic through the goal of making emails memorable. Deploying positive emotion language may help advisors and professor draft effortlessly respectful emails, but style matching is also a vital tool. Students said they look to faculty and advisor emails to learn how to write. “I’ll

gauge kind of what tone they send back next,” one student explained, “and if you have a back and forth, you pick up on their tone.” Student participants claimed they try to mirror the emails they receive. One of the international students in the focus group directly cited emails as a key learning tool, and other students sat nodding in agreement. Focus group responses indicated faculty and advisor emails were yet another classroom. If faculty and advisors invited students into the conversations with short emails, directed pronouns, and respect, students seemed open to learning from other communication elements. Student receptiveness to style matching could offer faculty and advisors an opportunity for covert pedagogy.

Students focus group participants offered several tools through which professors and advisors can capture their attention via email. Short emails are essential to cut through the noise of other communication in students’ lives. Participants also believed seeing their name in emails or being the obvious subject in an email helped capture their attention. Once an email had their attention, participants said they were more likely to keep reading if an email had a respectful, instead of an accusatory tone. Finally, student participants said they look to professor and advisor emails to style match and learn how to write. Professors and advisors who show respect and keep emails brief have an opportunity to lead students to develop essential communication skills outside of the classroom.

Phase II Summary

The Phase II data yielded more measurable differences and variations than the Phase I data. Students largely used more person-centered language when communicating with professors. Specifically, when writing to the professor in the study, the data

indicated students used more positive emotion language, power language, social language, analytic language, and personal pronouns. When communicating with advisors, students prioritized present tense language and object-centric impersonal pronouns.

The qualitative results offered further insight into students' experiences when communicating with faculty or advisors through email. The quiz student participants completed did not indicate any relationship between linguistic composition of emails and student information retention. Despite not finding a relationship between email composition and memory, the student focus group participants offered insight to these data, indicating short, positive messages yielded the most impact. Finally, students claimed faculty and advisor email influenced their own writing. If a faculty member wanted to help students communicate effectively via email, they could use the preferences cited in the student focus group to gain student attention and then guide the students to effective communication strategies through style matching.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Recommendations

Overview

Estimates projected over 30.4 billion emails would be sent in 2020 (The Radicati Group, 2019). To consider how students perceived the electronic communication they receive from their fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty, I conducted a two-phase sequential mixed method investigation. In Phase I, I gathered a body of emails from fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. In Phase II, I then studied how students wrote and reacted to the previously collected data. This study relied upon LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) to dissect the linguistic composition of the Phase I and Phase II data. LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) provided the data with which I completed quantitative analysis to assess potential differences in Phase I contributors' emails and Phase II students participants' writing and perceptions. In Phase II, student participants provided qualitative data through a focus group that offered holistic insight into their experiences and perception that quantitative data may not have represented. I hoped to synthesize the Phase I and Phase II data to understand how fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty crafted emails and how students read those emails. I then hoped to use the results to recommend best practices to help institutional stakeholders craft more effective electronic communication to students.

Discussion

Phase I

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 tested for differences in the percentage of positive emotion language used between fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisor participants. Pennebaker (2013) discussed how positive emotion language constructed

connections between individuals and demonstrated optimistic focus. Vianden (2016) and Tinto's (2015) findings that students craved a sincere and optimistic advisor created an expectation that advisors would use the highest percentage of positive emotion language. The ANOVA results did not support my interpretation of Vianden (2016) and Tinto (2015). All three participant categories contained similar percentages of positive emotion language, around 4%.

As all of the Phase I participants taught or advised at the same institution, one could conclude the results of Hypothesis 1 demonstrated the average participant either utilized an engaging amount of positive emotion language or needed to use more positive emotion language to better convey a sense of optimism in their communication with students. Deeper research into this specific linguistic category would be necessary to determine the specific positive emotion language percentages that best support students. Beyond specific percentages, the lack of significant difference in positive language use between participant categories may still be telling. Taken in concert with Vianden (2016) or Tinto (2015), my results indicated advisor participants from this study should seek to integrate more positive emotion language into communication with advisees to help differentiate their standard of engagement from fulltime and adjunct faculty. As some of the advisors who participated in this study may also have functioned as faculty at their institutions, developing code switching strategies through the increased use of positive emotion language could better support the students' expectation to communicate with a sincere and optimistic advisor. As will be discussed in the Phase II section of Chapter 5, students carried different expectations for faculty and advisor communication, so lack of

differentiation between fulltime faculty and advisor communication could indicate one participant category did not fulfill students' expectations.

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 tested for differences in the percentage of power language use. Kacewicz et al. (2013) found all communication between individuals, no matter how mundane, contained dynamic power roles, and Sakai and Carpenter (2011) concluded leaders and followers used unique percentages of language in communication. Due to the different amounts of power and reassurance held by fulltime faculty members, advisors, and adjunct faculty, I hypothesized the three roles would employ differing amounts of power language. The ANOVA results told a different story. As with positive emotion language, the ANOVA results did not indicate a significant difference in power language use between participant groups.

Sakai and Carpenter (2011) claimed less powerful individuals were focused on power and used language that suggested they were interested in increasing their authority. As fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty participants in this study all employed similar percentages of power language, the data could have indicated all three groups were similarly satisfied with the power they wielded at their institution. Email samples from the three groups all addressed students, and, regardless of their role, data suggested Phase I participants wrote with similar amounts of authority or power language. Even though research depicted adjunct faculty as having less power in their institution (AAUP, 2014; Meixner et al., 2010; Thirolf & Woods, 2017), there was not as much research contrasting power dynamics between fulltime faculty and their students against the power dynamics between adjunct faculty and their students. While the results of Hypothesis 2 surprised me, the data could prove inspiring for future research.

Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 tested for differences in the social language used by fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty contributors. Pennebaker (2013) outlined how higher percentages of social language indicated awareness of one's relationship to the speaker. Individuals who employed more social language were likely aware of their relationship to their communication partner and sought to strengthen or revise that relationship (Pennebaker, 2013). As faculty, especially adjunct faculty, occupied syncopated moments in students' careers while the students' advisors played more consistent roles, hypothesizing that advisors would use differing percentages of social language to maintain the social relationship with their students seemed reasonable. The results did not support my hypothesis. The third ANOVA found no significant differences in the social language used by fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisors.

The lack of difference in social language could be attributed to a number of factors. First, fulltime faculty at the host institution also often served as advisors. As the line between an individual's faculty and advisor duties could have been arbitrary, the lack of difference in language may not be surprising. Second, shortly before data collection occurred for this study, the host institution completed an institution-wide training to promote student-centered practice at the institution. Given that the host institution charged every member of the faculty and staff with developing personal connections to students, the training could have influenced participants' writing. Furthermore, as social language made up a very large percentage of the average participant's writing (11.69-13.77%), the student-centered training all employees received may be a logical explanation for the similar results. Third, and most simply put, the data could have suggested fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty did not differ in their social

relationships to students. While an advising appointment and a lecture are different experiences, the social connection forged between faculty and student may be similar to the connection between student and advisor. No matter the root of the similar social language use, the average participant's use of social language was greater than their use of power language (2.07-2.56%). Pennebaker (2013) claimed that language use reflected the user's focus. The results indicated the fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty in this study were more focused on building a social connection with students than establishing authority over them. As higher education continues to work against its elitist portrayal (Cornwell, 2016), continuing to rely on social over power language may prove vital.

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 tested for differences in analytic language use between fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisor contributors. Pennebaker (2013) explained heightened use of analytic language emerged when a speaker engaged in reflective or critical thought. Categorizing words, causal words, and insight words composed LIWC2015's (Pennebaker et al., 2015) analytic language category. Lankveld et al. (2016) emphasized faculty must maintain competence as a researcher and a lecturer. In accordance with findings from Lankveld et al. (2016), I expected fulltime faculty in this study to use different amounts of analytic language than the advisor and adjunct faculty contributors. Contrary to my hypothesis, all three contributor categories used an average percentage of analytic language between 52.679% and 53.277%.

LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) sorted over half of the words used by all three contributor categories as analytic language, so it was apparent all three groups engaged students with insightful discourse. The data seemed to indicate I underestimated

the percentage of analytic language advisors used when communicating with their students. Due to Vianden's (2016) findings, I believed advisors would focus their communication on engaging with students as individuals, thus employing more social language. Instead, advisors in this study wrote using similar percentages of social and analytic language as fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty. Tinto (2015) may explain my oversight. According to Tinto (2015), a primary responsibility of advisors is to push advisees to develop self-advocacy. The critical thinking associated with analytic language may foster self-advocacy. If an advisor pushes a student with verbs like "reflect" or "consider," that advisor is using analytic language and leading the student to think for themselves. Future research into the language of high-impact self-advocacy practices would be necessary to check for such a connection.

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 tested for differences in personal pronoun use between fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisor contributors. Gardelle and Sorlin (2015) explained how pronoun use indicated a speaker's focus. If an individual used a high percentage of personal pronouns, the language use indicated people captivated the individual's attention. Words such as "I," "you," and "they" showed how a communicator focused their communication on individuals. Within this student, fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty contributors wrote with similar percentages of personal pronouns, 11.379-12.198%. As Gardelle and Sorlin (2015) suggested, the similar percentages of personal pronoun use indicated the Phase I contributors likely held a similar focus on individuals within their writing.

At a glance, one may assume advisors would use higher percentages of personal pronouns. After all, if an advisor is to meet the levels of student engagement championed

by Tinto (2015) and Vianden (2016), they must treat students as people. White's (2015) findings may explain why fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty also wrote with high percentages of personal pronouns. Within White's (2015) study, professors who received accolades from students indicated higher levels of job satisfaction. Scholarship is important, but, in synthesis, White's (2015) study and the present research indicated professors need to have opportunities to engage with students as people. In addition to the people-focus present in professor writing, future research could help administrators track professor engagement through their use of personal pronouns. If a professor communicated with higher percentages of personal pronouns, they likely had people, meaning students and colleagues, at the forefront on their mind (Gardelle & Sorlin, 2015). Alternatively, if a professor's use of personal pronouns declines, it could indicate a disconnect with the campus community.

Hypothesis 6. Hypothesis 6 tested for differences in impersonal pronoun use between fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisor contributors. Impersonal pronouns, chiefly "it," related to things. Be it ideas, objects, or concepts, an individual who wrote with more impersonal pronouns likely held things at the center of their focus instead of people (Pennebaker, 2013). All three Phase I contributor groups wrote with similar percentages of impersonal pronouns, between 4.170% and 4.934%.

Just as I expected advisors to write with a higher percentage of personal pronouns, I thought fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty would craft emails with higher percentages of impersonal pronouns. Similar percentages of impersonal pronoun use by fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty may be explained by the Hypothesis 5 discussion. Advisors engaged in self-efficacy building (Tinto 2015) would need to use impersonal

language to encourage practices like goal setting and reflection. On the faculty side, impersonal pronouns allow for the research and subject-matter competence described in Lankveld et al. (2016). Impersonal pronoun allowed certain communication; however, its relation to personal pronoun use may be a vital tool for tracking fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty state of mind. Relating to people is healthy, and, as evidenced in Donaldson et al. (2016) and White (2015), essential for professor and advisor happiness. Future studies could interrogate a potential connection between gaps between personal and impersonal pronoun use and professor and advisor job satisfaction. Impersonal pronouns may indicate objects, but they also carry information about the individual using them.

Comparison of Fulltime Faculty, Advisors, and Adjunct Faculty. The three Phase I hypotheses did not yield any statistically significant differences between participants' language use. As discussed in Chapter 4, further testing did not find any statistical differences within LIWC2015's (Pennebaker et al., 2015) other 90 categories. The four categories of word use that came closest to offering significant differences were clout, authentic, "I," and present tense.

Adjunct faculty in the study tended to use clout language—a combination of social and power language—and present tense verbs at slightly higher, albeit not statistically significant, rates. Adjunct faculty participants in this study served their institution through yearly contracts and enjoyed no self-governing opportunities. As discussed in the literature review, at-will or short-term contract adjunct instructors often worried about their institution's ability to dismiss them with little notice (AAUP, 204; Rebore, 2015). Through their longer-term positions with their institutions, fulltime

faculty and advisors may also have engaged in more touchpoints with students. While advisors often focused on a student's long-term goals, an adjunct faculty member was not guaranteed to see the student after a term's conclusion. Seeing students primarily in courses, which have set beginnings and ends, and being aware of their own professional mortality may keep adjunct faculty a little more in the present than fulltime faculty or advisors. Students in Phase II did not seem impacted by changing percentages of clout of present tense language, so these findings may be best digested by institutions as they attempt to understand the experiences and needs of adjunct faculty members.

The closest LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) category within which fulltime faculty members came to carrying a significant difference were "I" language use and authentic language percentages. Pennebaker (2013) wrote that increased use of "I" often represented an inward focus, which seems contradictory to the fulltime faculty position. Be it through research or teaching, individuals could view professors as professionals who are concerned with the world around them. Previous research may have offered an answer. In general, previous studies found research was becoming less collaborative and imposter syndrome was on the rise, particularly among young faculty members (Kuntz 2012 & Lankveld et al., 2016). The commodification of higher education may have driven faculty members' attention more toward themselves. As more students became consumers interested in the shortest, cheapest path to a degree and professors risked becoming grade gatekeepers (Elmore, 2016; Woodall et al., 2012), faculty may have faced more pressure, which turned their focus inward. College and universities should continue to monitor faculty mental wellbeing—further increased use of "I" and "me" could become a cry for help.

The second category within which fulltime faculty came closest to a significant difference was authentic language. More authentic language indicated a writer may have been more present, genuine, and candid in their communication. The best explanation for these findings may have come from Lankveld et al. (2016). Faculty members in the Lankveld et al. (2016) study craved recognition and responded better to candid student feedback than to university awards or recognition. Faculty analytic language use provided one of the closest to significant differences in Phase I of the study, and as language use represents focus, the fulltime faculty participants seemed to indicate they crave authentic connections with students. Reallocating resources to create more candid points of faculty-student contact, such as student research, faculty mentorship, and collaborative service learning may benefit faculty wellbeing and sense of purpose.

The advisors in the study did not offer any standout near-significant differences in language use. The group used slightly more exclamation marks than adjunct faculty or fulltime faculty, which could have indicated less formal or more passionate conversation. The average advisor participant also wrote slightly longer emails than the fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty participants; however, the difference was minute. The lack of variance may have indicated that advisors operated perfectly between the linguistic limits of adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty, or the data could have been impacted by the dual professor/advisor role occupied by several employees at the host institution. To return to Tinto (2015) and Vianden (2016), research suggested advisors should focus on building candid connections with students. Developing authentic and positive language habits could be a vital development goal for advisors.

Phase I may not have yielded any significant differences between fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisor participants' writing; however, the lack of variance may in fact be telling. If the contributors all leveraged similar language in their emails, they were likely all meeting or all failing to meet students' communication needs. The homogenous data could offer faculty and advisors insight into how they need to revise their scripts to better reach students. Insight gleaned from Phase II further unpacked students' perception of the Phase I data.

Phase II

Hypothesis 7. In Phase II, I studied how students responded to faculty and advisor communication. First, I wondered if students used more positive language when communicating with faculty members or advisors. Since increased use of positive language likely indicated a positive outlook or conversational tone (Pennebaker, 2013), I hypothesized students did not use the same percentages of positive emotion language when communicating with the faculty member in the study. Due to anecdotal observations that interactions with an advisor were more likely to be transactional, I believed students would have different opportunities to express positivity to professors than to advisors. My results supported this hypothesis. Student participants used significantly higher percentages of positive emotion language when communicating with professors than with advisors. Additional testing indicated student participants did not use significantly more negative emotion language when communicating with faculty members or advisors.

As hypothesized, students' increased use of positive emotion language with faculty members could have been indicative of deeper connections with faculty than with

advisors. Previous research explained students sought positivity and optimism from all aspects of the university (Tinto, 2015); however, Singleton et al. (2011) concluded students valued accessibility above all else from their professor. If students merely desired accessibility from their faculty members, power language would have likely been greater and positive emotion language would have been equal between faculty members and advisors. Despite previous research, when upon synthesizing positive emotion language use with increased social and power language use, a picture of a deeper connection with faculty members than with advisors materializes. In the context of the study, students engaged with the faculty member as a social, albeit it sometimes subservient, being. The students approached the faculty interaction with more optimism than the interaction with the advisor. Hypothesis 6 indicated students are applying critical thinking to diverse aspects of their education; however, in collaboration, Hypotheses 4, 5, and 7 found that students were more likely to seek a positive personal connection with their professors than with their advisors.

Hypothesis 8. Student participants may have written with comparable levels of positive language when communicating with faculty and advisors, but did they use similar percentages of power language? Within Hypothesis 8, I explored differences in power language use when student participants wrote to a faculty member or an advisor. As previously discussed, all conversation participants in studies developed a power-role in relation to the individuals with whom they are communicating (Kacewicz et al., 2013). In tandem with Kacewicz et al.'s (2013) findings, I expected students to write with different percentages of power language when communicating with an advisor, as a professor would have direct authority over a student, often exerted through grades or

recommendations. The results supported my hypothesis but indicated students used with more power language when communicating with a professor. Students used a significantly higher percentage of power language when communicating with the professor in the study than with the advisor.

A reason for the difference in language use may have been foreshadowed by Margolis and Soldatenko (2016). The increased use of social language may have indicated higher education had not been completely commodified; however, students' use of power language in relation to their faculty members may have alluded to neoliberal expectations. Hubble (2015) feared students had come to think of faculty as grade-giving degree gatekeepers, as opposed to academic collaborators. If Hubble's (2015) conclusions were founded and students viewed faculty members as part of an educational transaction, this view could explain participants' increased use of power dynamic language toward the faculty member. Kacewicz et al. (2013) concluded individuals with less power in an interaction used more first-person singular pronouns, so faculty members' slightly increased use of "I" pronouns, as discussed in a previous section, added further support to the possibility that students were increasingly willing to seize linguistic power from faculty members. To inject some optimism for the academy, students used power language at lower rates than social and analytic language—2.16-3.55% as opposed to 7.89-9.94% and 32.83-40.1%. Language in this study seemed to favor an altruistic view of education; as higher education continues to consider its relationship to students and the corporate world, monitoring faculty first-person plural use and student power language use could be a telling factor of the evolving relationship.

Hypothesis 9. Power dynamics can be a telling aspect of a relationship, and social language can provide equally powerful insight. Just as an advisor or a faculty member who wielded higher percentages of social language may have expressed awareness of or desire for social connections, students' use of social language in their writing represented similar focus. Due to the multi-year relationship between advisors and advisees, I believed student participants would use different amounts of social language with their advisor, and the data suggested my hypothesis was correct, though not in the way I had anticipated. Results indicated student participants used significantly more social language when communicating with a faculty member than with an advisor.

Students' reliance upon social language could have punctuated their views of faculty members. At its most jaded, a student could have thought building a social relationship with a faculty member may have benefited their final grade. More optimistically, students using more social language could have indicated resistance to the neoliberal trajectory Margolis and Soldatenko (2016) cautioned higher education to avoid. Margolis and Soldatenko (2016) described how some schools were investing in expensive complexes, amenities, and corporate partnerships to "build a brand." Yet increased social language use toward faculty members may have indicated students were interested in building relationships with people. Mentorship, accomplice learners, recommendations, or even just shared understanding encompassed common goals students may have hoped to accomplish through social language. These data were encouraging, and further research with larger samples may indicate the "community of learners" (p. 247) that Margolis and Soldatenko (2016) had feared was being replaced by the commodification of higher education is still strong. Further research that binds

student motivation with linguistic data will be necessary to develop more certain conclusions regarding student intent.

Hypothesis 10. Social language provided insight into the relationship between communicator and audience, and analytic language illuminated the depth of thought. Specially, higher percentages of analytic language use aligned with critical or complex thought. As students often engaged with professors regarding complex subjects, one may have assumed student participants would not use similar levels of analytic language when communicating with professors and advisors. The results indicated students did not use statistically different percentages of analytic language when communicating with faculty members than when communicating with advisors.

If analytic language demonstrated analytic thinking (Pennebaker, 2013), similar deployment of analytic language may have represented the participants' intellectual growth. Cornwell (2016) explained one of the goals of higher education should be to create more thoughtfully, socially engaged citizens. If Cornwell (2016) was correct, student language use should indicate they are growing and applying new perspective whenever possible. While a student may have worked with a faculty member to critically dissect a difficult philosophical paradox or chemical inconsistency, students also often confronted challenges with their advisor. Charting a degree path, developing a resume, and overcoming personal hardship were all accomplishments that demanded complex thought. It may have seemed obvious the classroom would expect analytic language from student, yet the data indicated students were as engaged in other aspects of their lives as they were with their studies. Student participants applying comparable levels of analytic language to both faculty and advisor communication may have indicated the participants

were developing as successful, agile thinkers. The large percentages of average analytic language used by student participants in their emails, 40.1% to faculty and 32.83% to advisors, offered further support to student intellectual development.

Hypothesis 11. To transition to function language, Hypothesis 11 considered the personal pronouns students used when communicating with the faculty member and the advisor in the study. As with other types of language, personal pronoun use paralleled to the communicator's focus. Individuals who used more first-person-singular pronouns were focused internally, writers who relied on second-person pronouns had attention focused on their audience, and speakers who orated with third person singular pronouns gave their attention to other individuals (Pennebaker, 2013). In tandem, when a communicator used higher percentages of personal pronouns, the language use indicated the speaker or writer held individuals at the center of their communication—be it themselves or another. I believed students more often engaged in the discussion of ideas and concepts with faculty members. If this were true, students would have used different amounts of personal pronouns when communicating with the professor and the advisor in this study. My results supported my hypothesis but not as I expected. Students used significantly higher percentages of personal pronouns when communicating with the faculty member. The disparity in student's personal pronoun use was one of the largest in the study

Differences in personal pronoun use added further support to the pattern seen within the content language in Hypotheses 7, 8, 9, and 10. Students in the study were more focused on individuals when communicating with the faculty member. In particular, students wrote more "I" and "you" pronouns in their faculty email—12.52% and 3.93%

opposed to 9.14% and 1.96%. Gardelle and Sorlin (2015) concluded pronouns provided a frame of reference into a writer's focus, so the participants' prevalent use of "I" and "you" likely indicated their attention was on their professors and themselves. Students' writing offered further defense for the idea that students want to engage with faculty members as people and forge personal, social connections with the professor.

Hypothesis 12. If personal pronouns represented people, impersonal pronouns represented everything else. "It" and "one" were the two most common impersonal pronouns; however, "they" and "you" could also have been impersonal pronouns in certain contexts. Whereas personal pronoun use indicated focus on people, impersonal pronoun use coincided with focus on objects or concepts. Coupled with the hypothesis that students would use different percentages of personal pronouns when communicating with the professor and with the advisor in this study, I also hypothesized students would not employ the same percentage impersonal personal pronouns. Once again, my results supported my hypothesis, yet the specific results surprised me. The difference in student impersonal pronoun use was not as vast as personal pronouns use; however, students wrote using a significantly higher percentage of impersonal pronouns when communicating with the advisor than when communicating with the faculty member in the study.

Higher percentages of personal pronoun use suggested students focused on people when communicating with the faculty members, so higher percentages of impersonal pronoun use showed participants' focus on objects and concepts when writing to the advisor. Previous research from Vianden (2016) and Tinto (2015) indicated students sought advisors who engaged with them as individuals; however, the participants'

language use in this study signaled different results. Vianden (2016) gathered data through asking students to recount critical moments and memories of their college and concluded students preferred memories where their advisor took the time to care for them as individuals. In the examples Vianden (2016) cited in their publication, students discussed how their advisor got to know them, which allowed the advisor to help them accomplish their goal—completing a difficult course, changing a major to a minor, received support, etc. It is possible, and even common, for individuals to misinterpret an experience or develop dissonance between how they feel and how they act. Did the students in Vianden's (2016) study prefer advisors who got to know them because such understanding kept the conversational focus was on them? Or did getting to know the student and their needs allow the advisor to help the student accomplish the goals residing within their impersonal pronouns? Tinto's (2015) study relied on synthesis of previous research; the cited students indicated how negative interactions damaged students' ability to persist. While optimism provided a strong persistence support system, perhaps the students in the studies perceived favorable news as optimism. The students in Tinto's (2015) concert of studies may have wanted an effective advisor whose diligence helped the student achieve consistently favorable results. This study's relatively small sample size should discourage applying the results to larger populations; however, advisors should be aware of how the language their advisees use and be sure they take the time to understand students' needs and intentions. If students use lower percentages of personal pronouns when communicating with advisors, it may make forging the essential connection Vianden (2016) promoted even more difficult. Impersonal pronoun does not

make students cold, and, for careful advisors, it may shine a spotlight on a student's primary desires.

Hypothesis 13. The final category of function words addressed in this study was verb tense. Small variations in word endings or auxiliary verbs controlled the tense of a sentence. As with pronouns, tense use in writing demonstrated where a writer placed their attention (Pennebaker, 2013). Past tense verbs indicated a writer looked back, while future tense verbs suggested a forward focus. As tense indicates attention, I hypothesized students would use differing percentages future tense, present tense, and past tense verbs when writing to the professor and the advisor in Phase II. My results found no significant differences in students' use of past and future tense verbs; however, the tests indicated students used significantly more present tense verbs when communicating with the advisor in the study.

Increased percentages of present tense verbs may have supported the previous conclusion that students focused on ideas and goals with advisors. If a student filled their writing to advisors with present tense verbs and impersonal pronouns, the student was likely discussing short-term or current issues with which they needed the advisor's assistance. To return to Vianden's (2016) provided samples, the students in the study discussed how their advisor addressed their current problems, such as poor course performance or an overwhelming major. Vianden (2016) further concluded the participants expressed the highest levels of dissatisfaction with advisors who were not present or unresponsive or who were unknowledgeable. The greater percentage use of present tense language with advisors supported Vianden's (2016) conclusions—advisees found greater satisfaction with advisors who could identify and resolve their current

concerns. The data supported conclusions regarding the communication challenges advisors faced. Advisors must be able to form personal connections with task-oriented students and address concerns of present-minded students while encouraging those same students to plan for the future.

Impacts on Student Memory. Understanding how students write could help faculty and advisors anticipate students' desires. Being a more intentional listener and reader helps prepare faculty and advisors to better assist students, yet, to truly be student-centered, communicators must also understand their own writing and how it impacts students. Within this study, student participants completed a three-question quiz. Each question related to an email containing certain linguistic patterns, and I charted participants' correct answers to determine if students better retained information presented within specific linguistic parameters. In short, the data did not yield any significant differences in student memory. Despite the lack of firm memory differences, there were a few interesting patterns in the data that may give rise to future research.

First, in terms of tone, students remembered slightly more information from emails with heightened negative emotion words. Research indicated students would prefer emails composed with a positive emotion tone (Tinto, 2015; Vianden, 2016). Students may have preferred the positive communication, yet they answered more questions correctly from negatively charged emails. The answer may exist within the concept of negative attention bias. Martínez-Tur et al. (2017) concluded individuals were more likely to anchor memories to negative than positive occurrences. Within the same study, the researchers found that individuals who encountered a single negative touchpoint were more likely to perceive of the entire experience as negative (Martínez-

Tur et al., 2017). Given the research on negative attention bias, there may be room to further study how students retain negative information. This being said, if negative emotion language is so great that the communication becomes a negative touchpoint for the student, the communicator risks souring a student's experience with a course or advisor (Martínez-Tur et al., 2017; Tinto, 2015). The large variance within this study's data also encouraged the need for more focused research into this topic.

A second interesting data pattern came from sentence length. Even though the difference may not have been statistically significant, student participants answered slightly more questions correctly from sentences containing fewer words of six or more letters. There are a few arguments to make within these data. The first is that students may find shorter language more approachable. Second, as will be discussed in the next section, students are often juggling myriad responsibilities and may benefit from staccato sentences. Finally, to turn to a student participant, bombastic word choice may distract from an email's meaning. Students in the focus group agreed faculty and advisors sometimes "answer(ed) every question but the one I ask(ed)." If a professor or an advisor filled their email with technical language, a student may miss a desired piece of information.

A final interesting data point is related to personal pronouns. A large amount of variance quashed a firm conclusion; however, students participants answered more questions correctly when an email from a professor or advisor used more second-person and third-person-plural pronouns—"you" and "they," specifically. Regarding the second-person pronouns, student participants claimed they were more likely to open and thoroughly read an email if it contained their name or requested a specific call-to-action

to them. Remembering more information from second-person emails corroborated students' claims. The third-person-plural data did not seem to have a research base—particularly because students did not seem to remember more information from third-person singular-focused emails. The best explanation may reside within the flexibility enjoyed by “they.” For decades grammarians testified “they” can only exist as a plural pronoun and the correct first-person alternative to which is “he or she.” In the late 2010s, popular opinion developed a more nuanced view of gender, and “they” became an acceptable gender-neutral third-person-singular pronoun in professional and academic writing—the change was even adopted by The Associated Press (AP) in 2017 (Easton, 2017). Common style manuals, which were not always on the cutting-edge of language use, followed AP's example and have accepted “they” as a singular pronoun. “They” has become an increasingly flexible pronoun, so charting use of “they” within email use may have required a more nuanced approach than was deployed within this study. Future scrutiny of student memory is necessary to better understand how students respond to pronoun use in email. In addition, the recent adaptation to “they” may require a revision the 2015 edition of LIWC (Pennebaker et al., 2015).

Student Perception of Emails. Beyond demonstrating effective email preferences through memory, student focus group participants offered a laundry list of likes and dislikes for the emails they receive from their faculty members and their advisors. Students differed on a few ideas, such as if the urgent flag in Outlook was useful or annoying, yet they concurred on several key points. Most of the participants' perceptions could be categorized into three groups: tone/direction, length, and timeliness.

Understanding and applying information from each of the three categories may help professors and advisors better reach students via written communication.

First, students claimed they preferred emails written with positive emotion language. Overwhelmingly, focus group participants cited the positive email presented to them as their preferred email. When compared with the aforementioned data-point that students remembered more information from emails drafted with negative emotional language, this may present a problem for email writers. How can an email be positive and negative? Two potential paths to reconciliation may exist. The first is to primarily rely on positive emotion language when communicating general information to students and save negative emotion language for essential emails. The second is to rely on the classic compliment sandwich writing model to create an email which primarily relies on positive emotion language to encircle the key facts and ideas presented via negative emotion language. In addition to preferring emails with a positive tone, student participants said they were more likely to read emails directed to them. Here, writers have an easy solution. Emails can be written in second person, relying on “you” pronouns, and tools, such as Microsoft Word’s mail merge feature, allow writers to include students’ names in mass emails. Giving students specific calls to action addresses the students’ email preferences and may make the student more likely to remember the information in the email.

Email length held a strong presence in focus group conversations. The data did not suggest a causal relationship between email or sentence length and student memory, so if a student opens and reads a long email, they may retain the information; however, the students in this study indicated they were less likely to read a long email. Student

participants said they often skimmed or skipped long emails. Instead, students said they preferred bulleted lists. The preference for bulleted lists may help students identify specific calls to action within the email, and, as previously mentioned, understand how the email relates to them. To help assist email searchers, students also recommended faculty and advisors develop and use a glossary of common language to help students use the search feature in their inbox. If project names, key concepts, and advising terms were consistent, students said they could more effectively search their inboxes for essential information.

Finally, student participants offered several comments about the response time they expect from their faculty members and advisors. Previous research indicated faculty members should return student emails within 48 to meet student expectations (LaBarbera, 2013; Young et al., 2011). The student participants within this study strongly disagreed. Most students said they expected their emails to be returned within 24 hours, a few students sought 12-hour response times, and one student said they wanted their questions answered within 5 hours. Not only did the students unanimously reject the 48-hour suggestion, they did so with great vehemence. I did not build this study to gauge effective response times; however, focus group discussions indicated previous research into email response times may need updating. In addition to occurring nearly a decade after the LaBarbera (2013) and Young et al. (2011) studies, this research spanned the COVID-19 pandemic. Communication could not occur in person, so response time expectations may have mutated. Until further research with larger sample sizes can be conducted, faculty and advisors may best serve their students by approaching the established 48-hour response recommendations as a maximum instead of a goal.

A final note about student perception to consider is the difference between student expectations of faculty and advisor communication. Focus group participants said they did not differentiate between faculty and advisor communication; however, the emails they wrote the faculty member and the advisor in the study disagreed. When communicating with the faculty members, students expressed a need to communicate with the professor as an individual and sought to develop a relationship with them. The emails to the professor were more positive and personal. The average participant used much different language when communicating with the advisor in the study. Instead of engaging personally, the students used more impersonal pronouns and relied on present tense verbs to discuss current situations or problems. The students' language use did not attempt to build a personal connection, instead it presented specific goals in need of accomplishing. Students may not realize the differences in their attention or desires, so it is important that faculty members and advisors pay careful attention to how students communicate so they can effectively engage with the student.

Recommendations for Practice

Despite the rise of new communication platforms, such as Slack and Twitter, email will likely remain a dominant communication method (Adestra, 2016; Purcell & Raine, 2014). To continue to connect with students, faculty and advisors can adopt several facets of this study into their personal communication scripts. In terms of form, students preferred short, direct emails. When possible, participants requested bulleted lists which they could use as a step-by-step guide. If a topic was too complicated to communicate in list form, short, heavily formatted emails were more visually appealing to students. In addition to more liberal paragraphing, professor and advisors should rely

on shorter, more direct language may also help students retain essential concepts and details. Emails are now likely to be accessed on phones, so shorter words and paragraphs will be more legible on small screens.

When considering word choice, faculty and advisors should also create and use a common glossary of terms in their course. Focus group participants said they often relied on their inbox's search function to find essential emails. If students can reliably search specific terms or phrases, they may be more likely to locate essential email communication. Careful language use should also be extended to subject line creation. Students said they were less likely to open an email with a generic subject line like "Math Class Information." Instead, students preferred subject lines with specific phrases or that included their name. In an emergency, phrases like "URGENT" or "OPEN IMMEDIATELY" can capture students' attention; however, faculty or advisors who use emergency phrases with consistency risk robbing the words of impact. One student added the phrase "extra credit" also always seized their attention.

The one word students said reliably drew their focus was their name. Individual emails to single students are easy to personally address; however, mass emails to entire classes or an advisee list require more effort. If an advisor or a professor takes a few extra moments to set up a mail merge to include each recipients' name at the top of the email, students said they were more likely to open the communication. Several inboxes allow recipients to preview the first line of an email before opening, so a student who sees their name in the preview is more likely to think specific action is required of them. To further encourage students to ingest email content, faculty and advisors should rely on second-person pronouns whenever possible. Imperatives like, "You will need to submit your

assignment by this Friday,” or “You must update your four-year plan before you can register,” helped the recipient realize they were the subject of the conversation and they needed to complete a specific call to action.

Second-person pronouns and student names could help students open an initial email, but faculty and advisors must continue to work to engage the student in essential replies. Most importantly, faculty and advisors must aim to return student emails as soon as possible. Student participants said slow response times damaged their opinion of a faculty member or advisor and made them less receptive to future communication. In the literature review, cited research claimed 48 hours should be the response goal; however, students in this study indicated they expect response times closer to 24 hours. Whatever a specific faculty member or advisor can manage, they should communicate their typical response time as an expectation and adhere to it.

A final recommendation for practice is for faculty, advisors, and administrators. Language is important. Faculty, advisors, and administrators should make a habit of listening, not just to what is said, but how it is communicated. Changes to a student or faculty member’s pronoun use or tone could indicate a shift of focus that could be telling for their mental state. An adjunct faculty member who wrote with more power language may be dissatisfied with how they are governed by the university; a student who began communicating in future tense may be seeking more guidance in career planning; or an advisor who has shifted to more “I” pronoun use may be enduring a stressor that has caused their focus to turn internal. An old expression claims one should not lose sight of the forest for the trees. There is wisdom in such advice; however, for language, the forest and the trees are both vital to meaning. When reading, glossing over individual words to

capture a main idea may cause one to miss essential information that exists in individual words.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study cast a wide, albeit shallow, net. Several findings might prove essential for improving electronic communication with students; however, additional, focused research with larger samples may yield results with greater potential for generalization. Specifically, a study should be conducted to determine possibly correlation between negative attention bias and student memory. Larger studies may also yield more applicable results concerning power roles between fulltime faculty, advisors, adjunct faculty, and students. This study did not have the sample size to come to any meaningful conclusions about power. As higher education continues to adapt to a neo-liberal market, continuing to track power dynamics may help colleges and universities understand student expectations.

Next, there is room for further study of how fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty members write. This study relied on self-selection and asked participants to submit nine writing samples. These instructions created a respectable sample pool; however, the self-selection meant each participant likely submitted some of their better, or at least most memorable, work. To capture a more true-to-life portrait of how faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisors write, longitudinal research that gathers most, if not all, of an individual's writing would be necessary. Such a study will require a careful relationship with FERPA; however, in addition to better understanding writing in general, longitudinal projects could help an institution identify changes in a role's behavior or happiness. If a longitudinal research study noticed changes in language use at specific

times or as overall trends, individuals or entire groups may be adapting to personal or institutional change. For example, if a group of faculty members began using more first-person-singular pronouns and fewer first-person-plural pronouns, the change could be indicative of students seizing more power in the student-professor relationship.

In addition to the self-selective nature of my study, Phase I contributors did not submit demographic information. Dividing Phase I contributors into three categories—fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty—only provided one dimension of understanding. Future research could be conducted regarding how fulltime faculty, advisor, and adjunct faculty demographics, such as gender, class, and ethnicity impacted communication with students. Such research could also investigate communication between demographics, such as a male student writing to a female professor or a black student writing to a white advisor, which could prove vital to better understanding students' experiences.

Finally, a longitudinal study of student style matching could help professor and advisors understand the impact they have on student writing. Students in this study said they often match their writing to their professors', a phenomenon known as linguistic style matching. If students style match to the extent that students in this study claimed to, faculty and advisors may be able to adjust their language use to guide their students to better practice. To understand how students style match their professors and advisors, a longitudinal study would need to chart student language use throughout their relationship with the professor or advisor and track changes in language use. The study may also need to follow the student beyond their relationship with the professor or advisor and see if the

language adaptations held in their other communication or only existed in interactions with the individual to whose style they were matching.

Conclusion

This sequential mixed-methods study sought to better understand how fulltime faculty, adjunct faculty, and advisors wrote and how students responded to that writing. Through a series of LIWC2015 (Pennebaker et al., 2015) analysis, questionnaires, and focus groups, this study came to appreciate some of the contributors' and participants' communication preferences. In synthesis, the contributor emails represented several aspects of the student participants' ideal email. The average word count of the emails was around 120 words; however, few of the emails used bulleted lists. Students said they wanted to be the focus of professor and advisor emails, and, for fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty, the highest percentage of personal pronoun use was "you" pronouns. In addition, Phase II student participants claimed they valued professors and advisors who treated them as individuals in emails. Meeting the demand for connection, social language among Phase II contributors was among the highest percentages in the study. The greatest disconnect between Phase I writing and Phase II desire existed in positive emotion language use. Phase II participants spoke extensively about positive language being essential in email, yet Phase II contributors used cognitive processing language at rates more than twice as often as positive language. The gap between Phase I contributors' writing and Phase II participants' desires were slight; however, the data indicated there is some room for improved communication between students, fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty. Still, the most applicable insights may have been into what the language use said about the writers.

The data indicated fulltime faculty, advisors, and adjunct faculty at the host institution crafted linguistically similar emails when communicating with students. Similarities in writing could have indicated shared competence among professors and advisors, or it could have indicated the groups were missing the same communication benchmarks, the most worrisome of which may have been low percentages of positive emotion language. The Phase I contributors' use of personal pronouns over impersonal pronouns indicated a desire to connect with students, a desire corroborated by high social language use. On the student side, Phase II participants indicated short, bulleted, and student-focused emails best captured their attention and memory. Students also offered sharp commentary on their expectations of email response time and critiqued overuse of negative emotion language, while the data indicated negative emotion language may help students retain slightly more information from email. Furthermore, student participants' increased use of social language with their professors indicated a need for personal connections, and their heightened use of impersonal pronouns when communicating with their advisor expressed a need to problem solve and discuss ideas.

Aspects of the discussion may be adaptable to current practice; however, future research with larger sample sizes will be necessary to generalize the results. No matter the suggested direct applications, the most important information to take from this study is appreciation for language. Most faculty, advisors, and administrators do not have the time to become applied linguistics researchers; however, mastery is not required. For example, if a student stops asking questions or engaging in social behavior, it could indicate something is amiss in their life. Communicators should take the time to appreciate individual words, and, if anything feels strange or different, take a moment to

check on the well-being of the writer or speaker. The words we use often know us better than we know ourselves.

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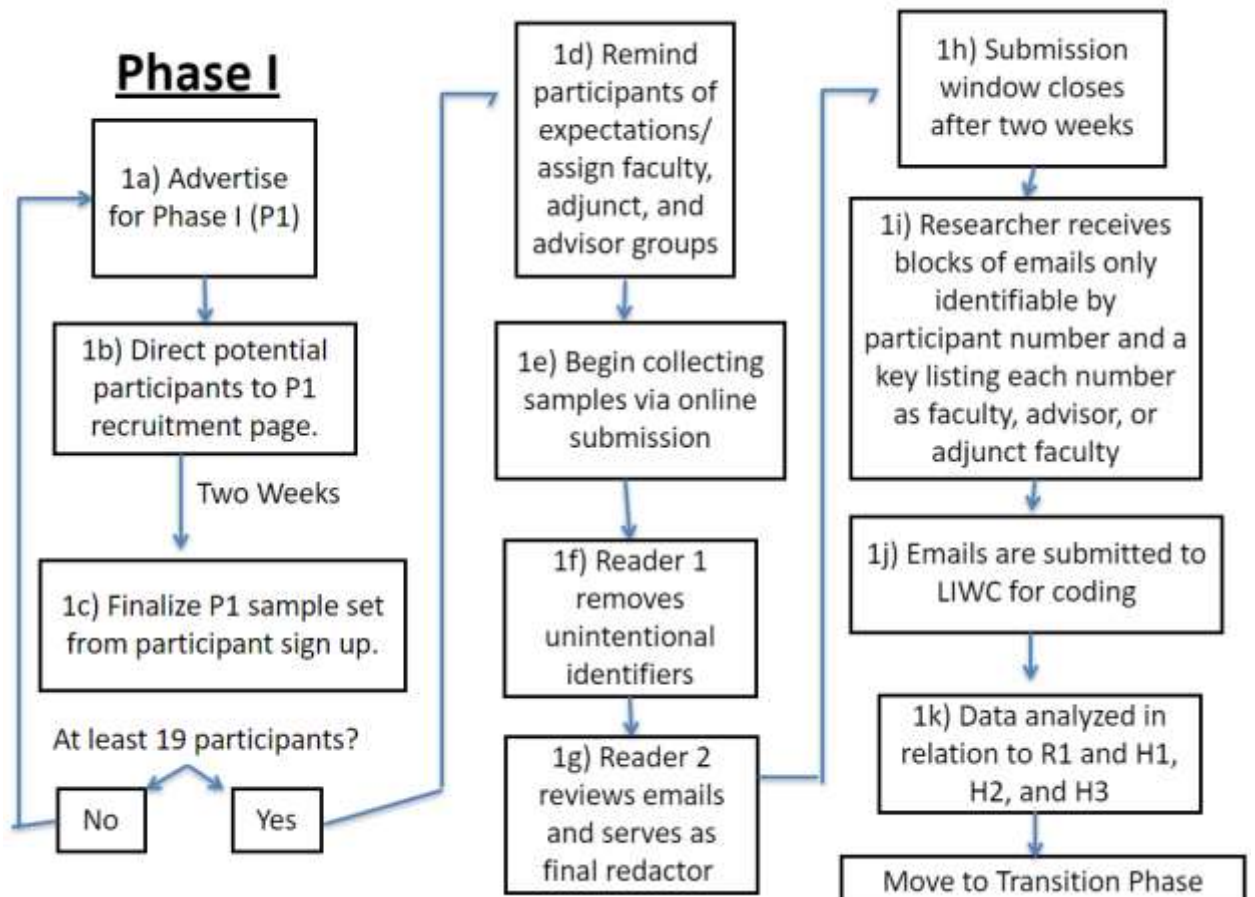
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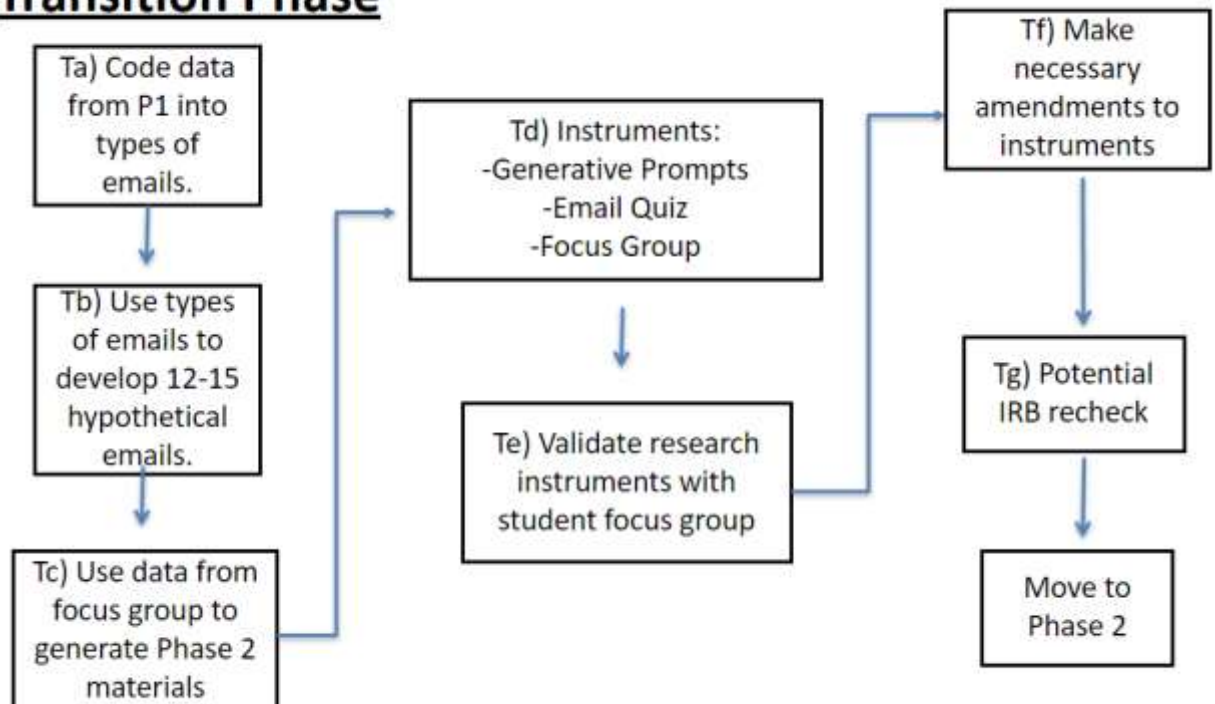
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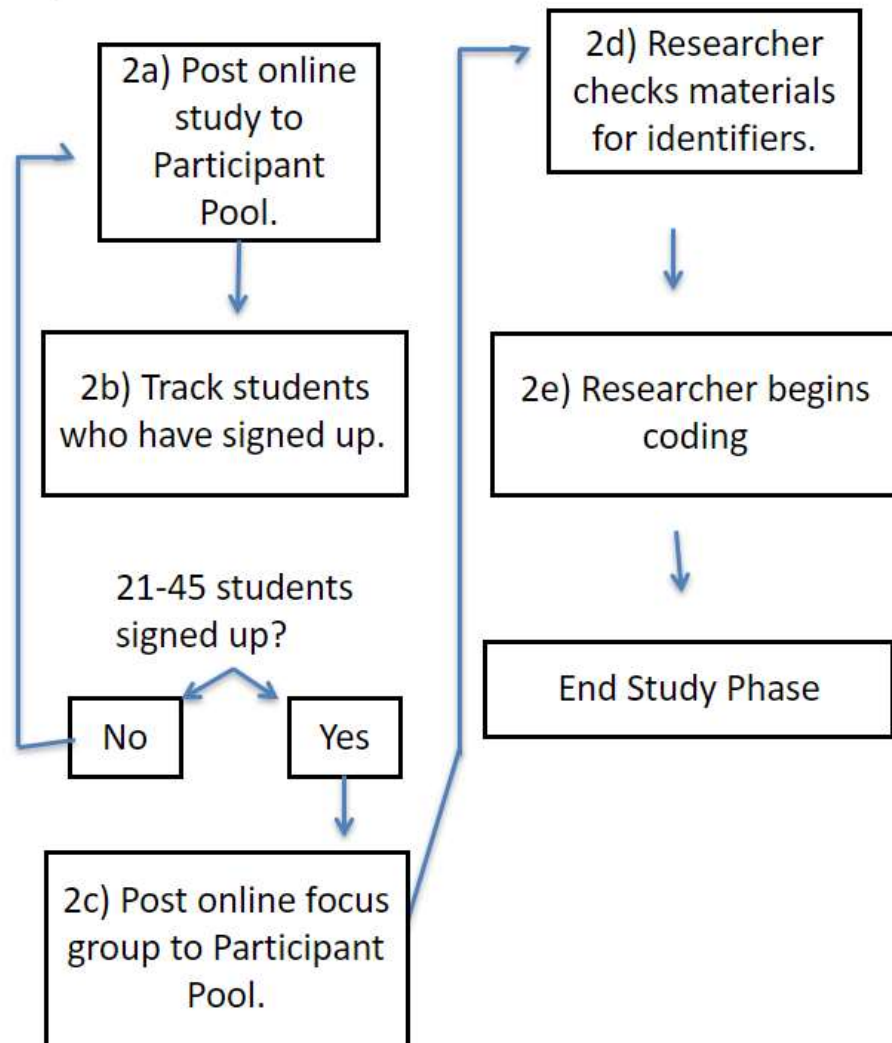
Appendix A Study Flow Chart



Transition Phase



Phase II



Appendix B

Instructions for Submitters (Phase I)

Thank you for your participation in this study. You will play a vital role providing real data to the researcher to help gain insight into how faculty write and how students read. We want each sample to give a realistic depiction into how faculty communicate, but we do want to address privacy concerns—both for you and your students.

We will be collecting emails from you for one week. The data collection will run from Monday (date) to Friday (date). You will have the next week (dates) to make any changes and final submissions, and then the submission window will close on (date) at (time). Please upload as many emails to your students as you feel comfortable sending within that window.

Please review the following guidelines. They will teach you about which types of information you should redact and how to submit your redacted emails.

We are primarily concerned with removed two types of identifiers, **Direct Identifiers** and **Indirect Identifiers**.

Direct Identifiers: Information that specifically relates to or references an individual

- Name
- Major
- Contact Information
- Office Number
- Numeric Identifiers (student ID number, social security number, etc.)
- Names of close relations/contacts

Indirect Identifiers: Seemingly harmless information that, when assembled, could allow an individual to find a participant's identity.

Indirect identifiers are limitless but may include characteristics like the following:

- Organizations to Which Someone Belongs
- Classes Taught
- Research Interests
- Previous Education/Classes
- Year in School

Before you upload an email, you will need to remove as many direct and indirect identifiers as you deem necessary. Just delete the information and write RD in its place. No matter how long the phrase or short the word, delete it and type RD. This may be easier to do by copying and pasting the text into a word processor.

After you have redacted the necessary information in the text, all you will need to do is follow the link below, paste the text, and click submit. If you would like to submit another email immediately, refresh the page and paste a new response.

Please do not submit multiple emails as a single response. This will harm the data.

If you have any questions, please contact the Project Moderator.

Thank you,

Example:

Good afternoon John,

I'm sorry to hear football has had you so busy, but the F you received on our midterm cannot be changed. I know it is your senior year and you are just trying to graduate and move on, but now is not the time to give up. Feel free to stop by my office (Spellmann 123), and we can talk about what you can do to make sure you are successful with the rest of your term. Don't despair, you still have plenty of time to pass my class.

Hang in there,

Dr. Professor

Redacted Example:

Good afternoon RD,

I'm sorry to hear RD has had you so busy, but the RD you received on our midterm cannot be changed. I know it is your RD and you are just trying to graduate and move on, but now is not the time to give up. Feel free to stop by my office (RD), and we can talk about what you can do to make sure you are successful with the rest of your term. Don't despair, you still have plenty of time to pass my class.

Hang in there,

RD

Notes:

- The name was redacted so the student could not be identified
- Football was redacted as it could be linked to the student
- The grade was redacted to respect the student's privacy
- The student's year in school was redacted as it could be in indirect identifier
- The professor's office was redacted to protect their identity
- The professor's name was redacted to protect their identity

Appendix C

List of Email Categories (Phase I)

Each participant will be asked to upload nine emails. While we would appreciate you fulfilling all nine requests, you are welcome to fill as many or as few categories as you would like. The submission portal for your emails will be open for two weeks. The categories below will explain the types of emails we are looking for:

- 1) A mass email you sent your class (faculty) or advisees (advisor)
- 2) An email in which you had to break some bad news
- 3) A conversation that you initiated
- 4) Your reply to a student-initiated conversation (remember to only submit your writing, not the student's!)
- 5) An email you are proud of
- 6) An email answering a question that was on the syllabus/in a previous email/on the degree planning sheet
- 7) An email you sent in the first week of the term
- 8) An email of your choosing (no restrictions other than it has to have been written to a student)
- 9) A second email of your choosing (no restrictions other than it has to have been written to a student)

Appendix D

Content Reviewer Training Manual (Phase I)

Thank you for your participation in this study as a content reviewer. You will play a vital role in protecting the identities of the students, professors, and advisors whose electronic communications the researcher will be studying. Please review the following guidelines. They will teach you about which types of information you should redact and how the redacting process works on Qualtrics

Direct Identifiers:

All of the professors and advisors who are participating in this study will be given instructions to remove direct identifiers; however, you should double check their work and redact information like the following:

- Name
- Major
- Contact Information
- Office Number
- Numeric Identifiers (student ID number, social security number, etc.)
- Names of close relations/contacts

Direct identifiers should be removed using the steps below.

Indirect Identifiers:

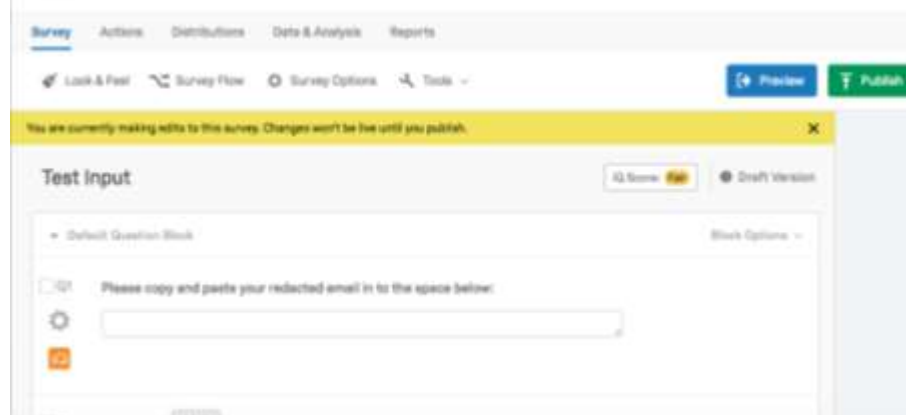
While some information, such as a student's name, should obviously be redacted, you should also be vigilant when looking for indirect identifiers. This includes seemingly harmless information that, when assembled, could allow an individual to piece together a participant's identity. Indirect identifiers are limitless but may include characteristics like the following:

- Organizations to Which Someone Belongs
- Classes Taught
- Research Interests
- Previous Education/Classes
- Year in School

Indirect identifiers should be removed just like direct identifiers.

How to Review and Redact

1) Open Qualtrics and use the provided login information. Click and open this survey project.



2) Click “Data & Analysis” to open the review page. The submissions we have received will be here. You can click “Recorded Date” to sort by the received time and date.

Recorded Date	Q1 - Please copy and paste your redacted email in to the space below:	Reader 2	Reader 1	Actions
Nov 26, 2018 5:24 PM	slghtsh vlcnretdv			
Nov 26, 2018 5:24 PM	wllf wvdf			

3) Click “Edit” to open the editing tool. You will then be able to edit the individual emails. When you find direct or indirect identifiers, delete them in the email and replace them, no matter how long they are with [RD].

Recorded Date	Q1 - Please copy and paste your redacted email in to the space below:	Reader 2	Reader 1	Actions
Apr 6, 2018 5:07 PM	Hello Dr. Professor: My name is [redact], and I really need to get an A in your class. I cannot go back home without a passing grade—Chinese families are greatly dishonored by sons who do not get an A's. What can I do to pass your accounting class? Sincerely, [redact]	Y		
Nov 26, 2018 5:24 PM	slghtsh vlcnretdv			

4) In this example, the submitting professor was careful to remove their student's name in two locations, but there are still direct and indirect identifiers. The professor's name, the student's nation of origin, the class should all be removed as well. This information could be used to identify either the student or the professor.

Q1 - Please copy and paste your redacted email in to the space below:	
Hello Dr. Professor. My name is [redact], and I really need to get an A in your class. I cannot go back home without a passing grade--Chinese families are greatly dishonored by sons who do not get all A's. What can I do to pass your accounting class? Sincerely, [redact]	
sfghbhn vcbnmnbv	

5) Once you are finished redacting information, notice the column labeled with your name. Type a "y" in the column to show you have reviewed the associated email. This will allow you to track what you have and have not read. Both readers should review all emails. This will make sure our students and colleagues are as protected as possible.

Q1 - Please copy and paste your redacted email in to the space below:	Reader 2	Reader 1
Hello [redact]. My name is [redact], and I really need to get an A in your class. I cannot go back home without a passing grade--[redact] are greatly dishonored by sons who do not get all A's. What can I do to pass your [redact]? Sincerely, [redact]	<input type="checkbox"/> y ✕ Add Tag...	<input type="checkbox"/> y ✕ Add Tag...
sfghbhn vcbnmnbv	Add Tag...	Add Tag...

6) When you are done with your edits, click "edit" again. This will close the editor and save your changes.

Thank you again for your assistance with this project. I would not be able to conduct this research without your assistance. If you have any questions, please contact me via the contact information below. I can assist you with technical questions or direct you to another who can help you with content questions.

Appendix E

Email Category List (Phase II)

Email	Topic	Categories	LIWC Goal
1	A	High Positive	8%
		High Wes	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Past Tense	5%
2	B	High Positive	8%
		High Is	8%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Present Tense	20%
3	B	High Negative	8%
		High Wes	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Present Tense	20%
4	A	High Negative	8%
		High Yous	10%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Future Tense	5%
5	A	High Power Dynamics	8%
		High Yous	10%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Present Tense	20%

Topics	
A	Delivering Bad News
B	Delivering Good News
C	A Mass Email

Average Length: 123 words (62-285)

Email	Topic	Categories	LIWC Goal
6	B	High Power Dynamics	8%
		High (S)he	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Future Tense	5%
7	A	High Social	20%
		High (S)he	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Present Tense	20%
8	B	High Social	20%
		High They	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Past Tense	5%
9	A	High CogProc	20%
		High They	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Present tense	20%
10	B	High CogProc	20%
		High Is	8%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Future Tense	5%
11	C	High Positive	8%
		High S(he)	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Future Tense	5%

Email	Topic	Categories	LIWC Goal
12	C	High Negative	8%
		High They	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Past Tense	5%
13	C	High Power Dynamics	8%
		High Is	8%
		Sen Word Length	Average 20
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Past Tense	5%
14	C	High Social	20%
		High Wes	5%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	11
		Future Tense	5%
15	C	High CogProc	20%
		High Yous	10%
		Sen Word Length	Average 7
		Word Length (6 letter+)	22
		Past Tense	5%

Appendix F

Questionnaire Quiz (Phase II)

Questions grouped by related email number

1. Email 1
 - a. What course did the university create to “honor the values, culture, and beliefs of all people”?
 - i. Human Diversity
 - ii. Global Perspective
 - iii. Shared Value
 - iv. Diverse Insight
 - b. What region in the United States did the student in this email have insight into
 - i. The Midwest
 - ii. The Northeast
 - iii. The West coast
 - iv. The South
2. Email 2
 - a. In what sport was this student injured?
 - i. Basketball
 - ii. Football
 - iii. Cheerleading
 - iv. Lacrosse
 - b. On what day of the week will the committee review the student’s suspension request?
 - i. Monday
 - ii. Tuesday
 - iii. Wednesday
 - iv. Thursday
3. Email 3
 - a. In an email to a student who was suspended from the university, an advisor cites two goals the student shared with her. One was working abroad. What was the other?
 - i. Publishing a book
 - ii. Starting a charity
 - iii. Opening a business
 - iv. Earning a doctoral degree
 - b. What social media platform did the author want to remain in touch on?
 - i. Facebook
 - ii. Twitter
 - iii. LinkedIn
 - iv. Instagram

4. Email 4
 - a. What letter grade will the student who had a bad start in Spanish receive?
 - i.A
 - ii.B
 - iii.C
 - iv.D
 - b. With which government office did the author want the student to apply for an internship?
 - i.The Municipal Court
 - ii.The County Clerk's Office
 - iii.The Department of Revenue
 - iv.The County Prosecutor's Office
5. Email 5
 - a. What is the name of the honors society the student is going to rejoin?
 - i.Alpha Beta Gamma Delta
 - ii.Beta Alpha Chi Kappa
 - iii.Gamma Alpha Mu Epsilon
 - iv.Beta Epsilon Sigma Tau
 - b. How much is the membership fee for this honors society?
 - i.\$100
 - ii.\$200
 - iii.\$300
 - iv.\$400
6. Email 6
 - a. What company does Val Ying work for?
 - i.Ameren
 - ii.Boeing
 - iii.InBev
 - iv.Energizer
 - b. What field of study is Val looking for interns in?
 - i.Finance
 - ii.Marketing
 - iii.Law
 - iv.Communications
7. Email 7
 - a. After being suspended, this student did something to express frustration about their suspension. What did they do?
 - i.Called the university's president
 - ii.Sent an angry email to their advisor
 - iii.Screamed on the quad
 - iv.Vented on Facebook

- b. When did this student and advisor meet to talk about the suspension?
 - i. First thing in the morning
 - ii. After class
 - iii. During lunch
 - iv. After dinner
- 8. Email 8
 - a. What company did the computer science student who plagiarized their paper say they want to apply to?
 - i. MasterCard
 - ii. WorldWideTechnology
 - iii. Microsoft
 - iv. EdwardJones
 - b. What blog did the student plagiarize from?
 - i. The Crazy Programmer
 - ii. The Balding Python
 - iii. CSS-Tricks
 - iv. Block-Chain and Tackle
- 9. Email 9
 - a. What page of the student handbook did the Dean of Sciences cite?
 - i. 8
 - ii. 10
 - iii. 12
 - iv. 15
 - b. What did the student do to try to prove the school rules are not clear and not fair?
 - i. Interviewed other students
 - ii. Looked up policies at nearby institutions
 - iii. Hired a lawyer
 - iv. Polled the faculty
- 10. Email 10
 - a. When will the advisor forward the student's application by?
 - i. Sunday
 - ii. Monday
 - iii. Friday
 - iv. Saturday
 - b. What did the advisor say was wrong with the reference the student listed?
 - i. The reference did not have a job title
 - ii. The reference did not have contact information listed
 - iii. The reference is related to the student
 - iv. The reference fired the student for cause
- 11. Email 11
 - a. How many student interns is the representative from Yum foods seeking?
 - i. 1

- ii.3
- iii.6
- iv.9

b. What chapter did the professor ask the students to review before meeting the Yum foods representative?

- i.6
- ii.7
- iii.8
- iv.9

12. Email 12

a. This professor accused the class of mass plagiarism. What did the professor say the class was doing to cheat?

- i. Taking turns sharing homework answers
- ii. Splitting the cost of an online cheating service
- iii. Writing answers on the inside of a loose-fitting jacket
- iv. Pre-recording answers on a shared podcast they listen to on AirPods

b. What percentage of the class did the professor guess had been cheating?

- i. 55%
- ii. 60%
- iii. 65%
- iv. 70%

13. Email 13

a. What is the chapter number of the exam that this professor is accusing their students of cheating on?

- i. 2
- ii. 3
- iii. 5
- iv. 7

b. On what day of the week was the exam that the professor believes students cheated on?

- i. Monday
- ii. Tuesday
- iii. Wednesday
- iv. Thursday

14. Email 14

a. Which of these things did the writer not ask students to do over their winter break?

- i. Check their Spring bill
- ii. Check their Spring schedule
- iii. Look for an internship

- iv. Leave their dorm heat on
 - b. Which company does the advisor's sister work for?
 - i. Mars
 - ii. Purina
 - iii. Enterprise
 - iv. Express Scripts
15. Email 15
- a. What is the website the professor gave as an example of where the plagiarism detector can find stolen work from?
 - i. Reddit
 - ii. Tumblr
 - iii. BuzzFeed
 - iv. Blogger
 - b. What is the university's plagiarism detector called?
 - i. SafeAssign
 - ii. Turn-It-In
 - iii. Grammarly
 - iv. Quetext
16. List any three names the professors/advisors used in the emails.

Appendix G

Linguistic Breakdown of Questionnaire Quiz Emails (Phase II)

Metrics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
High Positive	x	x									x				
High Negative			x	x								x			
Power Dynamics					x	x							x		
Social Language							x	x						x	
Analytic Language									x	x					x
High I		x								x			x		
High We	x		x											x	
High You				x	x										x
High (S)he						x	x				x				
High They								x	x			x			
Sen word len. (7)		x				x	x			x		x		x	x
Sen word len. (20)	x		x	x	x			x	x		x		x		
11 six letter				x	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	
22 six letter	x	x	x				x			x			x		x
Past	x							x				x	x		x
Present		x	x		x		x		x						
Future				x		x				x	x			x	

Appendix H

Questionnaire Quiz Emails (Phase II)

Email 1

Good morning,

I reflected upon your recent comments in class, and it became apparent that we started this semester incorrectly; I failed to clarify expectations. I developed our section to promote an atmosphere of encouragement and support; however, many of our community members confided in me that you were coercing them into helping you cheat on homework assignments. As such, we were worried that your selfish approach to our community was harmful.

Your resolve was admirable, yet your need to prioritize ease and a high grade over respect for our classmates made me fear we did not hold the same expectations for our time together. The university created Global Perspectives to honor the values, cultures, and beliefs of all people—I must inform you that should you continue to cheat instead of learn, you will not succeed in our course, and our administrators will seek disciplinary action.

Please understand I did not send this email as a threat, rather I wanted it to be an invitation for a clean slate and an opportunity to lend your valuable mind to our collective quest for knowledge. I hope our message resonated with you and prepared you to return to our class on Monday ready to support our collective growth.

Our peers said they appreciated your comments about the American South, and we all agreed your insights improved our discussion. Even though the term started poorly, I am here for you—I hope you are proud to be part of our community and will continue to share your talents and insights with our class. We are a family.

All the best in this trying time,

Dr. Rambourg

Email 2

Good afternoon,

I appreciate the saintly patience. I bring uplifting news. The committee will evaluate the suspension on Thursday. I need you to write a letter explaining what happened. Send it to me before you submit it to the committee. I can offer guidance. Include details. I know the committee likes specific examples. I need you to be humble. I need you to be sincere.

Once you explain your basketball injury, I think they will understand. But don't just blame the injury. Be positive and optimistic. Show you want to succeed. I know you are ready to continue but this letter is important. I am here if you need assistance. I believe in you. I think success is inevitable.

Respectfully,

Randy

Email 3

Hello,

This is an unfortunate, uncomfortable conversation, yet it is one we must not avoid or hesitate to have any longer. Despite our best efforts to overcome serious academic inadequacies, your poor performance in the classroom has resulted in academic dismissal. Even though we meet on a weekly basis and we have stressed and studied together, it seems our best efforts are wanting and our worries are realized.

During our study sessions, we often talk about plans for the future and goals after academia; I pray our talks will not be drowned by this upsetting and frustrating situation. This news only threatens our progress as a minor setback; the dreams you shared of working abroad and starting a charity cannot be dismissed along with your academic standing.

Even though our official mentor relationship is over, know our work was not meaningless; you have come so far as a student and as a person. Continue to be curious and remember our techniques to ward off self-doubt, and we will see you overcome any future challenges and difficulties.

Do not lose yourself and do not let uncertainty and frustration overpower growth,

-Brandy

(ps, please continue to keep in touch with me via LinkedIn)

Email 4

Hello,

Last May, you said you “will try your best this year,” and your hard work seems to have paid off. Not only have you avoided failing your last essay, you have also managed to overcome your bad start and will pass my Spanish class with a low C. Many of your peers had better starts but will receive lower final marks—now that you have overcome your difficulties and inadequacies, you should consider applying for a government internship with the municipal court.

Even if you struggle with Spanish and your vocabulary is lacking and your pronunciation mediocre, the employers at the courthouse are desperate for Spanish speakers. The repetition will even help your common mistakes and difficulties.

I am sorry you could not reach your full potential earlier in class, but in the future you will find success from the start—and please consider my recommendation for the government internship. Don’t be deterred by previous failure. Struggle means you will learn, and you likely will learn a lot in the coming semesters; keep your chin up and remember stress will beget innovation.

Sincerely,

-Dr. Hach

Email 5

Good morning,

I am honored to tell you your app to remove your suspension and let you return to the Kappa chapter of Beta Epsilon Sigma Tau, our top honor society, is approved with minor reservation. You can come back to the chapter, but your peers expect your best effort and have put a big review rule in place to track your ups and downs and help you meet your goals.

But you are the boss of your own fate—if you prove you can be among the top men and women at our school, you can keep your role in the group. If you let your grades be less than high marks or you break a major behavior rule, as you did with the prank spree that led to your first suspension, you will face immediate dismissal. You must pay a \$200 member fee due by the next group meeting; I hope you use this lucky break to prove your value to the men and women of our order. Beta Epsilon Sigma Tau are leaders and do not want less than the best.

Thank you,

-Dr. Kasper
Beta Epsilon Sigma Tau Faculty Representative

Email 6

Good morning,

Our honors students often have the chance to help with real world work. My old Boeing boss, Val Ying, will ask for help soon. She will seek a top senior with high grades and a love for law. I think your record will impress her. If you would be interested, I want to refer you to her. Most of the work will involve data presentation. Just like you did in our law comm class. Val said she will need a student who can read and share data. She also said the work will be a big challenge. With the challenge, Val said she will pay well. Plus, you'll have Boeing on your resume.

You may have a busy term, but consider her offer. Val is an industry leader. She will be a great reference. If you will want more info, I will check with her.

-Prof

Email 7

Hey,

Thanks for meeting in my office during lunch. This email is to rearticulate my recommendations. Academic suspension is a serious punishment. When the Provost contacted you, she provided clear direction. She needs you to write an appeal letter so she can evaluate the suspension. The Provost is an understanding person. She appreciates honest appeals. Detail your situation but don't lie. Write her a candid letter. Genuinely articulate your successes and failures.

I saw you expressed frustrations on Facebook. Understand the Provost is trying to help. She wants success for our students. Suspension is a final tool. It saves students from unwinnable situations. Keep an open heart. Let me know if you would like me to read the letter before you send it to her.

I believe in you,

-Sarah

Email 8

Hello,

Remember earlier this semester? You said you wanted to apply to MasterCard and remarked they represented several of your values, and then I responded that my aunt worked there for years and that they seemed a lot like you? Well, from the tales my aunt told me, I don't think cheating is part of their culture. Yes, I spoke with a writer from CSS Tricks, and they said they wrote the essay you turned in last Friday and you stole their work without their consent. They sent me their notes and a link to the essay's first post, which was over ten months ago.

Per school policy, I have told the Provost's Office about your academic dishonesty—you should expect an email from them in within the next week. The Associate Provost said this is not your first stolen essay; as such, they informed me you will earn an F for my class, and they will detail the rest of your punishment soon.

No matter what they do, I hope you know the depth of my disappointment in you; I had told my aunt about you, and she thought you might have been a good fit for MasterCard and had wanted to meet you. Now I would be embarrassed to let you meet her, her old boss, or any of their team. And now I know the only thing you value is an easy answer and a course grade.

-Prof Kingsley

Email 9

Good afternoon,

Now that this email has earned your focus, allow me to give the facts behind your dismissal. You claim the school rules do not seem clear, that they are not fair, and that when you talked with your peers they agreed. Please check the tenth page of the school rules, as some of your peers assure me, they have.

Curious. Upon review of the pages, you will find they list our rules very simply. Since you value your peers' perspectives, I spoke with some of them about the book pages and they all said quite the opposite; they said the rules are present and they are clear—I do not doubt their claim. Rather, I wonder if your commitment to your studies has been as clear and fair as the handbook; or do you want me to believe the others all lied and they are obviously not fair and not clear? Considering the “data” you tried to get and use from the others about the quality of our school is as poor as the rest of your work, this suspension should not be a surprise.

If you want to rejoin the college, and we would like for you to do so; we expect you to engage with your work and make your commitment to success true and clear. Should you return, you cannot waste your peers' time with weak moves to validate your own poor, lazy habits--they are making a reasonable effort, and they do not need the burden.

Be part of their team, not part of their issues; otherwise, if you waste their time, threaten their success, or they label you as an impossible collaborator, I will expel you from the school. Reflect on their needs, and do not give me specific reason to expect less of you.

-Dr. Ropert

Email 10

Good evening,

Upon review of your internship application, I have favorable news. I approve of the revision. Thus, I likely will approve your application. Before I finalize the request, I will require answers to a few questions.

-Your response to the previous work experience question. You listed a reference without contact information. Where can I reach them? Who are they?

-I will need a new purpose statement. Why should I read the application? Why should someone hire you.

-The final section will require attention. The resume items are a mess.

Should you reasonably address the three concerns, I will probably pass your resume along. Remember, this will not be a guarantee. The answers will all matter. I must receive everything by Friday. I will withhold a final recommendation until then. Upon final submission, I will forward everything by Sunday. Send me any unanswered questions. I will respond without hesitation. Good luck.

Sincerely,

-Dr. Coimbra

Email 11

Greetings class,

This term, we have an exciting opportunity—a member of Yum Foods will come to some of our classes, and she hopes to offer many of you a chance to apply our learning to the real world. She said she will want to find a team of six creative and talented students to serve on a committee with her and help develop a new image. The Yum rep said the six students she will choose will all receive paid summer internships, will benefit from Yum’s mentor team, and will be vital to Yum’s future brand.

The rep will have her first visit with us on Friday, and then she will check back in every other Friday after that, so to prepare for her, you will need to devote some time to chapter nine in the book and study the Nexis links on Canvas. I am confident the Yum representative will be impressed with all of you, and I think she will struggle to only select six students—this class will blow her away.

Thank you and best wishes,

Carly

Email 12

Class,

We have a problem. Two of your classmates sent me troubling news. They made mass plagiarism accusations against the class. Sadly, I believed them. Over the past month I had suspicions. They gave me overwhelming evidence. Many of you cheated. No, most of you cheated. At least 60% of you. One of their accusations was a group answer key. They said a group did the work. That group gave the answers away online. Then a new group did the next homework. I am sick with disappointment.

In the next week, I am going to conduct a thorough search. I will catch everyone they pointed out. Every lead they gave me will be followed. This is your chance to come clean. The evidence they gave me was strong. Confess now and avoid worse punishment later.

The worst part is I enjoyed our class. I thought you were all great learners. They showed me I was wrong.

-Professor Burton

Email 13

Good day students,

Several of you requested help or elaboration on the test questions with which many of you struggled. To this email, I attached the key outlining the best answers. As I am confident many of you noticed, I marked several of your correct answers as incorrect—this is because I obtained high-quality video evidence of several individuals cheating on Thursday's exam.

For weeks, I suspected several of you shared answers or used hidden “cheat-sheets,” so I hid a camera at the front of the lecture hall and reviewed the footage over the weekend. I saw at least ten of you looking at or sharing your papers with your neighbors. Don't worry—I have sent each of you a personal email with the footage attached, and I notified my dean and other administrators. I felt forced into submitting academic dishonesty reports for each of the cheaters; I expected juniors and seniors to understand the university's rules, policies, and expectations related to cheating.

I understand what could bring you to cheat, but that does little to manage my disappointment. Like we discussed last week, the Chapter Five test is the most difficult test in my course, and many previous graduates cited it as the hardest test they took; I told you no matter how much I covered in class or tried to help you, success necessitated extracurricular study time. Regrettably, several of you attempted to negate failure through dishonesty rather than overcome struggle through grit or perseverance.

To those of you who approached the test with honesty, I thank you and I apologize for this email, and to those of you who cheated but were not caught, you have been warned. I never wanted to be a merciless professor who threatened to report students to my dean, but I also never thought I would see a large number of students cheat in a single course section.

-Your Disappointed Professor

Email 14

Dearest Senior Advisees,

When the term ends, we will have much to discuss. We will come back on Jan 10th. You will want to check your classes. This will help us start next term well. You will also want to look for an internship. Check local lists. Ask your best profs for introductions. We can chat about any questions.

We should meet first thing in the spring. We'll set term goals. We'll go over your internship plan. And we can trade favorite holiday stories. Until then, let me know if you will need more help. We can always call or email. It is a hard time. But we'll make do. We'll get through together.

Cheers,

-Doug

(ps. My sister, Rachel Ander, might be able to help. She works for Purina.)

(pps. Remember to leave your dorm heat on low.)

Email 15

Hello,

Despite learning remote, I wanted to tell you about our plagiarism policies. I wanted to provide you with a few notes. I thought they were interesting. I hope you think about the following.

-The university bought a plagiarism detector--SafeAssign. It can locate almost any potential theft. You would be amazed at what it can find. Like a stolen essay. If you copied and pasted. Or downloaded something from a website like Blogger. And then called it your own. The program would catch it.

-The detector can identify attempts to cover. If you changed select words. And then submitted the paper thinking you tricked us. The program would catch that too. And highlight the changes.

-The detector also catalogs old submission. So if you recycled an old assignment. It would know. And then so would I.

The detector is definitely impressive. Did you want to resubmit anything? Since you had reflection time. And may understand previous inadequacies. Did you want to revise anything? This is unrelated to the bullet points. I just thought you might have come to understand the situation. It's up to you. But I recommend it.

Cheers,

Carlos

Vitae

Employment

2021-Present

Director, Professional Advising – Lindenwood University

- Develop, train, and manage a team of 10 advisors.
- Set advising standards for the university and provide professional development opportunities for both professional and faculty advisors to fulfill those standards.
- Serve as the Lion Life Coach for all nontraditional students. Provide support resources, accountability, and caring point of contact to nurture student success.
- Provide insight to various university committees whose directives intersect with advising.
- Collaborate with Admissions to manage university new student onboarding process.
- Provide forecasting data to Associate Deans to make scheduling decisions.
- Facilitate challenging discussions between advisors and students who have been misadvised.

2020-Present (Contact Work)

Lindenwood Learning Academy—Service Excellence Contactor

- Contracted to provide service excellence recommendations or support for Lindenwood Learning Academy initiatives.
- Recent projects included:
 - Spring 21: Q2 Going the Distance Award—implemented competitive financial award to promote student engagement.
 - Summer 20: Q2&U project—developed communication strategy to help advisors identify and support students whose Fall 20 schedules changed due to university COVID-19 policy. Created materials to support 20+ advisors contact 1000+ students.

2019-2021

Assistant Registrar, Transfer Services – Lindenwood University

- Reviewed student degree requirements and confer 250-1000 earned degrees after each academic term.

- Provided initial point of contact for Lindenwood academic colleges to develop articulation agreements.
- Evaluated credit transferred into the university and work with academic college deans to determine and set course equivalencies.
- Served as liaison for Wiley Online advisors and enrollment specialists and provide training materials and Lindenwood advising resources.
- Trained Academic Services personnel on university technology and policy.
- Utilized LindenCircle and Canvas to communicate essential information and deadlines to students.
- Worked with university departments and vendors to plan and coordinate university commencement ceremonies for 900+ students each semester.
- Served as university's Missouri Reverse Transfer Coordinator; enroll and serve 25-50 new MRT participants each year.
- Coordinated with Missouri Secretary of State to apostille official documents for alumni residing outside of the United States.
- Supported faculty and advisors who receive complex policy inquiries. Serve as SIS expert to help stakeholders navigate technology.

Fall 2019

Lindenwood Learning Academy Intern – Lindenwood University

- Interned 5 hours per week with the Lindenwood Learning Academy.
- Compiled 2018-2019 university service data into 100-page assessment report. Report included 250+ data points and set foundation for future university service initiatives.
- Developed and implemented assessment tools to gauge effectiveness of Q2 service initiative.

2017-2019

Academic Services Representative – Lindenwood University

- Communicated with 500+ students placed on academic probation and suspension and compiled materials for student appeals.
- Evaluated student transfer credit.
- Serves as coordinating official for university's Missouri Reverse Transfer students; enrolled and submitted materials for students.
- Communicated university policy to faculty, staff, and students
- Enrolled students and maintained academic records.

- 2018-2019 **Service Excellence Fellow – Lindenwood University**
 -Created interactive customer service experience to train colleagues on how to provide exceptional service to students.
 -Conducted interviews with front line service colleagues.
 -Developed university service counsel for reviewing and implementing university-wide service initiatives.
- 2017 **Student Success Specialist II – Lindenwood University**
 -Academic advisor for post-traditional students in evening education program.
 -Enrolled students and maintained degree progress records.
 -Clarified university policy and degree requirements for students.
- 2014-2016 **Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant–Truman**
 -Developed effective and engaging curriculum for introductory freshman composition and creative writing classes.
 -Generated academic material, established classroom environment, and communicated with students in and out of the classroom.
 -Taught citation styles, rhetorical analysis, and research habits.

Conference/Committee Work

- 2021-Present **University Transfer Committee**
 -Coordinate with representatives from Admissions, Advising, and Athletics to promote improved transfer policy across university.
 -Year 1 successes included reduced evaluation timelines, new effective international transcript evaluator, and uniform degree planning sheets.
- 2019-2021 **Committee on Transfer and Articulation (COTA)**
 -Serve on Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (MDHEWD) committee charged with recommending transfer best practices and promoting transfer equity across the state.
 -Plan and run Missouri’s only state conference on transfer and articulation for 100+ attendees.
 -Served as conference webmaster to create impactful online hosting page for virtual 2021 conference.
 -Recommend practice and policy updates to Missouri state officials.

- 2021 **Missouri Core 42 Planning Committee**
 -Advisory member of MDHEWD committee that reviews and approves Missouri Core 42 courses and policy.
 -Provide perspective on equitable transfer practices.
- 2019-2021 **Academic Standards and Processes Committee**
 -Non-voting liaison to support faculty committee members.
 -Provide recommendations for applying university policy.
 -Coordinate contract degree proposals with committee chair.
- 2021 **Breaking Bad News Like a Doctor**
 -Conducted workshop on delivering bad news to students and employees for university faculty and staff.
 -Material adapted medical SPIKES method.

Awards/Titles

- 2020-2024 **Notary Public- State of Missouri**
- 2019-2020 **2019-2020 Service Excellence Staff Award**

Education

- EdD in Instructional Leadership; Lindenwood University; 4.0 ABD; expected completion Fall 2021
- MA in English; Truman State University; 4.0 May 2016
- BFA in Creative Writing; Truman State University; 3.98 May 2014