Academic Socialization: Mentoring New Honors Students in Metadiscourse

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Discussion-based classes are a defining characteristic of honors curricula (National Collegiate Honors Council). Of the 177 institutions to describe their curriculum in the *Official Online Guide to Honors Colleges and Programs*, 50% promote their classes as "discussion" or "discussion-based." The descriptions include the following: "Honors Seminars are unique, discussion-based courses" at the University of Minnesota; "Discussion-based seminars . . . [provide] the highest level of personal attention" at Villanova; and the importance of "Discussion-based courses, where lecturing is avoided" at Western Carolina. I, too, follow a conversational learning model, a "dialogic pedagogy" (Knauer 44), in my honors teaching. Students learn by externalizing their thoughts in debate with others, and helping students improve their abilities to discuss topics is thus a key element of higher education. This study reveals techniques that faculty can use to help students hone their thinking and learn the fine art and skill of effective oral discourse.

I facilitated learning and socialized students into academic life by introducing my Succeeding in Honors class to spoken metadiscourse. According to one of its leading researchers, socialization into academic life takes place largely in and through the spoken word (Mauranen, "'But Here's'"). Students, from the first-year seminar to the thesis defense, are expected to situate their discourse in the larger academic conversation. While the thesis and publications will matter later in an undergraduate's life, new students display the rigor of their thinking in the structure of their spoken language. Independent of course grades, I asked students to use verbal cues to signal agreement, dissension, or return to a previous point. My goal was for students to discern that expert discussion includes metadiscourse, defined as talk about the ongoing talk, and that signaling recognition of others' views, paradoxically, gives greater visibility and clarity to their own points of view. As students found their own contexts to encode new ideas, they used metadiscourse to translate their thought process into language. While both written and oral communication includes metadiscourse, the presence of others makes the deepened inquiry of oral communication a collective responsibility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The value of a dialogic pedagogy is well established. An abundance of research beginning in the 1970s supports the importance of discussion-based classes to learning (Brookfield and Preskill; Finkel; O'Connor; Owen; Roehling et al.; Taylor). In view of the importance of discussion in honors curricula, research on student-centered discussion is integral to honors education (Casteel and Bridges; De Volder et al.; Getty; Griffiths et al.; Linkin; Phillips and Powers; Sternberg). In particular, NCHC's iconic City as Text™ explorations capture the foundational quality of discussion in an honors education, stimulating the kind of "long-term sensitivity and reflection" characteristic of honors discussion (Braid 25, 23).

Complicating the practice of dialogic pedagogy is the fact that millennials (born around 1980) are different in their approach to information. They have easy access to information, but not to sorting it out (Carr; Medina; Roehling et al.; Wilson). They have the desire for face-to-face interaction, if not the facility for it. Despite students' different approach to information, researchers have found that "the kind of information that is still most valued by the students interviewed is face-to-face" (Sánchez et al. 554). The preference for a face-to-face learning experience is a finding supported by research in the United Kingdom (Committee of Inquiry; Ipsos MORI) and the United

States (Smith et al.). In an attempt to explain millennial student preference for face-to-face communication, Turkle stated, "Today's young people have a special vulnerability: although always connected, they feel deprived of attention" ("Alone Together" 294). Wilson determined, furthermore, that because they grew up working in groups and playing on teams, millennials "face difficulties in learning to think independently and articulate their positions" (60). Student-centered discussion provides an opportunity for millennials to feel connected to the group, while gaining experience at sorting out new information. As they make their self-reflecting activity explicit to the group, students develop their identity as undergraduates.

Despite the foundational quality of discussion in the education of millennials, student-centered dialogic pedagogy—in contrast to "teacher-directed Socratic dialogue" (Knauer 40)—appears not to be the norm in honors. Knauer observed, "Even in honors classrooms that feature student discussion, student-to-student dialogue is rarely at the center of a course, shaping its content and directing the learning process" (40). In the same manner that Knauer supported his claim, I compared the 2010 version of "Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program" (NCHC Board of Directors) and the now sixty-year-old version from the Inter-University Committee on the Superior Student (Rinn). Knauer's observation appears equally valid today: "While the current version [of "Basic Characteristics"] has much more to say about administration than about pedagogy, the older version specifically recommends 'elimination of lecturing and passive note taking' (p. 75)" (41). Instead of teacher-led discussion, new undergraduates need to be encouraged to direct their own learning process. In a student-led discussion, the challenge to reorganize opposing perspectives falls on the students rather than the teacher. Learning often occurs when speakers can signal their thought process through their reflexive language. Simply put, contextualizing or reformulating a concept helps the speaker grasp it.

In the context of cognitive psychology, the Inventory of Learning Processes has served as a useful tool to measure the learning style of honors students (Schmeck et al.). Deep Processing, one of its scales, assesses the extent to which students evaluate, organize, and compare and contrast the information; it includes conventional linear processing and fact retention. To shape the classroom conversation, however, students need to do more than rote learning: they need to translate the new information into their own vocabulary. The Elaborative Processing scale assesses the ability to restate and reorganize information in relation to one's own experiences. While honors

students are eager to join the conversation, they are often uncertain about how to encode their classmates' ideas into their own contexts. Metadiscourse offers verbal codes that stimulate Elaborative Processing. As students translate their classmates' new information into their own terms, they improve their Elaborative Processing. To measure their improvement, Carnicom and Clump proposed using the Inventory of Learning Processes as a longitudinal assessment tool, tracking developmental changes in honors students' learning styles across their undergraduate career.

Remarkably, studies have shown that honors students' Elaborative Processing is no more developed than in their non-honors peers. Carnicom and Clump concluded in their investigation of the learning styles of honors and non-honors students that honors students enter college "already actively organizing and critically evaluating information to a greater degree than their peers" (41). While they found that new honors students scored significantly higher on Deep Processing, they also found that "honors students do not initially personalize or apply information in more meaningful ways than their non-honors peers" (38). To improve Elaborative Processing in honors students, Carnicom and Clump suggested tailoring honors courses to better facilitate Elaborative Processing. Millennials need formal opportunities to articulate their viewpoints to others, to recognize and contextualize others' viewpoints, and to hear their own viewpoints restated.

Spoken academic metadiscourse addresses the need to develop honors students' Elaborative Processing. Discussion calls for students to reformulate multiple perspectives in quick succession. However, as applied linguists have noted, research on metadiscourse has studied written language more than spoken language (Hyland, "Metadiscourse: Mapping"; Vande Kopple, "Some Exploratory," "The Importance"). A representative study of a professional genre, for example, examined the use of metadiscourse in introductory sections of environmental reports (Skulstad), showing how the metadiscourse helped establish the relationship, maintain confidence, and reinforce the relationship with the reader. Research on academic genres has combined the study of written and spoken language by comparing university lectures to graduate student essays (Ädel) and comparing oral discussions to the persuasive essays of children (Latawiec). Research on metadiscourse focused specifically on academic discussion ranges from studies of metadiscourse in student presentations (Magnuczné Godó) to analyses of particular discourse markers such as "I'm just saying . . ." (Craig and Sanusi). Until recently, most past studies focused on written or one-way spoken discourse.

In the last two decades, metadiscourse research has begun to investigate co-constructed spoken academic genres. Hyland noted the interactivity and more egalitarian nature of discourse in seminar, in contrast to lecture ("Metadiscourse"). Zhang et al. investigated metadiscourse by middle school students working on team projects. In his descriptive study, Swales focused on the uses of *point* (as in "my point is") and *thing* (as in "the thing is") as "commentary by speakers about where the discourse has been, where it is going, and why" (34–35). I hope to add to the research into spoken academic discourse, specifically the area of student-centered class discussion. Seminal to my study, Mauranen's "'But Here's a Flawed Argument': Socialisation into and through Metadiscourse" examined the role of discourse reflexivity, focusing on *argue* in evaluative contexts. Her research captured the socializing role of discourse reflexivity from a developmental perspective.

Instead of examining cues used to organize the talk itself, as Swales does, I took Mauranen's approach, focusing on cues identifying whose talk is being commented on, organized, or elicited: the speaker's own or the person addressed. My study responded to Mauranen's challenge to "furnish new insights into the processes of academic socialization and of negotiating complex positions and identities" ("Reflexive Academic Talk" 177). Mauranen observed that throughout students' path towards socialization, "academic talk is mainly left to take care of itself without very much explicit teaching" ("A Good Question" 2). I hope to add a practical framework for teaching metadiscourse to those at the beginning of their academic path. To nurture the growth of their undergraduate identity, I tailored my Succeeding in Honors seminar to encourage students to voice their Elaborative Processing in discussion.

METHODS

For three fall semesters, I documented, analyzed, and compared students' metadiscourse. My investigation was largely qualitative, with supportive quantitative data from my 2014, 2015, and 2016 honors seminars. I mentored the groups in increments, each year adding an element to my study (see Figure 1): the 2014 group held student-led discussion; the 2015 group also observed metadiscourse models and participated in focus groups; in addition, the 2016 group completed surveys of their discussion skills and roles. My purpose was to determine the effects of mentoring students in metadiscourse. How did their use of metadiscourse affect discussion? How did students perceive its effects on learning and on themselves as honors undergraduates? In brief, did their use of reflexive language affect their academic and social capital?

Participants

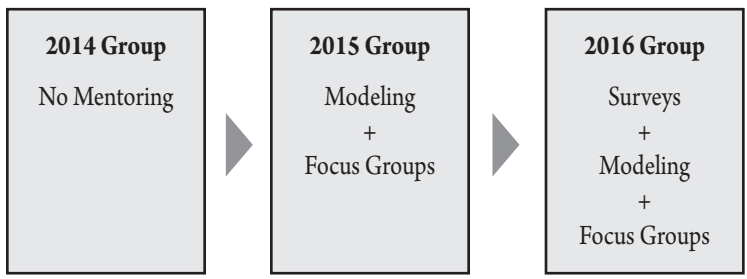
A total of 59 incoming honors students over three years ranging in age from 17 to 21 years enrolled in my Succeeding in Honors seminar, one of six taught by different instructors in the fall semester. The 2014 and 2015 groups consisted of 20 students each, while the 2016 group consisted of 19 students. Characteristic of our regional university, the groups shared similar demographics for gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status although the average ACT scores of the classes improved slightly each year (28.4, 28.7, and 29.1). No participant knew of my research prior to enrolling. All gave their informed consent to participate in the study.

Procedures

To study the metadiscourse of beginning honors students, I selected a course designed as an introduction to the honors program. The required one-credit Student Success Seminar met weekly for an hour in a classroom suited for recording round table discussion. With the exception of our first meeting and two others focused on invited guests, we held a new student-led discussion each week through the Thanksgiving break. The course ended with students delivering an elevator pitch on their independent research.

The corpus of my study was the ten student-led discussions held each year. A pair of assigned co-leaders composed the pre-class forum questions, guided the discussion, scored their classmates according to self-designed rubrics (unrelated to metadiscourse), and submitted a post-discussion reflection for the course website. All students co-led a discussion. Every student

Figure 1. The Research Design for the Study



participated in almost all discussions. To ensure a student-centered conversation and to avoid pre-empting the student leaders, I excluded myself from the conversation for the first twenty minutes of each class (as suggested by Dierenfield). My limited participation in discussion differed from that of students only in that my contributions modeled metadiscourse by intentionally responding to and engaging with speakers.

As the co-leaders guided discussion, I documented the group's metadiscourse in two ways: (1) I recorded discussion using a Snowball microphone placed in the center of the room, sent the audio files to the university's transcription services, and received the text versions; (2) I took verbatim notes to identify speakers and the beginnings of their utterances.

I defined interpersonal metadiscourse as reflexive expressions referring to the evolving discussion by referencing the speaker's speech, responding to a listener, or eliciting a response from a listener. Mauranen explained these three types of metadiscourse in her classification system:

> Reflexive expressions can be classified according to their target in the interactive situation; they can be targeted on the speaker's own discourse, on that of another participant, or on the discourse situation more generally. This targeting reflects on the speaker's choices by which he or she explicitly positions himself/herself in relation to the discourse and the participants. In this way, three main types of targeted expressions can be distinguished: the monologic, the dialogic, and the interactive. ("Reflexive Academic Talk" 171)

Her investigations of two-way academic speech contexts such as seminars and thesis defenses led her to conclude that "new models of metadiscourse must take the dialogic perspective of interaction seriously on board" because "in argumentative discussion other-oriented reflexivity is particularly salient" ("Discourse Reflexivity" 37–38). To classify my students' comments, I adapted Mauranen's terminology, as summarized in Ädel's 2010 overview (74):

- Monologic elements organize the speaker's own talk.
- Dialogic elements respond to the interlocutor's talk.
- Interactive elements elicit a response from the interlocutor.

After manually classifying the metadiscourse used in each week's discussion, I entered the metadiscursive elements into a table. For individual comparison data, the table listed each student's elements chronologically with

a column for each of the three types, indicating those uttered in the first five weeks and those in the subsequent five weeks. For group comparison data, I entered the weekly quantities of each type into Excel; they are summarized as percentages of all utterances in Figures 2, 3, and 4 below.

Each year I added an element to the way I engaged the class in metadiscourse. To define the baseline for discussion, I did not introduce metadiscourse as such to the 2014 group. Instead, I encouraged students at our first meeting to use the class as an arena to develop their discussion leadership skills. At the end of two classes, I asked the group to reflect on their discussion. The 2014 baseline allowed me to rule out confidence gained from time in college as a factor since all 59 participants were first-semester students.

The next year, I explained that I was investigating metadiscourse and, after the fifth and tenth discussions, conducted 20-minute focus groups. I invited students' observations on their metadiscourse use in general as well as any specific comments on their individual use and group trends. With the 2016 group, I again conducted focus groups to gather student observations. The first focus group occurred after the fifth discussion, when I provided the group with data to consider: (1) a table of individual metadiscourse; (2) a summary of group trends; and (3) a list of reflexive speech that was used by NCHC students during three sessions at the 2016 conference and that I brought back to EKU as models for my less experienced students. I conducted the second focus group after the tenth discussion, when I shared the updated individual and group data.

The final year, the 2016 group completed two email surveys on discussion. I conducted the Skills Survey (see Appendix A) pre-, mid- and post-course and the Roles Survey (Appendix D) mid- and post-course. Given two email reminders, each survey had 100% participation from the 19 participants. Skills Survey Questions 1 to 4 were open-ended questions about speaking experience, with the results summarized in Appendix B. Skills Survey Questions 5 to 14 required students to respond with a rating on a 1 to 5 Likert scale. To analyze the results, I used Excel. I grouped responses to the ten quantitative questions regarding student perception of interpersonal cues according to the question category: Figure 5 summarizes perceived effects (Q9–14); Figure 6 presents perceived skill level (Q7–8); and Appendix C displays comfort level (Q5–6). The Roles Survey, adapted from Benne and Sheats, asked students to identify the discussion roles at which they excelled. I entered the values in Excel as summarized in Figure 7.

Figure 2. Metadiscourse by 2014 Group

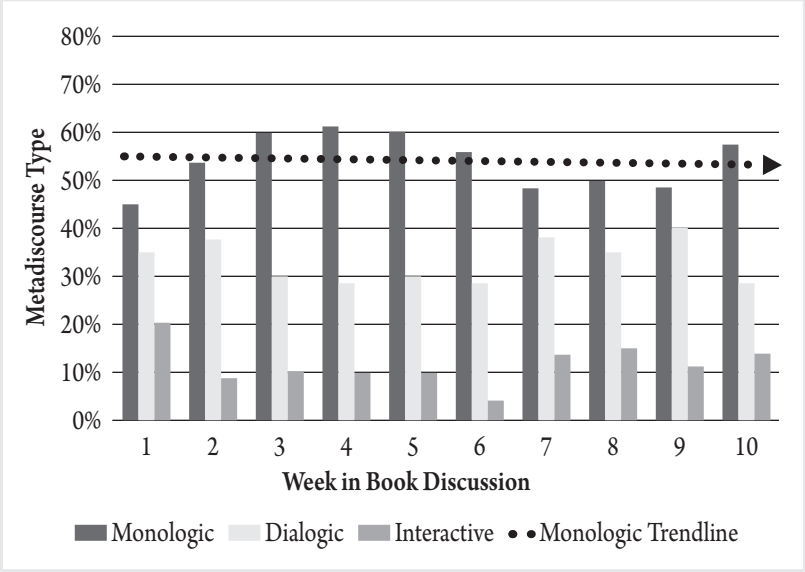
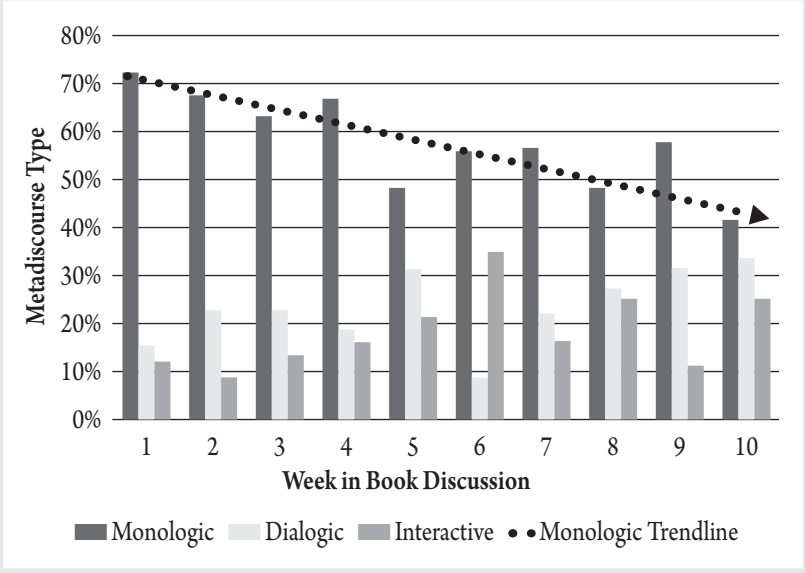
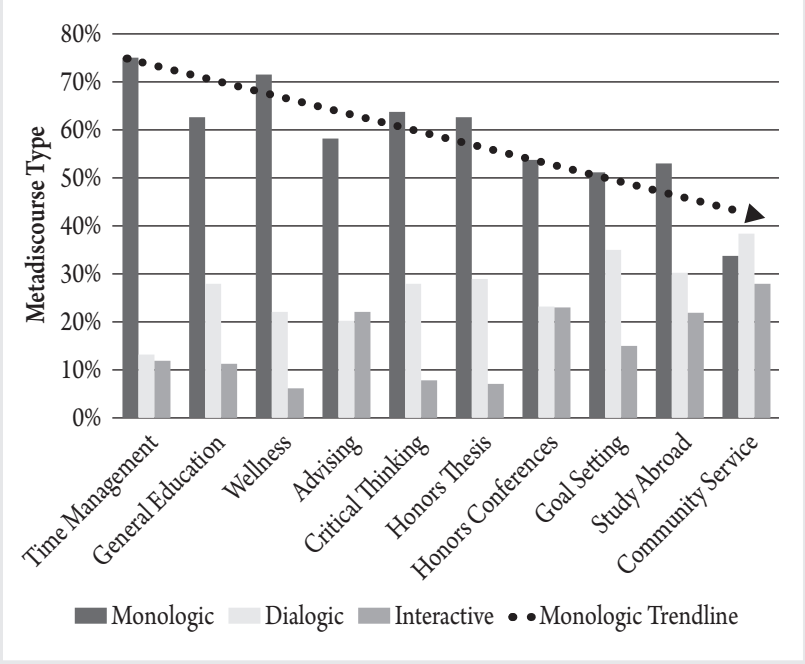


Figure 3. Metadiscourse by 2015 Group



Metadiscourse in itself was incidental (less than 5%) as a topic for discussion. Students taking the pre-course survey began the course with a strong idea of what "interpersonal cues" are. In Question 7, I defined interpersonal cues via example. In Question 8, I explained that such phrases as "you stole my point" and "what do you think" share a recognition of other speakers, refer to something they said, relate what they say to what someone else said, or ask a question. While I promoted the use of reflexive language with my modelling and surveys, except for conducting two 20-minute focus groups I did not interrupt discussion of the course's scheduled topics with instruction on using interpersonal cues. Nor did the data I collected on their use of reflexive language factor into their grade. A former member of the 2014 group served as the peer mentor to my 2015 and 2016 groups. As my teaching assistant, she attended classes, evaluated forum posts, assisted in evaluating the project presentation, and maintained the gradebook. My role as researcher was to collect student perceptions and elicit their comments as well as to collect information from field notes, discussion board posts, and course evaluations. As a teacher, however, I intentionally modelled reflexive language whenever I spoke.

Figure 4. Metadiscourse by 2016 Group



FINDINGS

Study results indicated that with mentoring and practice, discussion became more interactional, regardless of the topic. Students became more aware of the role of metadiscourse in discussion, increased its use, and developed leadership.

Effects of Metadiscourse on Discussion

Metadiscourse caused discussion to become more interactional. Figures 3 and 4 summarize the 2015 and 2016 groups' metadiscourse. As Figure 3 shows, metadiscourse in the 2015 group's first discussion consisted of 73% monologue, 13% dialogue, and 14% interaction. However, the tenth discussion revealed a difference, with monologic elements decreasing to 41% while combined dialogic and interactive elements increased to 59%. The 2016 group's combined dialogic and interactive elements increased to 66%.

The starting point for all three groups was monologue. Only the unmentored 2014 group discussion resulted in a flat monological trendline (see Figure 2). The group members often began their statements with the default lead-in for discussion: variations of the phrase "I think" or "I feel."

The mentored 2015 and 2016 groups increased engagement and interaction despite discussing radically different topics. While the 2016 group talked about topics such as time management, honors thesis, and community service, the 2015 group discussed the school-wide book selection, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. The discussions of ethical issues in medicine became as interactional as the discussions of ways to succeed in honors.

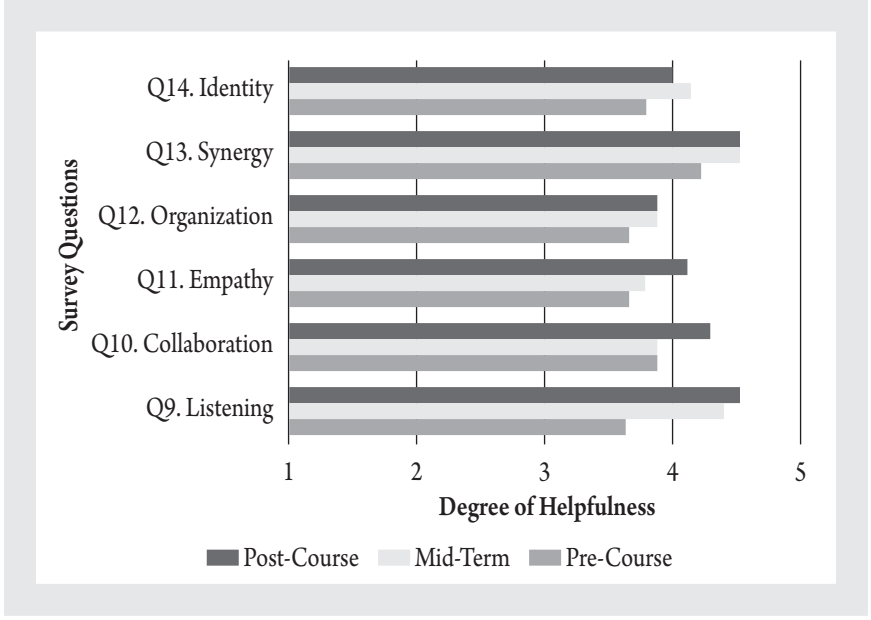
Effects of Metadiscourse on Students

To understand students' motives for using metadiscourse, I surveyed the 2016 group's awareness of its uses (see Appendix A). Figure 5 displays the extent to which they felt interpersonal cues helped create group synergy, facilitate listening, increase collaboration, improve empathy, coalesce individual identity, and organize thoughts. Pre-course, the group's mean rating for the overall effectiveness of interpersonal cues was 3.8. Post-course, the overall mean rating was 4.2. Already expressing a high awareness of its effectiveness pre-course, the group became somewhat more aware of its role over time. Listening was the category that showed most improvement.

Figure 6 indicates that students' perception of their skill using metadiscourse remained the same although they recognized improved skill in others. On reviewing the individual metadiscourse data, one student reported that she "remembered what other people said" more than what she had said. Pre-course, students reported their mean skill at 3.4, but the data did not reflect a high skill rating with only 25% of the utterances in the first discussion using interpersonal cues (see Figure 4). At the outset of the semester, the group overestimated their skill. Post-course, the group underestimated their skill: whereas they rated their skill mean at 3.5, the individual data indicate that 79% of the group had increased their combined dialogic and interactive elements in the last five discussions.

Unlike the 2014 data, the 2015 and 2016 metadiscourse revealed characteristic patterns. These habitual patterns emerged as students increased their reflexive language. Reflecting on her data, one student noted, "A lot [of interpersonal cues] were the same." Participants prefaced their conversation with favorite lead-ins, such as "The way I look at it" or "I agree." Table 1 illustrates one student's patterns, with the repeated elements "I think" and "going off of" in boldface. As she developed her ideas by reformulating those of her classmates, student SD's cues directed the conversation. Her engagement markers had a cumulative effect on the group and helped make "going off" the dialogic

Figure 5. Effectiveness of Metadiscourse by 2016 Group

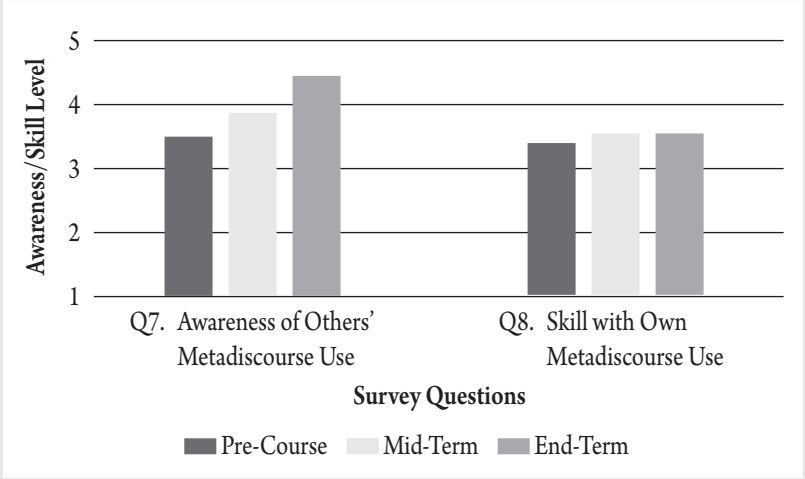


transition of choice for the 2015 group. The 2016 group validated each other with similar metadiscourse sequences, rating their synergy at a mean of 4.5 (see Figure 5). No individuals were so influential that their absence affected discussion.

To understand how students identified their roles in discussion, I asked students to indicate the discussion roles in which they excelled. The Roles Survey found a change in the roles students identified for themselves. Figure 7 shows that most students identified with group building and maintenance roles at mid-term, but at end-term identified with group task roles. The percentage of students excelling in group task roles increased for five of the six group task categories and decreased for five of the six group building and maintenance categories. At end-term, over 60% of the group identified with the group task roles of clarifier, information giver, information seeker, summarizer, and initiator in that order (see Figure 7). The only group task role in which fewer excelled was the role of opinion seeker (32%). According to the pre-course Skills Survey, 21% of the group expressed being nervous about introducing a conflicting opinion because, as one student later explained, in a social setting "nobody likes conflict."

The Roles Survey found that "compromiser" was the one group-building and maintenance role in which the group improved, with 58% of the group indicating they excelled in the role at end-term. According to the results of the Skills Survey, students' comfort level with discussion in a class setting

Figure 6. Metadiscourse Skills Perceived by 2016 Group



changed from a mean rating of 3.4 pre-course to a mean of 4.4 post-course and in a professional setting from a mean rating of 3.0 pre-course to a mean of 3.7 at the end of the semester (see Appendix C).

DISCUSSION

Enhanced Awareness of Elaborative Process

Both mentoring and practice helped increase the interactive metadiscourse. As the students gained experience with metadiscourse, they increased their Elaborative Processing and discussion became more interactional. I took the opportunity to teach students a way of processing information that Carnicom and Clump have shown is no more developed in honors than in non-honors students. According to Bransford and the National Research Council, metacognition is not learned naturally; it has to be taught. Since developing rhetorical skills was not a designated learning outcome for the course, I relied on indirect techniques to hone student thinking and oral discourse. When I asked students to reflect on a discussion, they indirectly described Elaborative Processing. One student explained "pretty great" discussion by saying, "I think there were more questions definitely, like follow-up questions. I think

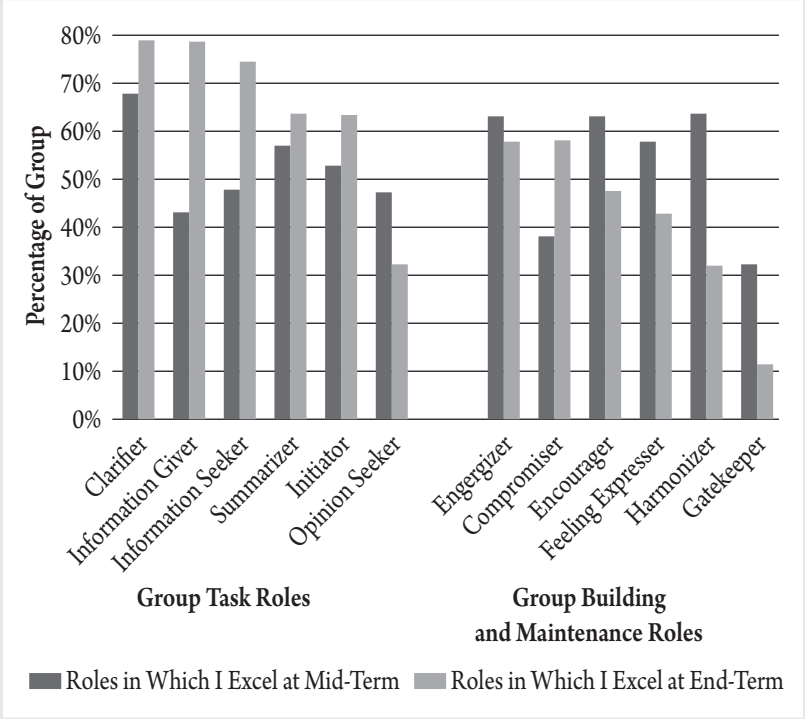
Table 1. Student SD's Pattern of Metadiscourse in 2015 Group

Monologic Elements	Dialogic Elements	Interactive Elements
I think	**Going back** to what Jenny was saying	Is it possible . . . **?**
I think that	Also **goes back to** what Haley was saying	
I think	I was **going to try to answer** your question	
I** don't **think	I agree with you	
I think	I'm actually **going to go off** what you just said and what Sami just said	
Honestly I just wanted	**Going off of** what both of them said	
He really makes me angry	**Going back to** what Haley was saying . . . like Austin said	
I understand	**Going off what** Kasey said	
I think that it was really	**Going off** . . . , it broke my heart	
I think it's	**Going off what** both said	

we kind of just went out there and just gave our opinion more." Someone else said, "We just didn't answer just the question, pose another, and didn't have any more thoughts and just went through each question fast. We actually had a discussion." Although their comments recognized dialogic and interactive elements that suggested Elaborative Processing, the 2014 group lacked the tools to control a discussion.

To manage discussion, students developed specificity in their Elaborative Processing. I invited rather than required the 2015 and 2016 groups to experiment with reflexive language while offering no tangible reward for its use. Nevertheless, the mentored groups became more deliberate, explicit, and precise in linking new ideas with their prior knowledge. The expression "Yeah, I like that, but I'm going in the opposite direction" illustrates the 2016 group's nonspecific metadiscourse. In contrast, an NCHC participant restated the conversation in terms of "the divide" between honors and non-honors students: "I was wondering whether other people have experienced the divide."

Figure 7. Discussion Roles in Which 2016 Group Excelled



Another conference participant verbalized her Elaborative Processing by connecting with the speaker, hedging, and redirecting the conversation: "Just hopping off that, perhaps there's also the social capital and access issue." As students refined their Elaborative Processing, their metadiscourse became equally specific.

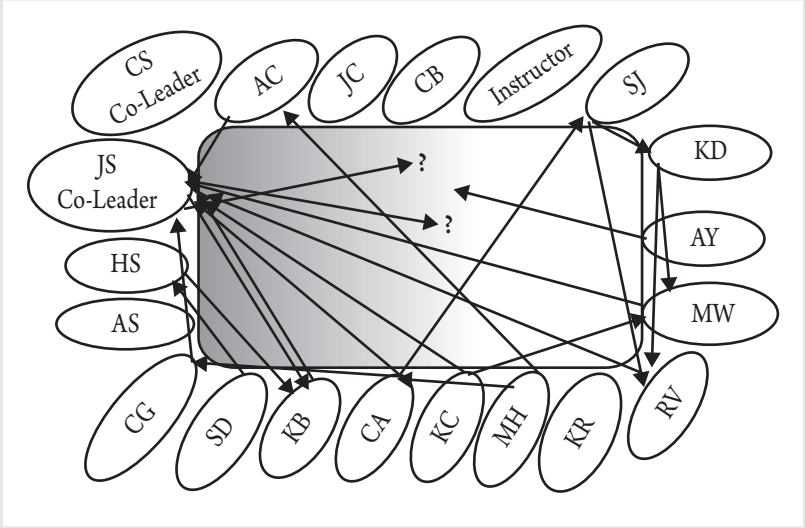
The focus groups brought metadiscourse to the discussion for only two 20-minute sessions. While students' comments showed a raised awareness of reflexive language, the data required more debriefing. My effort as a researcher to remain objective prevented my asking whether their subjective perceptions matched the data of their individual metadiscourse. One finding showed that mentoring in metadiscourse did not make students feel more skilled, but the metadiscourse data show that half of the 2015 group and over three-fourths of the 2016 group increased their metadiscourse. Consistent with the increased use, the post-course Roles Survey showed that over three-fourths of the 2016 group increased their identification with group task roles in discussion. Similarly, the post-course Skills Survey showed that the 2016 group's comfort level with discussion in both academic and professional settings increased a full point on the 5-point Likert scale. I interpreted the fact that students did not feel more skilled in terms of their realization that mastering oral discourse is a challenging process.

The Intentionality of Metadiscourse

The 2014 group's monological trend line suggests that a discussion environment alone does not ensure dialogue and interaction. In contrast, the 2015 and 2016 groups matured from one-sided sharing to interactional discourse. Speakers began to recognize each other. As Figure 8 shows, in the five-minute block of discussion, the co-leader raised two questions, student AY addressed the group as a whole, and the others engaged or interacted with a classmate. Metadiscourse, even in written texts, makes "participants and feelings visible" through the choice to promote rapport (Abdi et al. 1677). The finding that a different course agenda did not affect the results is significant because it suggests that the psychological desire to bond was more important to the students than the course material. Despite the leader-centric quality of the block of discussion, 16 of the 20 group members contributed to this five-minute segment. The 13% of the 2016 group concerned about "getting left out" of discussion especially appreciated having their ideas recognized (see Appendix B). Leading with an interpersonal cue provided the shy students a technique to help them compose their response.

In addition to enabling students to recognize and be recognized, signaling Elaborative Processing with interpersonal cues allowed the conversation to become less ego-driven. The metadiscourse created a coherent discussion and a cohesive group. Even though academic talk derives from everyday metadiscourse, students became aware that reflexive academic talk has an institutional position of authority. As part of his research on language and social interaction, Craig examined how his students' "announcement and formulation of the issue" led the class's interactive constructions of an argument by making the issue under discussion available to other participants as a "metadiscursive object" (26). Craig's student, Jim, argued his viewpoint in relation to the rest of the class's views. As a result, Jim's argument became "progressively more coherent as it [emerged] in successive reformulations" (27). This progression is representative of how metadiscourse contributes to a more cohesive group dynamic. As students became aware of metadiscourse's normative basis in academic talk, they were more willing to practice it. Similar to Craig's study of the metadiscursive formulations in an undergraduate class of 20 students, my 2015 group came to understand the issues through the reflective discourse they used to interject ideas and question the ones already presented:

Figure 8. Diagram of Five-Minute Block of Discussion, November 5, 2015



- Megan, you ask brilliant and meaningful questions during discussion and overall lead the group to look at things differently . . . you showed that you understood multiple views of situations. Nice. (posted by KB)
- Calvin, you seem like you know a little bit about everything, and I am very envious! You were always questioning and trying to understand others [sic] points of view during the discussion. I think that is very awesome! (posted by CS)
- [Sami,] It was neat to see you using more dialogic/interactive discussions [sic] methods as the semester went on—that's definitely something that's hard to do, at least in my opinion. (posted by JS)

For students to negotiate differences of opinion, however, they needed to develop more than the "Yes and" approach to metadiscourse. Acknowledging previous speakers with the ubiquitous "going off of what she said" circumvented the need for students to articulate differences of position. The pre-course finding that 21% of the 2016 group expressed nervousness about introducing conflicting opinion was offset by a 2015-group student expressing admiration for the independent classmate who demonstrated the "ability to stand [her] ground and give insights that are unique and valuable [and] boosted our class discussions and got the entire class thinking outside of the box!"

The Formality of Leadership

A significant study finding was how many students valued, respected, or aspired to leadership. In their comments about each other, students recognized and marshaled the group's resources. They came to see the leadership role in Benne and Sheats' terms as "functions to be performed within a group in helping that group to grow and to work productively" (41). The Roles Survey suggests that most of the 2016 group made a fundamental shift from excelling at group-building and maintenance roles in discussion to excelling in group-task roles. At end-term, 79% of the group excelled in the roles of clarifier and information giver. The metadiscourse data showed the same 79% increased their metadiscourse: 14 out of 15 identified as clarifiers; 12 out of 15 identified as information givers. This shift suggests that the 2016 group diffused the "leadership" functions among the group members. Furthermore, the students most comfortable using metadiscourse to help the group grow also reported having considerable speaking experience. Two of the clarifier/information givers, RH and KM, reported having had three years' debate experience.

Other researchers have reported a link between leadership and interactional metadiscourse. Though initially focused on professors lecturing, Mauranen found that "those in a dominant position in any speech event will use more reflexive expressions" ("Reflexive Academic Talk" 170). Another study, albeit of one-way student presentations, similarly found that "effective presenters were distinguished by a higher proportion of interactive and dialogic elements, with dialogic elements dominating" (Magnuczné Godó 75). Ideally, Benne and Sheats observe, the concept of leadership—emphasized here by using metadiscourse to marshal the various resources in the group—is that of "a multilaterally shared responsibility" (41). Students in the 2016 group able to mediate difference helped raise the class's comfort level in discussion by 20% in both classroom and professional settings (see Appendix C).

Yet student comments suggest a spirited resistance to the formality of metadiscourse. Students readily acknowledged that metadiscourse "connects the dots," "lets the other person know you know what they said," and "shows respect." No student questioned that interpersonal cues make various communication tasks easier. Nevertheless, as one student pointed out, his discussion is typically "not as formal" as discussion needing metadiscourse. Another student attributed the pervasive use of *yeah* to the group having established a relaxed therapeutic setting for seminar. Yet another explained the persistent use of the nonspecific pronoun *that* (as in "I agree with that") by explaining that *that* represented the speaker's "continuation of what [the previous speaker] was saying." Even though students knew that metadiscourse connects the dots, some preferred to keep their conversation informal.

One reason for millennials' informality may stem from growing up in a faster-paced, digital culture in which metadiscourse is not second nature to their conversation. Millennials talk differently; they learned their discourse patterns differently. Interpersonal cues are not formally on their radar even though they may appear in digital forms such as tagging and retweeting. Like the interpersonal cues in oral discourse, these digital forms of metadiscourse can bring new people into the conversation, providing millennials with the recognition Turkle has contended they crave ("Alone Together"). By contrast, today's students may see oral metadiscourse as a superfluous form of decorum. They may even interpret this type of "university idiom" as an expression of professorial authority (Bourdieu et al. 108). Teachers can help millennials socialize into academic culture by providing varied opportunities with team assignments, poster presentations, and student-centered discussion. The different contexts allow students to practice leadership with oral discourse and experience the appropriateness of formal language.

APPROACHES TO MENTORING

The instructor can integrate a number of approaches in discussion to mentor honors students in metadiscourse. Following are the ways I have used to help students develop the reflexive language of successful members of the academy and the professions:

1. **Model the metadiscourse use in discussion.** By deliberately referencing the previous speaker and then asking a question, the instructor can illustrate the use of interpersonal cues. She can also provide a list of reflexive speech used by the students' more experienced cohort at the NCHC conference.

2. **Ask students to reflect on their discussion skills.** Request that students identify the discussion roles in which they excel and those in which they would like to develop expertise. A listing of group task and group building and maintenance roles in discussion will help them develop a vocabulary to recognize the different roles (see Appendix D for a list of roles in discussion).

3. **Provide students with data on their individual metadiscourse use.** Students can see whether what they think they said in discussion matches the record of what they said. Because individuals bring their speech patterns into any discussion, an instructor can help students make a change by drawing those habits to their attention (see Table 1).

4. **Diagram the discussion flow.** Invite a student to sit outside the group, as the audience does at NCHC conference fishbowls, to diagram the discussion (Ronco, "Diagramming Discussions"). The participants can then discuss the diagram, identify problems, and take action to improve discussion. Figure 8 shows group members filtering much of their conversation through the leader, possibly without developing each other's ideas.

5. **Invite metadiscourse use to connect presentations.** Ask speakers to comment on the previous speaker's project before beginning their presentation. Once they have completed their presentation, ask them to introduce the next speaker. In the formal setting of presenting individual research, each presenter restates and contextualizes the previous speaker's new information for the group.

My hope for the study is to inform honors teaching practices. Since students' speech develops gradually as they feel socialized into the academic community, my mentoring techniques do not specify extensive explicit instruction. However, if academics want students to develop their oral discourse, instructors have to give them an opportunity to talk. Students may imagine that instructors do not welcome their ideas, as some conveyed in the following post-discussion exchange. On asking the 2014 group whether they were carrying over their leadership skills to other discussions, several students volunteered opinions:

- Well, generally, for my classes, it seems like, it's the professor asking a question and you raise your hand.
- People get shushed in our group. . . .
- I have the feeling it was more of a teacher-oriented discussion since the beginning, I felt like I'm always trying to contribute something, like my own idea, and then once I've contributed to the idea the professor is more like, "Eh, not really, this is kinda what it is. . . ." It wasn't something that they thought fit with their view.
- Yeah, I'm in the same class as him and I've personally been shut down in class before trying to talk. So, I don't speak in that class very often. . . .
- It's not like we've given up on discussions, we just know the boundaries in the class.
- They're just very small, controlled discussions.

The deliberate discussion leader ensures everyone is recognized. By using reflexive language to acknowledge and engage students, an instructor can model Elaborative Processing and metadiscourse while validating the ideas of her students.

CONCLUSION

The structure of a speaker's language traces the structure of her thought. My effort to help students manage their discussions facilitated their ability to learn. New honors students were eager "to show a little respect" and "to come off the right way to somebody." Their social motives for using metadiscourse began the process of their academic socialization. Their use of metadiscourse in seminar stimulated collaborative inquiry. Metadiscourse accelerated listening, promoted understanding, increased organization, and intensified group

and individual identity. To the extent that metadiscourse use is a learning process, the study results support Clump's finding for instructors of "courses geared toward helping students succeed in college" that "*just* teaching students about effective learning processes can influence their utilization of those effective processes" (296). My study hopes to demonstrate that teaching students about metadiscourse encouraged their use of the rhetorical tool to express their Elaborative Processing.

The challenge for honors instructors lies in engaging students in defensible dialogue. Students can rise to doing more than speaking their piece or reciting what they had planned to say to earn class participation points. They can be present and open to each other's ideas. Seen as a tool by which to avoid killing and "plopping" other people's ideas, metadiscourse used in class discussion directs the speaker to identity and empathy, in short, to academic socialization (Ronco, "Stop Killing"). In her *New York Times* opinion piece "Stop Googling. Let's Talk," Turkle cites a longitudinal study that found a 40% decline in empathy among college students, with most of the decline taking place after 2000. Today's students choose the level of "attention" to bestow on the other. In a discussion class, they may choose to be simply present, or they may experience a mutual social presence (Biocca and Harms). In an expert discussion, metadiscourse helps speakers decenter their perception long enough to make a connection with others. Metadiscourse helps the speaker focus. It also encourages the speaker—rather than the teacher—to restate and contextualize ideas. Teachers of discussion-centered courses can invite students to sharpen their "Yes and" approach. They can help their students refine their metadiscourse.

As we adjust our curriculum to keep pace with our students, we also need to adjust our pedagogies to meet their needs beyond the honors seminar. According to one projection of honors in the year 2025, "Citizenship and leadership develop where students build and facilitate conditions for human flourishing, including practices of listening, turn-taking, and non-violent conflict resolution along with respect for difference" (Scott and Frana). Our increasingly team-based and interdisciplinary workplace will require sophisticated verbal skills from students. More importantly, students will have considered the meta-question "What is learning?" and see that it is an ongoing and far-ranging discussion. Possessing rhetorical tools such as metadiscourse to own a discussion, students gain independence, develop leadership, and enact cognitive responsibility. To prepare students for creative careers in a knowledge-based society, schools need to cultivate collaborative, inquiry-based practices.

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APPENDIX A

Skills Survey by 2016 Group

Instructions: This survey attempts to determine your feelings about discussion. In answering, please consider your overall experience of discussion held in a classroom setting.

Open-Ended Question on Speaking Experience

1. Do you have any experience in public speaking? (i.e., speech, debate, school play, 4H, FFA)
2. Have you taken a speech class in high school or college?
3. Are you more comfortable speaking in front of people you know or strangers?
4. Are there any aspects of class discussion about which you are nervous?

Questions on Comfort Level Speaking

Rating Scale: 1–not at all comfortable, 2–somewhat comfortable, 3–neutral, 4–fairly comfortable, 5–very comfortable

5. How comfortable are you speaking in a classroom setting?
6. How comfortable are you with speaking in settings other than a classroom? (i.e., conferences, job, meetings, etc.)

Questions on Using Interpersonal Cues in Classroom Discussion

Rating Scale: 1–not at all aware, 2–somewhat aware, 3–neutral, 4–fairly aware, 5–very aware

7. How aware are you of other people's use of interpersonal cues in classroom discussion (i.e., asking a question, thanking the speaker for something they shared, acknowledging that the speaker's point of view is different from yours, expressing empathy for the speaker's experience, building verbal bridges between speakers)?

Rating Scale: 1–not at all skilled, 2–somewhat skilled, 3–neutral, 4–fairly skilled, 5–very skilled

8. How skilled are you at using interpersonal cues in classroom discussion? (i.e., "I like how you used the word "sacrifice," "You stole my point," "What do you think?" "Going back to what Mary was saying," "I kind of

agree"—what these phrases have in common is each phrase recognizes other speakers by naming a speaker, referring to something they said, relating what they say to what someone else said, or asking a question, etc.)

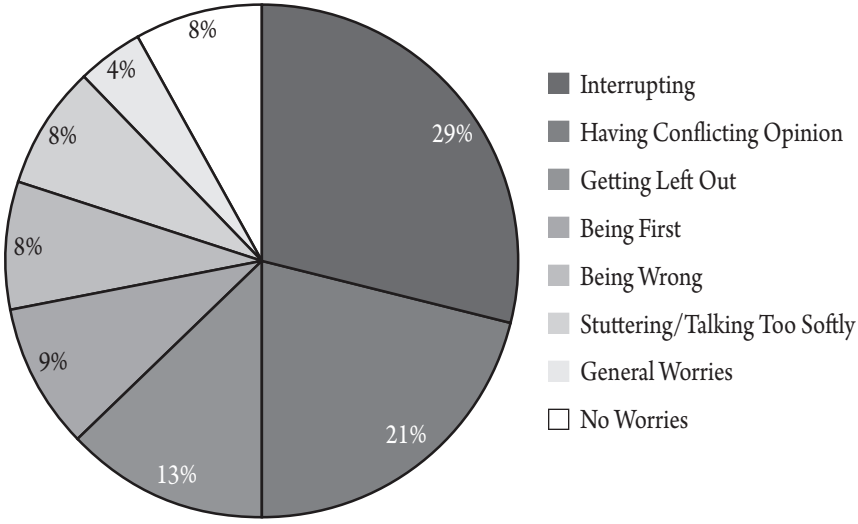
Questions on Effect of Using Interpersonal Cues in Classroom Discussion

Rating Scale: 1–not at all, 2–somewhat, 3–neutral, 4–fairly, 5–very much

9. To what extent does a speaker's use of interpersonal cues make listening to the speaker and understanding where he/she is coming from easier?
10. To what extent does your own use of interpersonal cues help you feel like you're contributing to a shared undertaking?
11. To what extent does a speaker's use of interpersonal cues help you understand/empathize with/feel compassion for the speaker?
12. To what extent does the use of interpersonal cues in discussion by yourself or another speaker help you organize your thoughts?
13. To what extent does the use of interpersonal cues help create class synergy (the interaction of contributions that when combined produce a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual contributions)?
14. To what extent does your or other speakers' use of interpersonal cues help you understand yourself better in relation to others?

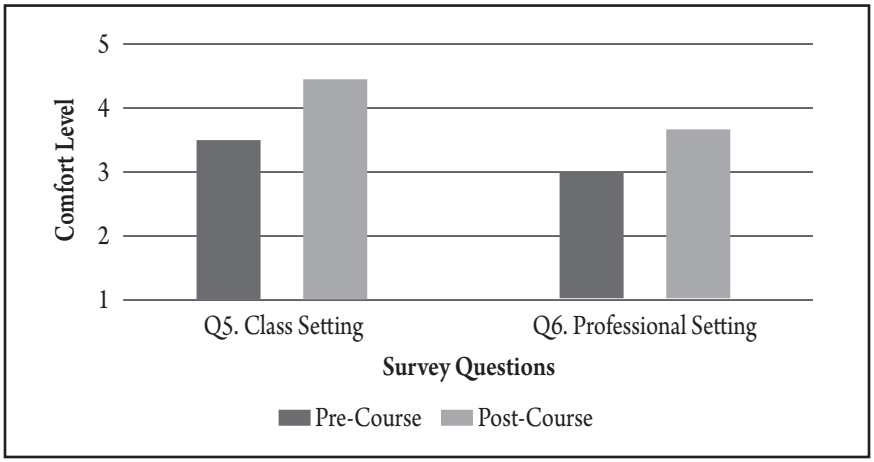
APPENDIX B

Pre-Course Discussion Concerns of 2016 Group



APPENDIX C

Comfort Level in Discussion of 2016 Group



APPENDIX D

Roles Survey by 2016 Group

Instructions: Please identify the roles at which you excel in discussion from the list below (adapted from Benne and Sheats).

Clarifiers clear up misunderstandings or confusion by explaining points or providing additional information.

Compromisers volunteer concessions of their own positions on controversial issues and suggest a middle ground when other members seem stuck in opposing positions. They help all members realize that they are contributing.

Encouragers offer warmth, praise, and recognition during discussions. They support quieter members, whom they gently encourage to join in.

Energizers motivate the members, often by communicating a sense of enthusiasm.

Feeling expressers share their own feelings or articulate those of the seminar, thereby enabling members to deal with emotions that might interfere with the ability to work together productively.

Gatekeepers assure that all team members have an opportunity to speak, sometimes by asking the more talkative members to be brief and by inviting quieter members for their contributions.

Harmonizers help team members explore differences of opinion without hurting one another's feelings. They detect and reduce friction by helping to focus on ideas rather than personalities.

Information givers furnish the facts needed, sometimes on their own initiative, sometimes in response to information seekers, through their own knowledge, and through research.

Initiators offer new ideas, propose new solutions, and restate old issues in novel ways. They provide creativity and direction.

Information seekers request clarification and additional information. They ensure that the seminar members understand all relevant factors.

Opinion seekers ask other members to express their judgments, values, and opinions. They also share their own views.

Summarizers consolidate the deliberations by stating concisely what has been said.