1992

Instructor as collaborator: a case study

Iris Ann Coffin
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd

Part of the Business and Corporate Communications Commons, and the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
Coffin, Iris Ann, "Instructor as collaborator: a case study" (1992). Retrospective Theses and Dissertations. 14413.
https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd/14413

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Instructor as collaborator: A case study

by

Iris Ann Coffin

A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

Department: English
Major: English (Business and Technical Communication)

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
1992
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I LITERATURE REVIEW</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominance of Individualism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community of Scholars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Research on Collaborative Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Groundwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Learning and Career Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Learning and Academic Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Group Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitting With the Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Alternatives to Inquiries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid Do-this-don’t-do-that Answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreeing With the Instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II COLLABORATION DEFINED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Definitions of Collaborative Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories of Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referential Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written-Critique Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-Research Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group-Written Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Group Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor as Collaborator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Classroom Environment

- Research Subjects
- Data Collection
  - Pre- and Post-Semester Questionnaire
  - Journal Entries
  - Proposal Assignment
  - Audio- and Videotaping

# Instructional Methodology

## Profiles
- Freshman Composition II
- Course Design
- Proposal
  - Setting Due Dates
  - Choosing Paper Lengths
  - Choosing Argument Styles
  - Choosing Topics
- Journals

## Data Analysis Methods
- Questionnaires
- Student Journals
- Audio- and Videotaping

## CHAPTER IV RESULTS

- Student Profile
- Instructor Profile
- Planning Session

# Observations

- Workshop Environment
  - Students
  - Instructor
- Collaborative Opportunity
  - Proposal
- Collaborative Categories
  - Student/Student
  - Student/Instructor

# Analysis

- Collaborative Opportunity
- Student Attitude
- Time Management
- Paper Lengths
- Topic Selection
- Workshop Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iii</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Environment</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Subjects</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre- and Post-Semester Questionnaire</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Entries</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Assignment</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio- and Videotaping</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Methodology</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profiles</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Composition II</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Design</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting Due Dates</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Paper Lengths</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Argument Styles</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing Topics</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis Methods</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Journals</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio- and Videotaping</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV RESULTS</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Profile</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Profile</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Session</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Environment</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Opportunity</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Categories</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/Student</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/Instructor</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Opportunity</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Attitude</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Lengths</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Selection</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Environment</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V FUTURE RESEARCH

Implications
Study and Course Design Changes
Improving the Instructor as Collaborator Approach
Suggested Studies

WORKS CITED
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
APPENDIX A INTRODUCTORY LETTER (STUDENT)
APPENDIX B CONSENT FORM (STUDENT)
APPENDIX C PRE-SEMESTER QUESTIONNAIRE (STUDENT)
APPENDIX D POST-SEMESTER QUESTIONNAIRE (STUDENT)
APPENDIX E PRE-SEMESTER QUESTIONNAIRE (INSTRUCTOR)
APPENDIX F POST-SEMESTER QUESTIONNAIRE (INSTRUCTOR)
APPENDIX G PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT
APPENDIX H CLASS OBJECTIVES
APPENDIX I DIAGNOSTIC WRITING
APPENDIX J POLICY STATEMENT
APPENDIX K CONSENT FORM (INSTRUCTOR)
INTRODUCTION

Today’s composition classroom environment seems to combine the belief in individualism in composition from our educational roots and the more current idea that composition is a social activity. Composition is an individual activity taking place in a social context with writing collaboration as its catalyst. There are an increasing number of classrooms and work situations that call for collaborative effort. This study focuses on the collaborative writing classroom.

Collaboration research dealing with written composition has focused mainly on student/student collaboration with studies from such researchers as Linda Houston and Sharon Hamilton-Wieler showing the instructor as a facilitator of student/student collaboration or as an invisible figure facilitating collaboration but separate from it. Students receive lecture and text information from the instructor and are on their own in the group situation. They have no direct contact with the expertise the instructor has other than hearing about it.

Would the student’s writing process benefit from having the expertise of the instructor within the group during the initial peer editing process? Simple logic says yes, but a closer look reveals some problems. Would the instructor be accepted into the group as a peer? Would students feel they had to accept any suggestion from the instructor? How would this involvement affect course design? Several more questions
dealing with classroom logistics, student/instructor relationships, grading and more present themselves.

Before such questions can be approached, it is necessary to investigate the possibility of the instructor entering the group activity as a participant. To facilitate this possibility it is necessary to create the opportunity.

This study investigates this preliminary situation. Can the opportunity be created for instructor/student collaboration, and if so what activities can be observed from both students and instructor? The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I, Literature Review, contains a review of early education's focus on the individual and its gradual move to the collaborative learning in today's classroom beginning with Dominance of Individualism, outlining a brief history of early education; Community of Scholars, showing the work of those writers during the beginning of the collaborative idea; and Contemporary Research on Collaborative Learning, which is set out in three sections including Theoretical Groundwork, Collaborative Learning and Career Preparation, and Collaborative Learning and Academic Success. This chapter concludes with an overview of the discussion.

Chapter II, Collaboration Defined, presents the current definitions of the overall term collaboration according to some of today's writers, a discussion of how the overall term
can be broken into several categories, and a discussion of how this study considers the instructor as a collaborator.

Chapter III, Methodology, explains the choice of case study as the research method and details elements of the study, including environment, subjects, data collection, and instructional methods. It also includes profiles of the ISU Freshman Composition II course as it is now taught, the course design of this study including changes in course design, and the student journals.

Chapter IV, Results, contains three sections. The first section—profiles—includes the students, their collaborative experiences, and pertinent personal information; and the instructor, her teaching history, and collaborative experience. These profiles give an overview of the various influences involved in the study.

The second section—observations—presents the findings of the data collected. It is presented under two headings—collaborative opportunity and collaborative categories. The third section—analysis—uses the observations to present an indepth description of and reasoning for, the results of the study.

Chapter V, Future Research, explores implications of this study for today's composition classroom, what design changes should be considered for future researchers, and what research possibilities this study leaves open.
It is hoped this study will further the use of collaboration in the writing classroom and that future studies in the area of collaboration can benefit from these results.
CHAPTER I LITERATURE REVIEW

The role collaboration plays in the writing done by writers working in different contexts points to the fundamental interdependence of all the language arts during the act of writing. Writing for these individuals, while sometimes accomplished in physical isolation from others (e.g., students separated from one another and from the teacher and textbook during an examination, the engineer alone in his office drafting a letter to a lawyer about necessary changes in a contract), never occurred in a social vacuum. The writing of each . . . depended in important ways on both prior and ongoing socially circumscribed "conversations" with others, "dialogic events" which themselves presupposed speaking, listening, reading, and 'seeing' skills as preconditions for participation.—Stephen P. Witte, "Some Contexts for Understanding Written Literacy" (Ede, Lunsford, Single . . . 18).

One of the most recent changes in pedagogy is the use of collaboration by students and instructors. For approximately the past twenty years, collaboration in composition has been the focus of much research. This chapter is a literature review of composition instruction from the early American focus on the individual learner to the beginning of collaborative learning. Current research in the collaborative field is discussed including recent work in collaborative learning directed towards student learning through group participation.

Dominance of Individualism

Even though the early school system promoted an individual view of education, collaboration is not a new idea.
The life of the early family centered in the home and was a collaborative effort (Dewey 6). John Dewey in his book The School and Society shows that the family has always been a cooperative entity and criticizes schools for creating an unhealthy competition:

The mere absorbing of facts and truths is so exclusively individual an affair that it tends very naturally to pass into selfishness. There is no obvious social motive for the acquirement of mere learning, there is no clear social gain in success thereat. Indeed, almost the only measure for success is a competitive one, in the bad sense of that term—a comparison of results in the recitation or in the examination to see which child has succeeded in getting ahead of others in storing up, in accumulating, the maximum of information. So thoroughly is this the prevailing atmosphere that for one child to help another in his task has become a school crime (12-13).

Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede in their book Singular Texts/Plural Authors, cite Alexis de Toqueville’s characterization of the early American: "Individualism is a calm and considered feeling which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from the main of his fellows and withdraw into the circle of family and friend; with this little society formed to his taste, he gladly leaves the greater society to
look after itself" (108). De Toqueville, like Dewey, felt that the continuation of this individualism in the educational system would not benefit society.

The American school system did not begin with this individualistic focus. "The earliest rhetorical instruction in America was influenced by Cicero and Quintilian and Roman concept[s] . . . (of) communal values and shared meanings." During the nineteenth century the emphasis shifted "as new objective methods of testing arose, and as the academy emphasized competition over cooperation, autonomous electives over the classical core curriculum and the autonomous individual over the social" (Ede, Lunsford, Single . . . 109).

By the end of the nineteenth century English departments believed in "a concept of writing as an individual, solitary act, and with philological and exegetical traditions that emphasized the autonomous writer and text" (ibid).

Not all instructors heeded the influence of this autonomous atmosphere. Women’s clubs, the Lyceum societies, and the Chautauqua societies of the early nineteenth century show evidence of collaboration. Ede and Lunsford found that "Fred Newton Scott and his student Gertrude Buck both advocated more natural social conditions for composition instruction and evaluation in schools, while Alexander Bain's *On Teaching English* praised the practice of writing with an
eye toward reading draft versions to a society of peers and revising on the basis of discussion" (Single ... 109).

John Dewey showed that the educational focus of his era was toward a "scheme of generous, liberal culture" (26). Educators felt that any active class that engaged in manual training such as carpentry or sewing tended toward specialization, which they did not want. Dewey countered that most people preferred training that would enable them to be a part of their community rather than a "liberal education." Dewey argued, "If our education is to have any meaning for life, it must pass through an equally complete transformation" (Dewey 26-27). According to Ede and Lunsford, Dewey believed in the idea that "meaning is not individually wrought but is instead constructed through social interaction" (Single ... 110).

In spite of these views and objections, education remained, for the most part, unchanged until the mid-twentieth century when the needs of the students and the observations of the instructors came together to offer change.

Community of Scholars

M. L. J. Abercrombie presented a deeper look at collaborative work in the 60s with her medical students. "Abercrombie devised an experimental teaching course that would help students, through collaboration, learn to recognize
diverse points of view, diverse interpretations of the results of an experiment, and thus to form more useful and accurate judgments" (Ede, Lunsford, Single . . . 111). She recognized the value of the input of peers in accurate diagnosis and the contextualizing of knowledge. Her course design was an initial example of peer editing groups as we now know them.

Abercrombie’s work predates widespread educational interest in collaboration by two decades. Kenneth Bruffee in his article "Collaborative Learning and the 'Conversation of Mankind’" states that "collaborative learning began to interest American college teachers widely only in the 1980s" (636).

For American college teachers the roots of collaborative learning lie neither in radical politics nor in research. They lie in the nearly desperate response of harried colleges during the early 1970’s to a pressing educational need. A decade ago, faculty and administrators in institutions throughout the country became aware that, increasingly, students entering college had difficulty doing as well in academic studies as their native ability suggested they should be able to do. . . . It was traditional classroom learning that seemed to have left these students unprepared in the first place. What they needed, it seemed, was help that
was not an extension of but an alternative to traditional classroom teaching (Bruffee 637).

Finally, what Dewey and de Toqueville had been advocating began to surface as a response to individualism. Colleges turned to peer tutoring in an effort to give these students the guidance they needed from a source that they would accept. According to John Trimbur in "Collaborative Learning and Teaching Writing," "suspicious of authority, students rejected the traditional hierarchy of the academy, calling instead for a 'community of scholars'" (89). Their peers posed no threat to their situations and were not authority figures. They found good results with this method of supplementing student learning. Bruffee states, "collaborative learning, it seemed, harnessed the powerful educative force of peer influence that had been--and largely still is--ignored and hence wasted by traditional forms of education" (638).

This "community of scholars" resulted from a demand by the students of the 60s and 70s for a greater role in their own education. They wanted a decentralized system and what seemed a more democratic situation stemming from "a deeply felt desire for community, self-organization, mutual aid, and non-authoritarian styles of leadership and decision making" (Trimbur, Collaborative ... 90). Although much of this attitude degenerated during the "Me Decade" of the 70s, it did create critical thinking on the part of academia about social
relations and how they influence the classroom and learning (Trimbur, Collaborative . . . 90). Collaborative pedagogical techniques are one of the results of this critical thought on social relations and the classroom.

Contemporary Research on Collaborative Learning

Trimbur also addresses teaching writing collaboratively and acknowledges that collaborative learning in the composition classroom is a permanent situation and not a passing fad (Collaborative . . . 89). The steady increase in the number of articles in professional journals and the number of special issues published by those journals on collaboration would suggest that collaborative pedagogical techniques are valuable, are not a passing fad, and warrant the research attention they are getting. This section reviews collaborative research in theoretical studies, in business and in pedagogy showing the benefits of collaboration in the classroom and recentering the responsibility of the student/instructor relationship. Also discussed are works centered in group activity involved in collaborative learning.

Theoretical Groundwork

Bruffee’s "Conversation of Mankind" (1984) is the framework article on collaborative learning. Bruffee reviews both student involvement with materials and teacher involvement with the professional community. "If we look at
what we do instead of what we say, we discover that we think of knowledge as something we acquire and wield as individuals relative to each other, not something we generate and maintain in company with and in dependency upon each other" (645). Bruffee then lays the groundwork for the human "conversation" that exists. "If thought is internalized public and social talk, then writing of all kinds is internalized social talk made public and social again. If thought is internalized conversation, then writing is internalized conversation re-externalized" (641). To be part of Bruffee's conversation, students must be part of the peer community of their chosen fields: collaboration seems a necessary part of this learning process due to its increasing use in the workplace. "All that is new in collaborative learning, it seems, is the systematic application of collaborative principles to that last bastion of hierarchy and individualism, the American college classroom" (647).

Composition instructors today use various methods of interaction within the college classroom—question and answer sessions, group activities, peer editing groups. Class discussion is one of the most common. As Bruffee states, "Most of us believe that "class discussion" is one of the most effective ways of teaching. The truth, however, is that despite this belief the person who does most of the discussing in most of our discussion classes is the teacher" (Bruffee
645). In principle discussion should act as a base for other activities, and these more involved activities, in turn, should serve as a base for student/student and student/instructor collaboration—the focus of this study.

As John Trimbur shows us "by shifting initiative and responsibility from the group leader to the members of the group, collaborative learning offers a style of leadership that actively involves the participants in their own learning" (Collaborative . . . 87). Collaborative learning methods range from simple peer editing groups to full workshop class designs. But what evidence is there that collaborative learning benefits students either in the workplace or in their school work?

Collaborative Learning and Career Preparation

The college classroom has a dual responsibility of preparing students to fill a place in a chosen career and a place in society. According to Ede and Lunsford’s *Singular Text/Plural Authors*, in their studies of the career individual 70 percent wrote on the job and 12 percent of that effort was collaborative (152). Their research covered seven professions and 1,400 participants. It is reasonable to believe that today’s businesses and society are changing the students' vision of the workplace from that of the solitary worker to the group participant.
The following articles and many others of recent publication indicate that anyone entering the job market today should be exposed to the group collaboration process in order to be at least cursorily familiar with the experience. As an example, articles from the November, 1991 issue of Technical Communication include several on collaboration. In "Recent Research on Collaborative Writing in Industry" by Mary Beth Debs. She reviews the kinds and frequencies of collaborative writing experiences, develops models of the collaborative process, and establishes guidelines for success. "Substantive Conflict in a Cooperative Context: A Way to Improve the Collaborative Planning of Workplace Documents" by Rebecca E. Burnett looks at how delay of consensus, and substantive conflict can help the collaborative process. She also outlines how students and workplace professionals can increase their success as collaborators by learning and practicing how to elaborate key ideas, consider alternatives and voice disagreement. "Designing Effective Technical Communication Teams" by Deborah S. Bosley discusses the philosophical move by corporations "from a competitive organizational mode to one of cooperation and collaboration" (504). "The Complexity of Workplace Review" by Susan D. Kleimann points up the collaborative nature of document review during the composing process and discusses multiple internal and external readers that further complicates the process. "The Practice of
Collaboration in Usability Test Design" by Mark Simpson shows how co-workers collaborate in managing the test design process for Microsoft Corporation. He investigates both the group process and the problem-solving process for successful results.

Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford in "Let Them Write—Together" state that "important research suggests that the concept of authorship as inherently single or solitary is both theoretically naive and pedagogically flawed" (120). Their research follows the premise that writing should be done with others and usually is, whether recognized or not. Many on the job feel they write alone but analysis of their writing process discovered a great deal of input from others. What more logical place to begin the writing process than in the classroom where career training also takes place.

These research efforts indicate the need for entry-level people to have had experience working in a group situation. How does this experience benefit the student in academic areas?

**Collaborative Learning and Academic Success**

Preparing students for the work world is not the only goal of the composition classroom. Trimbur states that "by socializing the process of learning to write, collaborative learning also promotes important kinds of affective, social, and cultural change" (Collaborative . . . 98). The process
gives the writer the idea that he or she is not alone in writing or learning. Students, and in reality all of us, write to gain membership in our communities, especially the professional discourse communities. "Collaborative learning can help students generate a transitional language to bridge the cultural gap and acquire fluency in academic conversation" (Trimbur, Collaborative . . . 101). How does this affect the traditional classroom? What would best facilitate Trimbur’s bridge and fluency of academic conversation?

John Trimbur sees collaborative learning as a critique of the traditional classroom. "According to the traditional conventions that regulate the social life of the classroom, education operates on a hierarchical model. Authority is centralized in the figure of the teacher, and knowledge is passed from the top down" (Collaborative . . . 89). He shows a change in this model away from the teacher-centered autonomous text classroom. He uses Peter Elbow’s Writing without Teachers as an example of the rationale for the workshop approach to writing. "As Elbow points out, students write not to but for teachers, and thus the authority . . . hovers over the act of student writing" (Collaborative . . . 97).

Trimbur feels that the workshop approach to teaching writing can reduce the total authoritative position of the instructor and that "the dialogue of a writing workshop
employs the ongoing exchange of verbal and nonverbal feedback inherent in oral situations in order to help student writers initiate and sustain the kind of monologue that the writing situation imposes on them" (Collaborative ... 97). This situation also enhances the novice writer's awareness of audience by immediately gaining feedback from peers which in turn de-centers the author as primarily involved in the creation of text. "Instead of picturing the author as the sovereign creator and owner of the text, they [the group] have reduced the author to a function of the text, a social construct created by the activity of writing" (Collaborative ... 99).

In Trimbur's 1989 article, "Consensus and Difference in Collaborative Learning," the opposition to collaborative learning is reviewed and he discusses the theory of consensus within the group that results in most collaboration. Opponents such as Thomas S. Johnson and Pedro Beade "want to rescue the sovereignty and autonomy of the individual from what Johnson calls collaborative learning's 'peer indoctrination classes'" (Consensus ... 602).

However, Trimbur argues that "a rehabilitated notion of consensus in collaborative learning can provide students with exemplary motives to imagine alternative worlds and transformations of social life and labor. In its deferred and utopian form, consensus offers a way to orchestrate dissensus
and to turn the conversation in the collaborative classroom into a heterotopia of voices—a heterogeneity without hierarchy" (Consensus . . . 615). Placing the instructor into the production process, which is what this study investigates, can further promote this dissensus and heterogeneity.

Does collaboration benefit the composition classroom? Research says yes. Meg Morgan et al. in their article "Collaborative Writing in the Classroom," for example, describe student involvement with assignments concluding that students "become more aware of and involved in the planning, writing, and revising stages of the writing process; improve their problem-solving ability; and develop a tolerance for other's opinions and styles" (25). The authors also feel that the responsibilities of instruction are shifted to the students and that in turn "we become more sensitive to where the students are in their learning rather than concentrating on where we think they should be" (25). According to Andrea Herrmann in "Teaching Writing with Peer Response Groups" "collaboration provides writers with an opportunity to read their drafts aloud and to discuss them face-to-face with a peer audience while the written product is taking shape" (2).

According to Mary Ann Janda in "Collaboration in a Traditional Classroom Environment," "interaction requires students to be aware of the rhetorical demands of a particular situation immediately and makes them accountable for their
responses to those demands in a way that cannot be accomplished with teacher commentary, which is typically received long after production is finished" (292). Janda also notes that students with prior collaborative experience entering a peer response group may need to further develop group skills to produce a group-authored product (293).

Peer response groups offer much in the way of insight for students in the production of their final products even though the final product is still produced by a single author. In "Collaboration in Writing: From Start to Finish and Beyond" Michael Tritt contends that the vested interest of each member of the group in a single product is strong motivation. The problems of students' lack of confidence in their writing, preoccupation with text inadequacy, and reluctance to critique honestly are averted when tackled in a group situation (83-84).

The English classroom also fosters critical thinking and creates personal growth through the benefits of the collaborative experience. According to Linda S. Houston in "Collaborative Learning: A No-Lecture Method of Teaching English" "[s]tudents must have opportunities to practice these skills." The goals must be reached by making the student the active participant and the teacher the more passive manager of the activity" (3). The student becomes a responsive member of a team striving towards a single goal. This often fosters a
higher degree of class participation because "responses are not individual but based on group discussion" (4).

Current collaboration research seems to lean towards the more unconventional classroom in which the instructor transfers a considerable share of responsibility to the students. The instructor takes on an invisibility that enables students to work within the group at gaining knowledge for themselves. In "Collaborative Classrooms: Building a Community of Writers," Sharon Hamilton-Wieler shows the steps to take to achieve both collaborating students and an "invisible" instructor. "The quality of this invisibility is a significant determinant of the effectiveness of collaborative learning and writing" (4). Hamilton-Wieler bases her instruction on the student discourse community, which changes with each class and within each group. She sets multiple parameters that allow students to gain autonomy within the classroom rather than instructor-directed group activity.

"Writing as Collaboration" by James Reither and Douglas Vipond discusses writing as a social process and sets out the idea that if we can use collaborative techniques in our somewhat contentless courses, content-area courses could also profit from collaboration (862). "The aims of the student community-within-a-community are collectively to develop, through reading and writing, its own knowledge claims, and co-
operatively to find ways to fit its knowledge claims into the knowledge of the larger community" (862). Preliminarily interjecting the instructor into this community as a peer rather than as only a judge should enhance the result by forming a cohesive bridge between communities.

The student has moved from being a passive learner in a lecture format, to sharing work in peer groups, to self-directed production of final work by several authors. The next step in the classroom collaborative study is to bring the instructor out of the background, not to become a head-of-the-class instructor again but a peer editor with the students, thus lending expertise in the field of composition to the students by example within the group. In "Collaboration in the Writing Classroom: An Interview with Ken Kesey" by Carolyn Knox-Quinn, Kesey tells how his students wrote a novel with him as a peer writer. The students were a part of the novel and were working with someone they could learn from. "I think this is the way to teach writing. You teach wrestling by having guys get out and wrestle. You teach basketball by having them play basketball, and you teach writing by having them sit and write" (310). The only discussion of criteria stated that he retained 50% power in the class and was equal to the students otherwise.

Published descriptions about peer collaboration between students and instructor are not readily available. Those of
such authors as Jone Rymer and Paulo Friere remain based in theory rather than empirical research. Most involve direction of peer activity or Hamilton-Wieler's invisibility. Even in Kesey's class graduate students were the participants; the project took place over a one-year period, not a one-semester undergraduate composition course. Physical activity was not discussed.

Instructor Group Activities

Tebo-Messina shows that Elbow stresses the exploration and experience of the writing workshop and insists the "workshop facilitators should also be learners—talking and writing just like any other member of the workshop" (90). With this in mind, it might be expected that the instructor maintain similar actions to other members of the group.

Further groundwork for the points of instructor activity used with the groups is necessary: sitting with the groups, using multiple answers for problems, avoiding do-this-don't-do-that answers, and observing student disagreement with the instructor. The instructor/researcher meeting profiled in chapter IV can be placed in Stephen North's description of composition lore presented in The Making of Knowledge in Composition. North presents the practitioner as a knowledge maker and practice as inquiry.
North gives an extended definition of composition lore as a body of knowledge not "scientifically" rigorous, informed by other kinds of inquiry but not supplanted by them. It is "driven . . . by a pragmatic logic: It is concerned with what has worked, is working, or might work in teaching, doing, or learning writing . . . . It’s structure is essentially experiential" (23).

North gives lore three functional properties: "anything can become a part of lore," "nothing can ever be dropped from it," and "contributions to it have to be framed in practical terms, as knowledge about what to do" (24-25). He states, "The nature of a pragmatic logic makes disposition simple: once somebody says that it has worked or is working or might work, it is part of lore" (24). He also shows composition practice to be an oral culture, stating, "practitioners talk about what they know and don’t know, about what they have done, are doing, and plan to do, all the time. They talk to one another, to their students, to administrators, to Scholars and Researchers, to spouses and friends, to anyone who will listen" (32).

Can practice be inquiry? North shows practice as inquiry only:

(a) when the situation cannot be framed in familiar terms, so that any familiar strategies will have to be adapted for use;
(b) when, although the situation is perceived as familiar, standard approaches are no longer satisfactory, and so new approaches are created for it; or

(c) when both situation and approach are non-standard (33) Studying the interjection of the instructor into the collaborative group on a peer editor basis must be guided by set criteria. Few if any studies have been done involving this action on the freshman composition level but it might be expected that the instructor should take on similar actions to other members of the group when in the peer editor role. Tebo-Messina shows that Elbow stresses the exploration and experience of the writing workshop and insists that "workshop-facilitators should also be learners—talking and writing just like any other member of the workshop" (90).

If the instructor attempts to join the group situation what can be done to facilitate this activity? Following is a list of instructor activities derived from the instructor/researcher planning session and the sources mentioned here.
Sitting With the Group

Connors and Glenn in their *St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing*, suggest that the instructor not "sit back and watch. Instead, drift from group to group, sitting in on each for a few minutes, talking, listening." Act as a "resource person who can help students find their own ways. Be friendly and informal" (41). This implies the instructor should sit with the group during visits.

Multiple Alternatives to Inquiries

Rebecca Burnett’s article "Benefits of Collaborative Planning in the Business Communication Classroom," suggests that students use collaborative planning to produce the assigned work. In part of that planning "students engage in a dialogue that raises questions and poses alternatives they might not have considered if they were planning by themselves" (Benefits . . . 16). Her article "Substantive Conflict in a Cooperative Context," also suggests "to consider alternatives involves suggesting something the other person has not considered" (537). This implies that the instructor should give multiple alternatives to solving problems.

Avoid Do-this-don’t-do-that Answers

Ramage and Bean’s *Writing Arguments* suggests posing questions rather than using orders or criticism: "every action in nature is met with an equal and opposite reaction—commands tend to be met with resistance" (747). Kitty Locker’s
Business and Administrative Communication, suggests in her list of items that block responses that members of the group refrain from "ordering, directing, commanding, preaching," etc. because these actions interfere with discussion (415). This implies that the instructor would encourage discussion by using questions and suggestions and should avoid the do-this-don't-do that reply.

Disagreeing with the Instructor

When we are involved in a group setting it is expected that our opinions will not always agree. It follows, then, that if the students accept the instructor as a co-writer during time spent with the group, they will disagree with his or her opinion on occasion. Rebecca Burnett's "Substantive Conflict in a Cooperative Context," suggests "substantive conflict in a cooperative setting could lead collaborators to reexamine opinions, share diverse ideas, and discover creative solutions typically regarded as essential to effective decisions" (Substantive . . . 535).

Conclusion

Although composition and, therefore, collaboration in composition are relatively new fields, current research shows a wide range of investigation. The field is growing and thereby changing as more research gives new information. Collaboration in the classroom can be a valuable learning tool
which involves the student in the instruction process potentially heightening learning.

Some areas of collaboration have not yet been studied in depth and some not at all. For instance, a focused definition for the overall term collaboration could aid future research by helping to clarify research situations. As the next chapter shows, little current research has dealt with this area.

Several studies involve the use of peer response groups in the classroom and many more deal with collaborative writing in the workplace. However, few studies deal with student/student collaboration in which the group produces a single product such as works by Janis Forman or Meg Morgan, instructor/instructor collaboration on pedagogy such as, "An Assessment System for Collaborative-Writing Groups: Theory and Empirical Evaluation," by John Beard, Jone Rymer, and David Williams, or instructor/instructor collaboration of the same or similar courses.

Another gap in current research is the collaborative relationship between the instructor and the students. If an instructor merely facilitates the group activity or remains as an "invisible" member of the classroom, it would seem the students are deprived of available expertise not only in the area of writing process but in the collaborative area as well. This research study focuses on this area of research.
CHAPTER II  COLLABORATION DEFINED

Does collaboration mean a little advice from a peer on an idea, or extensive work with a group in the production of a single product. Where along the continuum of progressively increasing input from outside the writer does the situation go from "a little help" to collaboration? Any discussion of collaboration must naturally begin with this fundamental question of definition. This chapter reviews definitions of the term in recent literature, proposes defining of various levels of collaboration by multiple criteria, and examines the particular type of collaboration central to this study, the "instructor as collaborator."

It is assumed writers such as John Dewey and Kenneth Bruffee took the definition of collaboration to be inherently understood since they included no definition in their writings. However, today's research in the collaborative field is becoming more specific, more complex. Andrea Herrmann's "Teaching Writing with Peer Response Groups," for example, investigates the effects of peer reactions on composition during collaboration, and Rebecca Burnett's "Substantive Conflict in a Cooperative Context: A Way to Improve the Collaborative Planning of Workplace Documents," investigates group consensus and the importance of generating conflict and resolving conflict in the group. Can the general term collaboration continue to function in these more complex
studies? Nancy Allen et al. in "What Experienced Collaborators Say About Collaborative Writing," state, "as currently used, collaboration refers to a variety of interactive writing experiences, making it difficult or impossible to assess research projects accurately or to use their findings effectively" (70). The study further defines only one small area of collaboration. The following section summarizes current definitions of collaborative writing.

Current Definitions of Collaborative Writing

Kenneth Bruffee's "Conversation of 'Mankind,'" suggests that nothing we write is ever anything but collaboration since we are in a constant "conversation" with others and thus life experience is a form of collaboration.

According to James Reither, collaborative writing means "writing together, writing with the help of others" (Reither 3). Reither asks "What does writing together mean" (2). He depends on Lunsford and Ede, Kenneth Bruffee, Patricia Bizzell, and others for the definition. Reither's definition stems from a socially constructed reality:

Whenever we write we are collaborating with past and present participants in the ongoing conversation through which our reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts, selves are created, constituted, maintained through symbolic action. Language and
ways of making meaning are, in this view, community "property" out of which, together, we construct texts, meaning, knowing (Reither 3).

Ede and Lunsford in their work *Singular Texts/Plural Authors* recognize that defining collaboration in writing is a complex situation. Because they wanted their research survey to encourage a broad collection of information, they left their definition of collaborative or "group" writing as "any writing done in collaboration with one or more persons" (14). However, they site several other authors' definitions:

Purdue University researchers:

* Production of a shared document
* Substantive interaction among members
* Shared decision-making power over and responsibility for the document (15).

Deborah Bosley:

* collaborative writing is defined as two or more people working together to produce one written document in a situation in which a group takes responsibility for having produced the document (15)

Ede and Lunsford quote Bosley as identifying specific collaborative writing "configurations" in business:

* supervisor’s assignment of a document that is researched and drafted by a staff member, but
carefully edited by the supervisor (qtd. in Ede and Lunsford 15)

* collaborative planning of a document that is drafted and revised by an individual (ibid).
* individual planning and drafting of a document that is revised collaboratively (ibid).
* a peer’s critiquing a co-worker’s draft (ibid).

These points, while making a sound beginning towards definition, seem to create more questions than they answer. For instance, what "shared document" means and what constitutes "substantive" interaction and the business "configurations" could be endless.

Mary Beth Debs further substantiates this view in her article "Recent Research on Collaborative Writing in Industry" by showing a departmentalizing of the writing stages by business. "Our sense of what interactions we will accept as being collaborative expand when we consider writing as a process with stages: traditionally, planning or invention, drafting, and revision. Then we immediately find the possibility for a number of combinations" (478). These combinations further confuse the issue of definition. "Researchers have begun to label different kinds of collaborative writing by highlighting particular characteristics:
* Interactive writing
* Primary collaboration
* Hierarchical and dialogic modes of collaboration
* Peer collaboration
* Integrated teams (479)

James Reither and Douglas Vipond, in their article "Writing as Collaboration" point out that "[t]hese different ways (of collaboration) can be thought of as comprising different forms, or realms, of collaboration, three of which are especially important: coauthoring, workshopping, and knowledge making" (858). The article then further defines these divisions. However, the three divisions are too vague for describing future research with much exactness. They are not criteria oriented but stem from the personal experience of the authors, which makes their use difficult.

The term collaboration seems to be an umbrella for myriad activities. The next section aims to bring some clarity to this confusing collection of definitions by describing eight categories of collaboration based on two major criteria: the form of outside input and authorial responsibility.

Categories of Collaboration

The term collaboration best applies only to general situations where some sort of togetherness in communication
exists but where the specifics of the situation are not evident. By moving beyond this general term to a definition of separate categories of collaboration activity, a deeper understanding of collaboration as a whole can be achieved.

The following categories of collaboration are not ranked in any order of preferential usage or sequential need but are merely grouped by certain criteria or features. For example, Casual and Draft collaboration are not necessary to arrive at Written-Critique collaboration. Each category has its own set of functions and criteria that define a collaborative writing activity without prescribing it.

There are two criteria used to describe the eight categories. The first is the form of input by outsiders and whether it is active or passive; the second is authorial responsibility for the final product. Input by outsiders is anything said or written, such as written references or oral editing comments, by someone other than the writer, that may be used to produce a final product. Active input is personal contact with the outsider by the writer such as phone calls or comments both written and oral. Passive input from an outsider, such as consulting references and cultural influences, is input other than personal contact. Authorial responsibility is measured by the names on the final product. It is recognized that in the work situation as well as the classroom those with higher authority may influence changes in
the final product. It is assumed that the responsibility for content remains with the authors listed.

Although the categories are not sequential, informational input by those other than the author becomes increasingly involved from one category to another until the last category places the outsider input in co-author status. The input also becomes increasingly active. For instance, the first two categories have inactive or passive input while all other categories engage active input. The input becomes more formal as the categories progress until the Group-Research category again uses casual input through discussion of the research done.

The categories form three distinct groups (Figure 1). Cultural and Referential collaboration occur essentially without active outsider input. Casual, Draft, and Written-Critique collaboration occur outside the influence of a formal group. Group-Research, Group-Written, and Full-Group collaboration all involve a formal group setting such as an assigned peer group or committee. The overriding purpose of all these categories is to provide a definition to encompass any collaborative writing situation.
Writing Collaboration

Informal Group Structure

Single Author of Record

Passive Input
  - Cultural Collaboration
  - Referential Collaboration

Active Input
  - Casual Collaboration
  - Draft Collaboration
  - Written-Critique Collaboration

Multiple Author of Record
  - not found in informal group structures

Formal Group Structure

Single Author of Record

Active Input
  - Group-Research Collaboration

Multiple Authors of Record

Active Input
  - Group-Written Collaboration
  - Full-Group Collaboration

Figure 1. Features of writing collaboration
Cultural Collaboration

Cultural collaboration is writing with no active outsider input in which the writer is the author of record.

Ede and Lunsford, Bruffee, Trimbur, and others present the concept that no one ever writes without collaboration. Our surroundings and general education influence our writing. The solitary writer does not exist. Because we often write alone—in a room with a computer, sitting by ourselves in the library, even working alone in a classroom setting—authors tend to believe that they have produced the final product with no input from outsiders. If we accept Ede and Lunsford, Bruffee, and Trimbur's concept, however, what we write must be considered a reflection of the sum total of the knowledge gained from our society and environmental influences.

Thus, with cultural collaboration, the product stems from the writer's own knowledge, thoughts, and environmental influences but without active input from outsiders. It is a culmination of all our educational, parental, and societal input, from how we learn to produce words in the first place to the attitudes and beliefs of our parents.

Is this truly collaboration? If we accept the general definition of collaboration as the process of working with one another on a product, then our upbringing and influences from any source have in fact been on a "with-one-another" basis. From learning to tie our shoes to college-level calculus, our
influences have been gathered from association with others. Therefore, their input into the final product would constitute a form of collaboration.

For example, lifewriting, writing done from personal memories and observations, is clearly a form of cultural collaboration. Diaries, letters, memos, and editorials done without consulting others or using references would also fall into this category.

The second criteria is authorial responsibility. In this category the writer is the author of record and maintains full responsibility for content.

Referential Collaboration

Referential collaboration is writing with the use of reference materials.

Referential collaboration involves the use of reference sources. When a piece is written that uses new knowledge, that knowledge has to come from others. For instance, if a paper on the death penalty were required for social studies, the author would typically go to the library or some other sources for information. These sources are then considered outside collaborative input into the final product as they do not come either from previous educational or personal experience.

Here the source sought out by the writer is passive input. In other words, the new information source does not
engage in a give-and-take conversation with the writer other than that described by Bruffee. For instance, this writing uses information from the work of Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford, but the writer has not engaged them in a reading or discussion of this draft for editing help.

For referential collaboration, sources are usually listed in the final pages of the work but such listing does not constitute official responsibility for the text, or how those references were interpreted or used.

Casual Collaboration

Casual collaboration is verbal input based on oral information from the writer.

Casual collaboration is characterized by informal input from outsiders such as peers, supervisors, professors, friends, etc. Casual input is defined as discussion that is usually oral and is based on information orally supplied by the writer and takes place in informal situations—coffee breaks, class breaks, phone conversations, impromptu gatherings. The writer may ask the outsider for input on the final product but he or she does not see a draft of the work in progress since that detailed level of involvement would move the collaboration beyond the bounds of casual input.

For example, a writer in the process of drafting a proposal may ask a coworker during a coffee break how to handle a particular problem. The coworker gives an oral
opinion. This category now involves a degree of active input in that the outsider and the writer are in a person-to-person conversation with each other.

Since the writer has the only authority to judge how this informal outsider input will be used he or she remains the only official author for a text resulting from casual collaboration.

**Draft Collaboration**

Draft collaboration is input derived from a reading of the work in progress which remains casual.

Draft collaboration involves outsider input gained from a reading of a draft with input remaining on a verbal or more casual level. Outsider input is more involved by the reading of the draft. For instance, this could work at the beginning of a document cycling process. A worker may give the document to a coworker to read or skim for general suggestions and critique. These suggestions constitute active input but not in the form of a written response.

The responsibility for the text remains with the writer as author of record because control over content remains with that person.

**Written-Critique Collaboration**

Written-Critique collaboration is defined as written outsider input in response to work in progress.

Written-Critique collaboration involves the outsider in a reading of a draft with active input given in written form, as
in marginal notes or a written critique. This category differs from casual or draft collaboration in that the critique is more detailed and the reading done more carefully.

As with all previous categories the writer maintains author of record responsibility for content because of content control.

**Group-Research Collaboration**

Group-Research collaboration is defined as a sharing of research responsibility constituting the outsider input with each writer producing a separate product.

Group-Research collaboration constitutes the outsider input in this category but authorial responsibility for the final products remains with each member of the group. The group obtains the information necessary to complete the final products, which gives each group member a deeper degree of input. The collaboration may, at the writer’s discretion, incorporate other collaborative strategies: Reference, Casual, Draft, or Written-Critique collaboration.

Each writer views the subject matter differently and produces a different final product. The authorial responsibility remains with each single member of the group; each product lists a single author.

For example, Group-Research collaboration occurs in the workplace where each researcher writes about his or her own involvement and confers with others in the group and occurs in
the classroom during collaborative group projects both in the form of peer editing.

**Group-Written Collaboration**

Group-Written collaboration is defined as group research with each member producing a separate part of a final single product.

Group-Written collaboration involves both group research and group composing with each member of the group writing a separate section of a final collective product. This degree of collaboration strengthens the outsider input to reflect authorial input. The group actively contributes to final editing so that each part is cohesively relevant to the other.

Authorial responsibility now strengthens to show all members of the group and all names appear as authors of record. Text responsibility, however, could remain connected to the section written by each contributor. In the workplace, for example, a committee is responsible for a single final document but each member maintains expertise in separate areas.

**Full-Group Collaboration**

Full-Group collaboration is defined as equal input during all phases of the writing process by all members of the group.

Full-Group collaboration involves not only group research but group writing of the entire final product usually with no discernible evidence of multiple writers. Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford write in this manner. "Whenever we write together,
however we list our names, our collaboration is equal” (Introduction x).

All group members comprise the writer and have full use of the other categories of collaboration. This category extends authorial responsibility equally to all authors of record.

Finally, research on collaborative writing is becoming more and more complex, calling for further defining of the overall term collaboration. Although only three categories of the eight are used as descriptive tools in this report, the eight categories of collaboration just described offer a possible classification scheme to help researchers describe their projects. More precise terms can contribute to clarity of purpose and avoid misunderstandings.

For example, the observation and analysis sections of the research chapter in this study make use of Casual, Draft and Written-Critique categories of collaboration to create a more definite picture of the collaborative activity for the reader. Also, the following instructor-as-collaborator section uses these three categories to describe her activity.

**Instructor as Collaborator**

Imagine a basketball team that spends all of its time watching videotapes of great basketball games of the past. For a particularly good move by a Cousy or a Mikan or a Chamberlain, the coach freezes the frame
on the tape, discusses the significance of the player’s accomplishment, and rewinds the tape so that his players can watch it again. The players take notes on different kinds of offenses and defenses, on how to shoot free throws, on effective rebounding. Once every week or so, they go through some layup drills and take some shots from the floor. But never, never, do they play an actual game. At the end of the season, they earn their letters by taking a written test, on which they are expected to identify Great Moves in Basketball by player, game, and significance, and write essays discussing offensive and defensive strategies (Blain 51).

Of all the categories of collaboration, the one central to this research study is Written-Critique collaboration. It takes a more active part in the group activity and allows the students to play the game with a coach as Edward Blain demonstrates.

As Blain explains, this "scenario is ludicrous" but "represents figuratively what happens all too often in English classes studying the novel" (51). Even though his article is directed towards a literature-based classroom, in essence this is what is done in some composition classes. The student is asked to listen to lectures on how to write and do exercises on the bits and pieces of the process. But we often do not let them "play the game" until the full penalties are brought to bear, until they play it wrong by handing in less than adequate final drafts of a currently assigned essay. Many
times students can't even confer with fellow writers in peer groups.

Collaborative classrooms allow students to "play the game" by offering a vested interest in the form and outcome of the course they are involved in, offering students experiences that aid them in future careers as well as teaching creative thinking and fostering personal growth. Collaboration has shown the ability to increase the quality and quantity of the writing (Tritt 82), and Hamilton-Wieler in "Collaborative Classrooms: Building a Community of Writers," suggests that collaborative work increases the positive results of the classroom and that by becoming "invisible" within the classroom experience the instructor can facilitate these purposes with more efficiency than those classrooms that do not use collaboration.

Does the instructor need to remain "invisible" as though he or she were only directing collaborative traffic? If the classroom is to provide a setting in which knowledge is freely available to the students, and if the instructor is the resident authority, why not interject the instructor, the "coach" with the expertise, into the group situation as a co-writer? The collaborative classroom provides that "coach."

The non-collaborative classroom seems to put the "coach" in the background; the product of the assignment is not seen by the instructor or other students until the day the final
product is turned in for grading. The process is to have the student use comments placed on this paper to improve the next paper. However, if the next assignment is a different strategy, that doesn’t always work. For example, just because a student knows how to argue the death penalty by using evaluation argument, does not mean he or she will succeed at definition. Also some techniques, such as coherence and support of ideas with the use of sources elude understanding for beginners. If they’re not discovered until the final draft, it is difficult to alter the misunderstanding and for the student to earn the desired grade.

Many instructors are now adding peer editing groups to the traditional curricula and classroom atmosphere, endeavoring to give students the confidence to answer questions during class and to give them immediate audience feedback on the final product. However, the instructor is left out of the loop; if the entire group happens to miss the point, we are back to square one without our "coach." Interjecting the instructor into the loop as a peer collaborator allows first-hand knowledge of what the students are needing, thinking, understanding, and most of all writing because he or she is directly involved with the groups and with each student.

Simply adding a collaborative paper or peer editing to the syllabus does add student feedback, but instructors often
become facilitators of collaboration as Houston and Hamilton-Wieler discuss. The instructor needs to create a more personal writing relationship with each student in the class. A workshop setting could help achieve this relationship.

As the groups work together, the instructor can effectively use various collaborative strategies to aid the process. With Casual collaboration, the instructor offers verbal comments on student suggested ideas and engages in verbal exchange of ideas. With Draft collaboration, the instructor gives oral suggestions from a written draft presented during group discussion. With Written-Critique collaboration, the instructor reads a draft and through the use of marginal comments or end notes gives suggestions in written form.

The use of peer groups, though a relatively new pedagogy, is growing in popularity as witnessed by the number of projects discussed by the discourse community. The field of collaborative composition research has shown that collaborative experience is needed to facilitate the individual career path that is beneficial to the student. Research has specialized in several areas such as Ede and Lunsford’s study of workplace writing, Janda and Tritt’s work in the classroom with peer response groups, Houston and Hamilton-Wieler on teaching methods and many more.
Some research effort should now be directed towards how and to what effect the instructor can be involved directly with the group.

The next chapter discusses the choice of research method and specific methodology for carrying out the study, including the rationale for selecting a case study method and the instruments and implementation of the investigation.
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

Groundwork has shown the need for research in the classroom environment focused on the instructor/student collaborative relationship. The definition of the general term collaboration provides a more focused understanding of various collaborative situations allowing the reader a clearer picture of the research. This chapter turns now to the specifics of this research project in two sections—case study and methodology. The methodology section is further divided into three sections: environment, research subjects, and data collection. Profiles of Freshman Composition II, the course design, and the proposal assignment integral in shifting classroom responsibility are presented at the end of this chapter.

The research questions are: Can the opportunity for instructor/student collaboration incorporating Casual, Draft, and Written-Critique collaboration be realistically incorporated into the design of a freshman composition classroom? What are the reactions of both instructor and students?

The study used a freshman composition class during the second semester of a two-semester series. The average freshman composition class in the ISU English department is a combination of lecture and peer editing groups with the instructor maintaining full responsibility for assignment
decisions. Many instructors allow students to choose their own topics of discussion but paper length, due dates, and argument choices remain with the instructor. This study incorporated the following items:

* Workshop setting
* Minimum lecture time
* Student responsibility for:
  - paper length
  - due dates
  - argument style
  - topic choice

This environment would allow the instructor to sit with the groups during discussion, use multiple answers for questions where possible, and avoid do-this-don't-do-that instructions. The workshop style, the shift in responsibility, and the instructor activity should act together to enhance the opportunity for instructor/student collaboration at the peer level.

**Case Study**

Case study was selected as the investigative form for this exploration of instructor/student, student/student collaboration. It provides a preliminary look at these relationships by investigating selected instructor group activities and student/instructor reactions yet avoiding the
numerical reductiveness of a quantitative study. Case study focuses on the more intimate aspects of the instructor/student relationship in light of their collaborative efforts to produce written work. Case study also affords the best opportunity to identify questions for further investigation.

Research Methodology

There are two primary questions under investigation: Can the opportunity for instructor/student and student/student collaboration in the Casual, Draft, and Written-Critique categories be accommodated in a freshman composition course, and how do both instructor and students respond to this pedagogical method?

The students in this study read an introductory letter (Appendix A) informing them of their responsibilities during the study which consisted of filling out the pre- and post-semester questionnaires. They were also asked to sign a consent form (Appendix B) allowing their information to be used in this study. None of the students objected to either of these.

Placing the writing student immediately into the writing process and giving the instructor the opportunity to become a part of the process through collaboration rather than only a judge of it, would seem to provide the student both an example to emulate and the practical experience necessary to learn new
writing skills. Studies discussed (Houston and Hamilton-Wieler) have shown that a shift of instructor responsibilities should enhance the collaborative opportunity. The proposal assignment designed by the research should implement this shift. The remainder of this chapter discusses the research environment, subjects, data collection, and instructor pedagogy.

Classroom Environment

The environment for the study was a freshman composition classroom in Ross Hall at Iowa State University, spring semester, 1992, involving the second half of a two-semester series, English 105. The class met on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 to 10:50 a.m.

The class of twenty-four students was divided into seven groups of three and four students each. The groups were set by the instructor using student performance on an ungraded diagnostic assignment given the first week of class. This consisted of a personal writing of 500 words. The instructor equalized the grammar and composing skills of each group by using a mix of abilities.

The room contained individual student desks each with a writing area attached. They were easily moved into small groups located in a circle around the room.
Research Subjects

The students were randomly assigned to the class through the ISU enrollment system and were not screened in any way. The instructor was selected by a review of past teaching methods such as high levels of collaborative work, peer editing groups, and use of conferencing. Classes were set at a time possible for the researcher to collect data. Profiles of both the student body and the instructor are presented in the next chapter.

Data Collection

Pre- and Post-Semester Questionnaire

Pre- and post-semester questionnaires were designed for both the students (Appendices C & D) and the instructor (Appendices E & F). These facilitated comparison of study influences before and after the semester concerning both collaboration in general and this course design in particular. This information offered an impression of the subject’s willingness to accept the instructor as a collaborator and the instructor’s willingness to encourage that acceptance as well as tracked impressions from both subjects.

Some questions were designed to discover the student’s previous collaborative experience: "Do you have others read your work for grammar or proofreading errors? Have you ever participated in peer editing? Do you enjoy group work in the classroom?" The post-semester questionnaire followed up on
these questions: "Did you have your peers critique your work? Has your opinion of group work changed?" The post-semester questionnaire investigated whether the student engaged in collaborative work in the Group-Written or Full-Group categories: "Did you write any papers in collaboration? Do you feel the work was evenly divided among group members?"

Questions about instructor performance were included covering timely return of completed work, explaining procedures, and giving helpful suggestions. Each questionnaire gave ample room for the students to express free opinions: "Please write a brief paragraph containing your personal opinion of collaborative projects and group work; Please comment on your general impressions of this semester. Address your interaction with your group, classmates and your instructor. You may make any other comments you wish." The students were informed that the instructor would not see the post-semester questionnaire until after grades were posted to reduce student concerns that their questionnaire comments might affect their evaluation in the course.

The questions for the instructor were similar, though more open-ended and opinion-oriented. The instructor was asked to outline her past experience with collaborative teaching methods, collaborative experiences as a student, and her opinion of peer editing. Some follow-up questions asked for her evaluation of the new course design: "How did your
students respond to your style of teaching?" "How did you encourage your students to see you as a fellow writer and collaborator rather than an authority figure?" She was also invited to add any information on both questionnaires that she thought might help the research.

**Journal Entries** During the semester each student was required to write a journal page for each day of class, whether in attendance or not. These were a required part of class work and they were asked to point some of their comments towards class activities and class design. These were also be used as a personal link with the instructor since they were returned to the students each day and were kept confidential. The students were expected to keep them and turn in all pages at the end of the semester. Typically, journal entries contained comments on current papers, group activity, complaints about the instructor or group members, personal activities, and problems. They were ungraded to encourage a free flow of comments.

**Proposal Assignment** The proposal assignment (Appendix G) designed to shift some instructor responsibility to the students was also used as a data collection instrument because it allowed the students to set their own syllabus for the semester. How well they remained on schedule indicated, in part, student ability to adjust to this course design and the
quality of communication between instructor and student. The assignment is profiled in the next chapter.

Audio- and Videotaping Each class period was audiotaped to capture the ongoing conversation between instructor and students. The instructor hand carried the recorder from group to group. These conversations documented how the instructor encouraged or failed to encourage her students to collaborate with her in peer editing. Did she offer several answers for writing problems? Did she use do-this-don’t-do-that comments? Did the students question her answers or comments?

Each Thursday class was videotaped to reveal the physical interaction between instructor and students. Indicators included her posture (standing, sitting, crouching) when joining a group, length of visits, and student reactions to her presence (e.g., having her read drafts, moving to let her join the group).

Instructional Methodology

The class was conducted as a workshop. Student groups were permanent and students joined their groups immediately upon entering class. Whole-class instruction was kept to a minimum—ten to fifteen minutes. The instructor made any necessary announcements at the beginning of the session and students, for the remainder of the class, worked on
assignments or discussed text chapters. The first five weeks of the term were spent discussing the various argument styles in *Writing Arguments* by Ramage and Bean, and working on the first assignment, the proposal (Appendix G). The remainder of the chapters were discussed over the rest of the semester as problems arose within the groups. The anthology was also used as the groups needed the essays as examples. For instance, if a group was confused about the use of moral argument, the suggestion was to read one of the selections that used that argumentative method. The discussion took place within the groups and it was the responsibility of one student (a different one each time) to lead discussion of the various chapters. The remaining students were responsible for reading the chapters. In this way each group resembled a small version of the larger class.

When the instructor felt some whole-class instruction was necessary, group work was interrupted and the topic presented from wherever she was standing or sitting: if several students showed the same grammar problem or if several groups were having the same problem with information from the text. Any problems or misunderstandings were discussed with the instructor or detected by the instructor as each group was visited.

The proposal assignment was designed to shift some of the responsibility for the class from the instructor to the
students. By equalizing responsibility for paper lengths, topics, argument styles, and due dates, students were placed in a position of control for class activity. It was hoped this added responsibility would create the vested interest mentioned by Michael Tritt earlier in this thesis as well as an increased need for instructor involvement.

Students were allowed to collaborate on all assignments except the original proposal, the mid-term exam, and the final exam. Collaboration was not mandatory but was encouraged for at least one paper.

The following section profiles Freshman composition II as taught by the Iowa State University English Department (Appendix H) and the course design used in this research including the proposal assignment that structured the semester.

Profiles

Freshman Composition II

Freshman Composition II: English 105 teaches students to present themselves in written form in varying argumentative situations. It is the second class in a two-class series. All students at Iowa State University must take this series to graduate from their respective colleges.

English 104, the first of the series, teaches the basics of presenting thoughts in essay form and clears up most
grammar problems. The students write approximately 5,000-6,000 words of final product. Most of their writing is an introduction to argument: remembering events, remembering people, writing profiles, and explaining concepts. Some of their writing is argumentative: causal, position, or evaluation argument. Most instructors also require some form of research paper. A good deal of time is spent teaching the writing process supplemented by grammar instruction. Students must meet the department grammar standard of only one error per one hundred words written. Students are also instructed in basic reading interpretation and analysis.

English 105 emphasizes argumentative styles: proposal, definition, causal, resemblance, evaluation, and moral. An argumentative research paper is usually required. The writing is more extensive ranging at 6,000-7,000 words plus. Some classes go as high as 10,000. Most instructors use journal entries of various topics to encourage writing and readings as examples of the argumentative forms. Grammar is taught as needed. Since the grammar standard is met in English 104, most students have this under control in English 105.

Both classes have a history of lecture style instruction. However, peer editing groups have been used in recent years. The typical class includes lecture on various kinds of writing, using class discussion and chapter questions discussed in groups. Readings are often discussed in class
focusing on their argumentative features. Students are expected to write their essays from this instruction, these being graded without direct instructor input. Papers are returned with comments that are to be used to improve the next effort.

**Course Design**

The purpose of the research course design was to give the instructor the best opportunity to engage in collaboration in a Casual, Draft or Written-Critique category. By discussing the projects with the students, reading and commenting on drafts, and offering written comments, the instructor becomes a co-writer along with the other members of the author’s group. However, because of instructor grading creating a conflict of interest, the remaining categories were not considered practical for research focus.

The traditional head-of-the-class lecture style and singular student production would not afford the opportunity for instructor collaboration, nor would the typical peer editing situation as the instructor maintains a high level of responsibility as well as distance from the group. The question, then, was how to change the classroom to offer the collaborative opportunity desired. The instructor needs to have the opportunity to enter into the student groups both physically and instructionally through a smaller scale than
the whole-class environment and with a more personal exchange of ideas.

Small groups situated in the classroom allow the instructor to move within smaller areas for a more intimate setting, encouraging a freer exchange of ideas in discussion between a small number of students as opposed to the larger group of twenty-four. To facilitate this structure the class was divided into seven groups of three and four students. This division was handled by assigning an ungraded diagnostic writing (Appendix I) the first week of the session. From this the instructor determined the abilities of the students as to grammar and writing skill and placed them in groups with a mix of talent. This group size facilitated peer editing by keeping the number of papers reviewed by each member small. Creating the groups as small versions of the larger class did two things: (1) allowed the groups to work somewhat independently of each other, and (2) still worked towards the primary goals of English 105. The class policy (Appendix J) set out the general rules and structure of the class. For this study most students demonstrated equal skills; therefore, student choices for group members were honored.

Proposal The proposal assignment (Appendix G) increased the students' level of responsibility promoting a vested interest in the workings of both the group and the class. With this design, the students did much of what the instructor
usually does when creating assignments. They set their own due dates, word length, argumentative styles, and topics of discussion. These added responsibilities gave the students more control over their final products.

The due date for the proposal assignment was set by the instructor for five weeks into the semester. This was the only due date set by the instructor. During this five-week period, the groups used the text to investigate the various styles of argument. Because this assignment was presented as a proposal, the structure of the paper had to follow the parameters for proposals given in the text. They needed a problem, a solution to that problem, and justification for all points.

**Setting due dates** The assigned proposal was due on February 20. The due dates for all remaining papers, except the mid-term and final, which were outside all other work, started from this date and had to be spaced a minimum of two weeks apart into the end of the semester on May 7. Conceivably, a student could have all graded work finished by April 16. They were then allowed to begin revisions on papers already handed in. The students had a responsibility to other members of the group to collaborate in the production of their work. Therefore, they were required by the policy of the class to attend each session.
The primary advantage for the student was being able to set due dates around heavy loads in other classes. Students were encouraged to check other syllabi and avoid setting due dates during weeks with heavy testing or when other projects were due. To alter the proposal as the semester progressed, students were required to submit any changes to the proposal in writing.

Choosing paper length  They needed to produce approximately 7,000 words in finished product. The mid-term and final were allotted 500 words each by the instructor and the proposal 750. One of the papers written needed to be a research paper of 1,250 words which could be added to by combining with an argument style as explained later. These figures left the students with 4,000 words to use at their own discretion.

Choosing argument style  The Rammage and Bean text contained six argument styles: definition, causal, resemblance, evaluation, proposal, and ethical or moral. The proposal style was used in the current assignment but could be chosen again using the book's second, more global style of proposal. Students were required to present three additional argument styles or combinations of styles. For instance, they could combine definition and causal argument for a 1,250-word paper, an evaluation paper for 1,250 words and add moral argument to the research paper for 2,750. If they wished to
use an argument style in their research paper, they were required to increase the word count to allow for it. If they wished, they could choose to demonstrate more than the required three styles.

**Choosing topics**  Topics were not required in the proposal but the students were encouraged to choose tentative topics to help find others in the class with similar interests for collaboration in a Group-Written or Full-Group category project. If a collaboration was planned, due dates for each party needed to be allowed for.

Once this project was completed, each student had an individual syllabus for the remainder of the term. The midterm, final, and proposal had set due dates. Other papers were due as students had arranged. This had the result of producing finished products nearly each class period of the term by someone.

**Journals**

Students were required to keep journal entries for each day of class. These were written at the end of each period and were handed in and read by the instructor who commented on them and returned them the next class period. They were kept confidential and ungraded so that students would feel free to make any comments they wished. Whether they did them or not was the only consideration in the final grade for the course. Students were required to keep these entries and turn them in
during the final exam. They were allowed to discuss any topic they wished but were encouraged to comment on group activity and course design.

Data Analysis Methods

This section discusses the data collection instruments used and how the information gathered was analyzed. Instruments included the questionnaires, student journals, and the audio- and videotapes.

Questionnaires

These consisted of the pre- and post-semester questions answered by both the students and the instructor as discussed earlier. They were primarily used to gauge the attitudes pro or con towards collaboration of the participants before the study and how those attitudes may have changed during the course of the semester. Also investigated were comments mentioning reactions to the course design and the instruction style. The dominating information came from the post-semester questionnaires since these answers dealt with student and instructor reactions to the study environment.

For the students, comparison to initial negative reactions and how they did or did not change was investigated. Negative reactions consisted of comments that revealed a dislike towards group work or peer collaboration. Also considered were answers that mentioned no experience with
collaboration. These answers were then compared to post-semester answers investigating for changes in these attitudes by looking for positive comments from previously negative attitudes or positive comments from those with no previous experience in collaboration.

For the instructor, both positive and negative comparisons were investigated using companion questions to look at attitude changes. Instructor comments lead to evidence pro or con as to whether the opportunity for collaboration could be successfully offered. While student comments pro or con indicated whether the opportunity was taken advantage of.

The questionnaire was tested on six people prior to the study which proved to be too few to reveal its problems. Problems arising from this data resulted from questions that were too vague or too open-ended and had to be discarded. The valid questions are discussed in the Results chapter.

Student Journals

Comments from the journals were investigated as support for attitudes found in the questionnaires. Since these were not graded and were commented on by the instructor and returned on a daily basis, they were seen as a reliable source for evidence of student impressions as the semester progressed.
Comments sought dealt with reactions to group efforts or reactions to instructor input on projects in progress. Instructor comments in reply to the journal entries were also noted as an indication of continued progress towards peer-style input. Indication of them becoming instructional, as in do-this-don't-do-that statements rather than remaining suggestions for solutions, was investigated.

It is recognized that the student might not speak with total freedom in journal comments because of the overall grading process. They were fully aware that the final grades were yet to be issued and may not have wanted to risk a negative influence by making comments of a negative nature. However, there were both negative and positive comments made. These were seen as evidence that the instructor was or was not successful in entering into the activity of the group in the collaborative categories discussed.

Audio- and Videotaping

The audio portion of the taping was an indication of whether the instructor used multiple alternatives to student inquires and maintained the suggestion-style or open-ended vocabulary desired rather than the do-this-don't-do-that kind of conversation. Also investigated was conversation that resulted in the student arguing or disagreeing with instructor advice as an indication of peer-like acceptance.
Items looked for were the number of times multiple alternatives were possible compared to times multiple alternatives were given, times do-this-don’t-do-that suggestions were made, times open-ended suggestions were made for problems, and times that students argued or questioned the instructors advice.

The videotaping revealed the instructor’s physical actions within the group setting. Items investigated included how many times the instructor visited each group during the classtime and whether she stood, knelt, crouched or sat with the group during peer action. Significance of these actions is discussed in the Literature Review chapter.

The audiotapes proved to be of a less than desirable quality due to background noise which made conversation difficult to hear. However, they did yield many of the desired points of analysis as discussed later. The videotapes helped a great deal to reveal the overall atmosphere of the classroom and the instructor/student relationship.

The results and further analysis of the collected data is presented in the following chapters.
CHAPTER IV RESULTS

Discussion of research results is presented through profiles of the students and the instructor, observations, analysis, and discussion of the collaborative categories.

The student profiles section discusses the demographics of the students involved in this study particular to their study of English and collaboration history, and the teaching and collaborative history of the instructor. The data collection includes numerical information derived from collection instruments and the analysis poses explanations for the observations made.

Student Profile

The following is a look at the general student population of the class. Information was obtained from the pre-semester questionnaire. There were 24 students ranging in age from 18 to 24 with the majority living in the ISU residence halls. The gender make up was 14 men and 10 women. They were all in their second semester as freshmen. Majors included graphic design, physical education, journalism, pre-business, pre-med, zoology, electrical engineering, landscape architecture, computer engineering, elementary education, civil engineering, agricultural engineering, pre-mechanical engineering, advertising, and several undeclared. The home towns ranged from Kansas City, MO, and Indianapolis, IN, to small towns like Alta, IA, and Melvern, IA. All students were engaged in
extracurricular activities, with the majority in sports and many students with part-time work.

Three students expressed ease in producing papers, with one of those worried about producing papers according to department standards. Most identified problems with both grammar and confidence in writing such as:

"I couldn't quite gear my writing to the instructor's expectations" (speaking of 104),
"papers don’t accomplish assignment,"
"I’ve generally been afraid I would write something stupid," and
"I have never been very good at writing. I can think of things to write but I don’t make them very interesting."

Several mentioned grammar problems and one cited the Iowa State grammar policy of one error per one hundred words of text as a worry in 104 and more of a worry in 105.

When inquiring on the questionnaires about student collaboration experience, high school classes were included in the questions because of the students' newness to the college level. Most had had experience with Casual, and Draft categories of collaboration in high school. Six students had never worked in a group producing a single project. The majority of students expressed a liking for group work in class. Some of the problems mentioned included one person doing all the work, having a problem dividing the work fairly,
not liking the influence of others on their grade. They were asked to give their personal opinions of collaborative projects and group work. Comments included:

"I would rather do it on my own,"

"a good way to help you prepare for the work force,"

"I enjoy the different ideas,"

"group projects produce a higher quality of work,"

"a person can get insight from others through their feedback and ideas,"

"help students get to know each other,"

"it (group work) provides a more relaxed classroom atmosphere,"

plus many students mentioned the benefits of having their grammar surveyed by others.

Instructor Profile

The instructor chosen for the study was married, with two teenage boys, teaching her fourth semester of English Composition with experience in both 104 and 105. She was working on her M.A. degree after receiving her B.A. twenty years earlier. The planning session was held prior to the beginning of the semester and her answering the pre-semester questionnaire.

In this study both the situation and the approach are non-standard and it was through an exchange of composition lore that the instructor and the researcher were able to set
the criteria for instructor activities during group work with much of that knowledge stemming from the references in Chapter I. Below is a further description of the instructor planning session.

**Planning Session** The meeting was on January 12, 1992, to review the teaching method needed for this research. Items discussed included: how to promote the workshop style of the class, how she could interject herself into the groups, and how to encourage the students to view her more as a peer.

It was suggested that the proposal assignment and having the chapters in the book discussed in each group rather than as a whole class would help the workshop style by shifting some responsibility for class planning from the instructor to the student. However, it was agreed that five or ten minutes of whole-class discussion on these topics at the beginning of each session might strengthen the feeling of class unity and also give time for discussion of unified problems.

The discussion resulted in the following list of instructor activities to promote acceptance within the groups and interject her more into them:

* sitting with the group rather than standing while talking to them

* giving multiple suggestions for problems

* avoiding 'do this' and 'do that' answers.
At the end of the session, which lasted approximately two hours, the instructor signed a consent form (Appendix K) allowing her contributions to be used in the study report.

Her instructor/instructor collaborative experience extended to preliminary Casual collaboration on teaching projects, and Draft collaboration with students during the fall 1991 term.

Personal experience with collaboration extended to Group-Written products during her B.A. work, several of the same category during the twenty years between her B.A. and M.A., and some Full-Group category work during her M.A. studies.

When asked about collaborative learning her reply was that students working on their own work should be a good motivator. She stated the workshop method would give the students a better chance to "pick my brain." Concerning peer editing she hesitated to call it that since she felt "the students think it just means finding grammar errors at first." With further practice her experience has been that they do use each other as sounding boards and benefit from the practice.

The instructor viewed directing collaboration rather than being a part of it as frustrating because of feeling like a moderator of activity. Getting students to spend the time necessary on their projects was also a major problem. Her impression was the workshop style would alert her to these problems for earlier solutions. She thought sitting with the
group, listening, making suggestions as suggestions rather than orders, and reminding students occasionally of her changed status should promote her co-writer role.

She identified some foreseeable problems as: students who would be unorganized, students viewing the class as easy due to its lack of whole-class structure, and students who wouldn’t prepare outside of class or wouldn’t refer to the texts.

The next section both details the findings of the study from the data collection instruments and evaluates those findings.

Observations

This section is divided according to the two research questions asked. The first section observes how the opportunity for collaboration was presented, including initial student and instructor reactions to the proposal, and is further divided into two sections: the proposal and the workshop pedagogy. The second section observes the categories of student/student and instructor/student collaboration used.

The information for this section is derived from the daily journal writings, the post-semester questionnaires, and both the audio- and videotapings. The journal entries were unguided but the students were requested to direct as much of the journal writing as possible towards class activities and
the writing process. The numbers vary according to how many students wished to address a particular subject in the journal writings. The post-semester questionnaire responses are to specific questions but vary according to how the student wished to phrase the answer. Some questions were not answered.

**Workshop Environment**

**Students** The class was divided into seven groups of three and four persons. Four of the groups appeared to exchange ideas and papers at a continual pace from session to session with little time spent in solitary work. Two of the remaining groups maintained an attendance problem throughout the semester with one of those rarely having all three persons present. The other group’s members spent the majority of their time in individual effort with little conversation.

Journal entries discussed group work a total of seventy-eight times, most mentioning positive effects on papers produced. The post-semester questionnaire showed five students who did not like the group situation, one citing "we weren't taught anything." Three students with positive opinions expressed a wish to mix with other groups more often.

After the proposal was completed the students turned to their own separate syllabi with separate due dates as well as different argumentative styles and topics to accomplish. Group planning was necessary to avoid having to read all
papers for critiquing purposes during the same class period. All groups agreed among themselves how to handle this situation with only minor coaching from the instructor.

Group critiquing of papers was discussed in the journals fifty times, with two of those stating that they felt this situation was better than previous experiences in that the critiques seemed to be of more value rather than the "that's nice" type. Several students commented on the positive aspects of group work. "Working independently, but with a group works so well. The group as a whole benefits from everyone elses ideas. I think this is the best situation for an English class." "I learned to communicate for others which is a big plus for writing papers."

The post-semester questionnaire showed eighteen students favored working in this style of classroom. They cited the exchange of ideas among students and with the instructor, they liked critiques with the groups, and learned more: "this was the best way to learn." Five expressed a dislike for the situation, citing they got off the subject and talked too much and spent most of their time reading. One did not answer this question.

They were asked to rate the workshop method with eight citing "much more helpful," thirteen citing "more helpful," and two citing "same." They supported their ratings with reasons mostly related to direct instructor guidance: could
work through problems, more help from the teacher, liked working on assignments while the teacher was there to help, and teacher helps when you are stuck. Representative remarks from this section include "having (the instructor) able to critique just as a peer does help me see my mistakes" and "It's always beneficial to be on a personal level with the instructor."

Students were asked to compare the personal attention to other classes. Thirteen cited "much more," nine cited "more," and one cited "less."

When asked to rate their work compared with other classes that involve writing, six students cited "much better," nine cited "better," six cited "no change," one cited "worse," and one did not answer.

They were also asked if they would take another class with this method of instruction. Eighteen cited "yes," three cited "no," and one answered with both "yes" and "no" saying the set-up was good but deadlines were needed. Other reasons for a positive answer were: liked how informal it was, liked the workshop but not the group paper, can do the work easier. Reasons on the no side were: needed deadlines, and group work slowed the student down.

At the end of the post-semester questionnaire, students were asked to give any further comments they may have had towards the pedagogy of the class. Six students commented
that they felt the class was fun and enjoyable, four cited the presence of the group or the teacher for help, two cited the casual atmosphere of the room as a help in the writing process, and one liked not having to listen to yet another lecture. The journals also cited the classroom atmosphere as a help to the writing process and the overall attitude towards the class.

One of the student issues discussed in the instructor planning session was student disagreement with the instructor's advice. The researcher and the instructor felt this could indicate further acceptance of the instructor as a peer. There were six instances in which a student disagreed with the instructor's suggestion. This seemed to further promote the discussion and other alternate suggestions came about. It is recognized that this disagreement is not always productive.

Instructor In the planning session held between the instructor and the researcher at the beginning of the project, three points were discussed: sitting with the groups rather than standing or crouching, using several answers for questions when possible, and avoiding do-this-don't-do-that directions. These were all cited as ways to encourage the students to accept the instructor into the groups during the critiquing process.
Sitting with the group placed the instructor into the group physically. The January 30 videotaping, the February 6 taping, and the February 27 taping, appear to be the best observance of this activity. January 30 shows 9 times stopping in the groups during the class with 6 of them sitting and 3 standing. The February 6 taping shows 7 stops with 5 sitting and February 27 shows 10 stops and 8 sitting. February 27 is also the first class without any whole-class time spent. March 26 shows 30 stops and 2 sitting. The observance overall is an increase in stops with standing, leaning, or crouching posture from the beginning to the end of the semester. Also as the standing increased the stays with the groups became progressively shorter.

To demonstrate that there is more than just the instructor's way of doing something and that writing holds many answers to the process, the instructor was to use more than one answer or suggestion to a problem. Here the tapes show several suggestions and answers used in the beginning of the semester. In the audiotapes for January 30 there were 12 opportunities for multiple-answers and 11 were used; on February 13 there were 13 opportunities and 9 used. For instance, in the January 30 tape one of the groups is discussing paper possibilities (S = student, I = instructor):

S. Can this be a completely off-the-wall argument?
I. You could take the side people wouldn't take and be completely non-sensical as far as the argument itself but I have to be able to follow it, you have to make some sense even if I don't agree with it. You could take something that everyone else takes the other side but you could argue for it.

S. Actually it shouldn't matter—the order?

I. No, questions come long after. But, yeah, you can do all kinds of things if you want to. See what you come up with.

S. Can we take both sides like two people arguing against each other or would that be two much like role playing?

I. Are you going to come to some conclusion? I don't know why don't you try it; I am willing to read it.

As the semester progressed there was a tendency to revert to saying how she would handle a particular problem rather than giving several answers that would work. To the same degree, as the several-answer technique diminished there was an increase in the do-this-don't-do-that type of answer. On February 27 there were 14 opportunities for multiple-answers and 7 used, and on March 26 13 opportunities and 3 used. On February 27 there were 4 instances of do-this-don't-do-that type answers as opposed to 1 on January 30 and 5 on March 26.
For instance, on March 26 the instructor is critiquing a paper from a rough draft:

I. OK This should be your first paragraph right here. And you should talk about ah De Vinci is going to be your whole thing?

S. Uh Huh

I. I would not include da Vinci in any of these. You need to spell Michel differently. Talk about Newton and Einstein and what they did and then talk about Michelangelo (corrects the name) Anyway I would talk about Newton and Einstein, Michelangelo and Van Gogh and then show them as really terrific and then your next paragraph hit us with the 'but.'

S. OK

I. You see what I mean. Keep bringing him up ahead of time and you can put those others down now.

These figures confirm a slow decline in expected instructor activities during group work. Several reasons are proposed in the analysis section.

Collaborative Opportunity

Proposal Journals contained 22 entries regarding the proposal. One student felt it was a little disconcerting:

"The proposal paper was a little shocking at first but now that my group has set down and discussed it and we agree on a lot of things I am very comfortable with it."
Setting their own due dates seemed to be the most favored feature of the assignment with only four students expressing a need for set deadlines in order to do well. One student stated, "It was a difficult experience to plan out my whole semester. I don’t know whether I liked it or not." All students were able to set dates but only two remained on schedule throughout the semester.

Changes to schedules set by the proposal assignment only needed written notification. It was anticipated that some students would want to hand in all papers at the end of the semester; therefore, one of the parameters of the proposal stated that each assignment had to have a minimum of two weeks between due dates.

Fifty journal entries were directed towards proposal changes with reasons ranging from computer breakdowns to personal procrastination. Several stated they appreciated being able to have this flexibility, "I do like the idea of setting my own deadlines because then I can avoid having a paper due when another big test is on."

The instructor’s advantage to this type of scheduling was that paper grading did not come in large doses. Only the proposal itself, the mid-term, and the final were finished on a set due date allowing papers to come in for grading on a near daily basis. The instructor felt not being overtired or
under pressure to finish a large stack of papers aided her judgment.

Nine of the previously mentioned 22 journal entries felt 7,000 words of finished product was a large amount. Many of the initial questions dealt with word count. One student expressed the wish to drop the class since there was so much writing involved but when informed that this was a typical count for 105, objections were eased. Another thought a listing of due dates and word counts would be better than essay form—the instructor replied, "But it was good for you! (like broccoli)." One student looked up his 104 papers "and found that the majority of them [were] four to seven pages long." All students reached the word count by the end of the semester.

The audiotaping of February 6 showed that one group was considering combining moral and definition argument with the research paper into a longer paper (5,250 words) on animal rights. The instructor discussed ideas with them for 15 minutes and suggested two different ways to handle the work at a 3,000 word length after discouraging them from doing this paper as their only one. Also discussed were several ways to focus the topic. The final result was a moral argument research paper done as a group but not of the length originally discussed.
The first five weeks of the semester were devoted to investigating, both as a class and in groups, the various styles of argument to facilitate student choices of argument styles for the proposal assignment. As understanding of these styles grew and as they worked with the proposal, they became more inventive with their solutions.

The emphasis for this time period was to explore the possibilities and plan argument styles for the rest of the semester. Styles did sometimes change during the semester as seen in this question from a journal entry about the topic of the drinking age. "Would this paper make a better causal or evaluation paper, or both." The instructor answered "Evaluation, I think."

Topics did not need to be chosen at the time the proposal was written. However, students were encouraged to do so in order to facilitate collaboration dates with other class members. Eight students changed topics after setting them in the proposal. One group had a problem narrowing subjects, a student felt his topics weren’t clear so entered more broad subjects to be narrowed later, another student stated, "I’m really looking forward to writing them (his papers), actually, because I’ll learn so much about the topics. I’ve been wanting to for a while, but haven’t had time." Group work also influenced the decisions made, "When you have three
people instead of one to help make decisions it's much easier!"

The instructor noted it was a pleasure to read papers with varying topics and the shift in argument styles from one paper to the other during a grading period made the sessions interesting.

Several students had reservations about this assignment in the beginning. The majority changed their minds as reflected in this journal entry, also a positive statement for the workshop classroom:

At first I was very hesitant about this 7,000 word/set my own assignment issue. I wanted my papers to be decided for me so I didn’t do something wrong. I always assume that when I get to choose what I want to do--I do it the wrong way.

After I finished my proposal I decided that it wasn’t going to be so bad after all.

Now I feel great about it... we were able to revise more, turn it in five days later - and feel better about our finished product.

I love being able to feel free to do my own thing as long as I stay with my own schedule. I also love having classtime to work. That is the best use of my time!
Collaborative Categories

Student/Student  The post-semester questionnaire shows in the Group-Research category, the Group-Written category and Full-Group category of collaboration 14 students collaborated on 1 paper, 2 students collaborated on 2 papers, and 7 students did not collaborate. Of those that collaborated, the equal division of work was rated "always" 6 students, "often" 7 students, "sometimes" 1 student, and "seldom" 2 students.

Through the workshop pedagogy the students engaged in Casual through Written-Critique collaboration. The post-semester questionnaire shows peer critiquing was reported at "always" 19 students, "often" 2 students, and "sometimes" 1 student. The journals mention at least two instances of Written-Critique collaboration. Approximately half-way through the semester the instructor began requiring at least one written critique for each paper. Not all students complied but there are no supporting figures for these instances.

Student/Instructor  The post-semester questionnaire asked three questions that pertained to student/instructor interaction. The first was a rating of whether the instructor’s suggestions helped. Thirteen students rated "always," 7 students "often," and 3 students said "sometimes." The second question asked if her help was "timely." Nine students said "always," 11 students "often," and 3 students
"sometimes." The third question dealt with the percentage of time the instructor spent in collaboration with the students. Some understood the question to mean just their particular group, and some understood the question to mean the entire class. Those who addressed the whole-class collaboration responded as follows: 100% = 3 students, 95% = 3 students, 90% = 3 students, 80% = 4 students, 70% = 5 students for a total of 18. Of those who felt the question dealt just with their group gave these responses: 30% = 1 student, 20% = 2 students, 10% = 1 student, and 5% = 1 student for a total of 5. One student did not answer.

The journal entries addressed specific papers 277 times. The nature of the journal entries suggested that the students were asking for comments from the instructor by including these mentions in the writing. The instructor in all but one case answered in writing on the journal pages.

Both the audio- and videotapes showed that Casual, Draft, and Written-Critique collaboration were used between instructor and students. On February 6 the instructor used the Casual category advising a group on topic size and suggesting several topics that would work for what they had in mind. On February 13 one of the students read a portion of her draft to the instructor, who gave oral suggestions for revisions constituting Draft collaboration. Another instance on February 27 showed the same action with the draft being
read by the instructor instead of read aloud by the student. The April 2 session showed the instructor reading a draft and marking it with her pen—Written-Critique collaboration.

As referred to earlier, one journal entry refers to the instructor as a peer and another mentions being on a personal level with her. The students were not prompted to use these terms when discussing relationships in the questionnaires. Also there are six instances in which students argue with a suggestion concerning a paper being critiqued, further suggesting that they were accepting her into the group discussions.

The videotaping process that took place during this study was readily accepted by the majority of students. However, five students expressed that the taping bothered them, one citing it as "annoying," another feeling she had to dress for the camera, causing her to get up earlier. All commented that they became comfortable with it two to three weeks into the semester. For this reason the effects of the taping on the results of the study are considered negligible.

The next section is an analysis and rationale of the data collected and presented in this section.
Analysis

The following is an analysis of the observations presented in the preceding section. Suggestions for changes are also presented as each topic is discussed.

Collaborative Opportunity

This section is discussed according to the parameters set out by the proposal assignment. Instructor response is also discussed where pertinent.

Student Attitude

The proposal shifted responsibility from the instructor to the students as to due dates, word counts, argumentative styles, and topics. It was expected that the students would be surprised by the control allowed them. The overall reaction was one of surprise, shock, and confusion as shown in the journal entries. However, as the assignment was discussed in the groups, the students became more at ease with it and began the process of solving the problem presented. The effect of all group members being in the same situation seemed to relieve many fears and concerns as to how to proceed.

Handling several new items at one time may have contributed to this confusion also: a new semester, a new class, a new building, new classmates, etc. An alternative that may avoid these concerns would be to postpone presentation of the assignment until later in the discussion of argumentative styles. Also the students were aware that
they were part of a study, which could have given the impression that the assignment was supposed to be more difficult than it was.

**Time Management** The students set their own deadlines for their work. The loose structure for deadline changes caused some postponing of work. Procrastination and lack of planning seemed to be the leading reasons for changes. Allowing only one change for each paper rather than an unrestricted number could reduce changes.

The fact that only two students maintained their schedules throughout the semester could indicate that expectations by those who did not maintain schedules were too ambitious. The two-week minimum in between dates did serve to prevent students handing in all work in the last week. Because the extra time requested was sometimes attributed to needing a critique of the final product, it is possible that this flexibility served to produce better work. The majority of students seemed to enjoy setting their dates and appreciated being able to miss heavy work loads in other classes.

The critiquing process was easier handled by not having each member's papers due on the same date. Most groups appeared to critique no more than two papers in a class session.
The instructor felt staggered due dates were an advantage. Fewer papers to grade in a sitting served to prevent boredom and quick grading decisions. New teachers are often not able to judge and grade with the speed of the more experienced; and therefore, grading sessions may be long and tedious causing unthoughtout decisions.

**Paper Lengths** The students controlled word counts. They seemed to worry more about the word count than about due dates, argumentative style, and topics as journal entries and initial classtime questions show. This could result from prior classes in which word count carried more importance than in this setting. Also, the proposal assignment unintentionally emphasized word count. By rewriting the assignment with less stress on this point, possibly placing the total needed towards the end of the text or using pages needed rather than number of words, this student concern could be avoided.

The discussion mentioned concerning word length for a group paper demonstrates that some students were unrealistic about how to handle this decision. The instructor helped them realize a more workable goal. This discussion also shows how her involvement in the group decision was an advantage to the students.

**Topic Selection** Choosing argument styles didn’t seem to present a problem. They were a new concept to most
students and well outlined in the text. The group discussions influenced the choice of styles and also operated as a sounding board for possible problems. The combining of styles seemed to be the choice mentioned in most journal entries. Some students who did change argument styles after writing began, may have found the style chosen did not fit the topic selected resulting from inexperience with usage of the argument styles under study. The example chosen in this section also shows the instructor attempted to demonstrate that her answer may not be the only one.

The majority of students did use the proposal to plan topic choices even though it was not required and did not change original topics planned. Some students chose only very broad topic areas when writing the proposal and later narrowed them to their purpose. Some chose topics that had little information available which necessitated change later and some entered into a collaboration with a different topic than their original choice. Moreover, the novice student often finds using the library difficult, gives up early, and chooses topics that are often too narrow or too broad. The fact that only eight students changed their topics shows that this was not a major problem for the class.

The instructor found grading varied topics and different argumentative styles more interesting. Here again, the
variety and lack of numbers influenced the grading process by relieving some of the stress factors.

The situation discussed earlier demonstrating how the instructor aided a decision on paper length illustrates the process for choosing a topic appropriate to the group and a length appropriate to the task. Originally the group idea was unrealistic in word count for freshman composition skills (5,250). Rather than saying they couldn’t do it, the instructor gave suggestions and guided them to a more realistic effort. By being a part of the group, the instructor was able to help them avoid the pitfall of attempting such a lengthy project.

The ability to choose seemed to make a difference in the attitude of the students. The majority mentioned through journal entries that they liked coming to class, liked having control over their work, and liked being able to turn a paper in when the student felt it was a finished product.

The figures reviewed and the fact that students made changes in their plans for the projects involved indicate that responsibility was successfully shifted to the student.

Presenting this depth of change in classroom routine for freshmen students is risky. The initial acceptance made the assignment seem more difficult than it actually was. Presenting the proposal assignment later in the semester may help. Also, doing one assignment prior to the proposal would
allow the students to become more acquainted with their groups and more used to the class.

**Workshop Environment**

**Students** The problem with setting groups at the beginning of the semester from only a diagnostic writing is that personalities are not yet evident and this did cause some problems which could have been avoided by setting groups three to four weeks into the semester. The attendance problems in some groups might have been avoided by placing those people within other groups and dropping the number to six. In this way their absences could have been less detrimental to those in their groups that did attend. Had the instructor been aware of their personalities, the group that did little exchanging of ideas could have been rearranged to encourage them to take a more active role. Also a gender split might have made a difference. As it stood three groups were all male and two were all female. The remaining two groups, which were mixed, did seem to be more active in sharing ideas and critiques from visual evidence. The number of journal entries (78) does show this as a concern for the students.

The instructor had experience with personality problems since it was her usual procedure to set peer editing groups in this manner. However, she did comment that with the group work as intensive as it was, it may have been better to wait until after the first three or four weeks.
A few students expressed a wish to know other classmates better. This stems from a kind of isolated feeling within the groups that resulted from working with only three or four other people on a regular basis. Since the students entered their group settings from the beginning of class and stayed until the end, there was no opportunity to mingle with other groups unless another group was acting as a critique unit for a group paper. Students were also involved with their own schedules and topics of research, which further isolated them.

This isolating effect of the workshop setting could be avoided by creating a system of critiquing that would intermingle the groups. The unity of the class could be established during the first two to three weeks by rotating group membership while the argumentative styles are being discussed. Permanent group membership could be established when the proposal assignment is given.

Since these were 80-minute classes, 10-15 minutes placed anywhere during the session for a whole-class activity would help the continuity of the class and maintain some unity. A time set aside for whole-class review of group work would also advance the sharing of ideas. This time frame could easily be adjusted for 50-minute sessions.

This sharing of group activity with the whole class could also prevent groups from straying off the subject into social conversation and might reduce procrastination. The critiquing
by peers could be advanced by having each group design its own written sheets for this purpose. The items on the sheet would then reflect the problems evident within each group rather than a general selection of problems that may not apply.

As evidenced in the journal entries and the post-semester questionnaire, students viewed the workshop setting as more helpful than the lecture method or than the combination of lecture and peer editing groups. Working on their papers in class where they had both the instructor and the group handy to help solve writing problems and little previous experience with a workshop classroom may have contributed to this impression. Since there was no outside paper evaluation done, this research can not say whether the work was actually helped.

Students felt they received more personal attention and that work was better. Instructor and peer editor input through the critiquing methods was a strong influence on final grades because problems could be detected prior to submitting the final product for grading. Also, most of these students were in large lecture classes where no personal attention exists. Therefore, the workshop style would seem much more personal in comparison.

The majority would take another class with this pedagogical frame because they liked the informal and casual atmosphere of the class. The casualness can sometimes get in
the way of production and attendance. Students might feel it was not necessary to attend because of lack of formal instruction. A lost day would not produce lost information as it would in a lecture class, where notes may be the key to good grades. The attendance policy helped but the attitude may still be present.

Students saw the class as enjoyable and several looked forward to coming to class. However, some felt the atmosphere was not conducive to learning and one spent much time reading. This may be due, in part, to the noise level of the room. Having seven groups discussing papers or writing problems can create a high noise level in a small room. The carpet on the floor helped reduce the sound but concentration may have been affected. The writing tables attached to the desks were small and made spreading out difficult. Students who work with a word processor on a regular basis may have trouble switching back and forth from pen and paper to keyboard and screen and vice versa.

The six disagreements by students with the instructor occurred during discussions of work in progress and could show, with further investigation, that these students were more accepting of her advice and presence within the group critiquing process.

Instructor For this research, it was decided to produce the situation and observe the results with as little
interference as possible. Therefore, the introductory session with the instructor needed to stand on its own and not be repeated during the session. This may be the reason the instructor’s collaborative strategies faded during the term. Also the introductory session was limited to the criteria mentioned in this report.

Instructor grading would not allow a 100 percent instructor/student collaboration. The area of focus was the time spent with the groups as they were working on the various projects set out in the proposal. The data shows that the instructor did not sit with the groups whenever possible. The length of the stay may have influenced whether she would find a chair and sit, or perhaps the group activity did not appear to warrant sitting in. The difficulty of this situation could be eased by having the groups place an empty chair in their circle specifically for the instructor to use. This might create the feeling that she was a more permanent member of the group.

The instructor started the semester, as can be seen by the conversation presented, by giving multiple suggestions for problems. However, as time progressed she reverted to saying how she felt the situation should be handled, often using do-this-don’t-do-that language as the later numbers and conversation presented shows. Again a follow-up session might have prevented this from happening. Another cause for this
may be that the student’s papers towards the end of the semester did not need as much guidance as at the beginning or that she simply ran out of suggestions.

Instructors implementing this style of teaching would not have planning sessions available with this researcher. Written guidelines or an instructional tape that could be consulted periodically during the semester would allow the instructor to do a self-check on his or her teaching methods. This would help avoid slipping out of the collaborative style intended.

Collaborative Categories

Student/Student  The data indicates that the students used all categories of collaboration during this semester with the exception of Reference collaboration. The diagnostic was Cultural collaboration. Some students did not engage in a collaborative paper citing the group influence on their grade. This suggests an uneasiness with the group situation. Possibly a separate grade for group input rather than a single grade based on the final product would have encouraged more collaboration. The majority of students that did collaborate in a Group-Written or Full-Group category found the division of work to be satisfactory.

Some students expressed negative experiences with past group projects, such as an unequal division of work and
difficulties compromising when making writing decisions. They were unwilling to try any further collaborative projects.

**Student/Instructor**  
As stated previously, Group-Research, Group-Written, and Full-Group collaboration was not the target of this study; Casual, Draft, and Written-Critique categories were. The data discussed does show that these latter categories of collaboration between student and instructor were reached. Evidence produced a view of the instructor in casual conversation about ideas and writing problems, reading drafts and giving oral opinions, and writing critiques on drafts as she read them. One student referred to her as a peer in a journal entry and another as being on a personal level with her suggesting their acceptance of her in the group setting as a co-writer.

**Conclusion**  
This case study showed the possibilities open to the instructor as a collaborating co-writer within the groups. The advantages were that student problems could be found and solved before the final product was produced and the expertise of the instructor was readily available to the students. The disadvantage was that the workshop setting did not lend itself to all students' writing processes, and some had the impression the instructor was not teaching them anything.
Was this study a success? The answer is yes and no. The opportunity was successfully presented and the instructor did use it for instructor/student collaboration. However, she could have used it to better advantage than was shown by the observations. The fact that she did not maintain all the criteria during the entire semester leaves in doubt the success of the intended collaborative strategies.

The next chapter discusses the implications of this research on the composition classroom, discusses further questions raised, and looks at possible future research.
CHAPTER V FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was a preliminary investigation into the relationship between student and instructor in the composition classroom. Was the opportunity for collaboration presented and was it used in this case? Yes, on a certain level, with this certain class, in this certain classroom, this instructor was able to collaborate with her students. The study could be replicated over and over and the results would doubtless be altered each time due to personnel variances, though this preliminary study does predict some positive consequences of collaborative instruction. This chapter investigates the implications this study presents for the composition classroom and composition research, suggests measures to enhance the study and course design, and discusses further study possibilities.

Implications

Student comments suggest that the workshop style, in this case, was more conducive to learning the writing process than other methods the students had experienced, and that instructor input during the draft stages of the process before the final grade benefits the student. Though these comments are student impressions, they do indicate that this type of collaboration on the freshman level merits further study.
To demonstrate to the student through example that the writing process works and that instructors have a wealth of information available through the discussed levels of collaboration could enhance composition classrooms and further the use of group work. The workplace needs people with collaboration experience and the composition classroom can provide a step towards that experience.

As a descriptive tool the collaborative categories may prove useful for future research in collaboration. They offer a clearer understanding of the particular situations under discussion, and suggest a guide for setting up future collaboration research designs by suggesting areas of focus.

Study and Course Design Changes

The first point of change would be to put less emphasis on the word count aspect of the projects. Referring to paper lengths in page count rather than word count would help. Writing twenty-eight pages doesn't sound nearly as threatening or shocking as writing 7,000 words.

Secondly, presenting the proposal assignment three to four weeks later in the semester would give students a chance to settle in to both the class and their groups. Assigning a small paper first might ease them into the proposal assignment. It would lessen the transfer of responsibility to some extent but only minimally. The student would still gain
a large amount of the responsibility for the remainder of the semester's work. The basis of the proposal assignment is sound and did succeed in shifting a good deal of responsibility.

For this study, the sound equipment should have been of better quality to allow a deeper study of the conversations taped. Many of the student questions during discussions of problems with their papers could not be heard which made final analysis difficult. More direct questions on both the pre- and post-semester questionnaires would also help analysis.

More input from the instructor would be an advantage. Written reviews or analyses during the semester in the form of a critique of the course design in progress would give an insight into how the groups progress or do not progress and how the instructor/student relationship evolves.

It is difficult for an instructor to change teaching methods or have those methods under scrutiny for study purposes. An analysis with the instructor at mid-term would maintain the focus of the study and remind her of the criteria in use.

Also, case study itself presents some problems. The singularity of case study negates accurate replicability. In this case, the general conditions could easily be repeated such as dividing students into groups and interjecting the instructor into them as described later, but the change of
location and personnel could alter the findings. According to Asher and Lauer "by close observation of natural conditions, [case study] helps the researcher to identify new variables and questions for further research" (23). Qualitative descriptive research, of which case study is one method, "tries to answer ... questions by closely studying individuals, small groups, or whole environments. It tries to discover variables that seem important for understanding the nature of writing, its contexts, its development, and its successful pedagogy" (23). The purpose of this study was to provide a look at the variables involved in the instructor/student and somewhat the student/student relationship between this instructor and these students in this particular setting.

One of the strengths of this case study, the researcher as observer, is in some sense also a weakness in objectivity caused by the use of the personal judgment of the researcher when dealing with collected data. Also, data could not be collected and recorded in any standardized way since the data was special to this particular study. These were not seen as major disadvantages in this case study because of the preliminary and exploratory nature of the research.
Improving the Instructor as Collaborator Approach

The instructor-as-collaborator approach requires the instructor to relinquish some of the responsibility for class activities that most instructors are used. As with any skill, practice is the catalyst for improvement. The more classes instructed using this method, the easier the shift of responsibility should become. This research suggests that prospective instructors in this method use a more gradual entry to this approach by increasing the amount of student responsibility each time the method is used.

For example, this study shifted nearly all the responsibility for production of projects to the student and proved to be a difficult situation for the research instructor. As the semester moved on, her ability to remain fully in the assigned role began to fade. Because of this, it is suggested that the amount of responsibility shifted might be lessened by adding a directed project to the beginning of the semester, then presenting the proposal that shifts the responsibility. Also, the instructor could easily maintain responsibility for due dates, a difficult matter for the students to handle. These could then be shifted to the student in later classes until the instructor is comfortable teaching with a full shift of responsibility.

The class also moves too quickly into the projects. There needs to be a longer introduction time to this method of
instruction simply because it is new to most students. An increased amount of instruction particular to the method and to the expectations of the instructor would advance understanding and should produce better results. There was an element of confusion present simply due to the lack of student experience with this kind of freedom of choice.

Physical activities within the classroom aside, the major hurdle to this approach in the composition classroom is the attitude and mind-set of the instructor. If an instructor feels this approach is worth the effort, he or she must be open to the opinions and ideas of the students. Students within the groups must be treated as true co-writers in the eyes of the instructor as well as each other. Practice will allow the classroom to become a sharing environment.

This study does show the instructor-as-collaborator approach to be valuable. From an observer's point of view, the students feel more involved and, seemed to produce a higher quality of work. They also seemed to maintain a higher level of interest in the class.

Even though each classroom of students seems different in both personality and interest, this method would seem beneficial to any group of composition students. It does merit further investigation. Several suggestions are approached in the next and final section of this report.
Suggested Studies

Is the written work produced under the conditions of this study better? A study to answer that question would require a control class or classes, several collaborative classes, and a team of evaluators to examine the final products. The assumption is that with instructor input, the product should improve. However, this improvement may be offset by the distraction of the workshop atmosphere or the student's dislike of group situations. Also, improvement could come from improved attitude or collaborative interpersonal skills and not the writing.

Another study could investigate how much the student learns. Just producing better work might not indicate that the student is improving but simply that the instructor is more involved. A research design would have to test writing abilities of individuals to determine if ability was improved. Here again, the improvement might be offset by writing 7,000 words of finished text. The common belief is that just doing the writing regardless of circumstances makes the writer improve, but does it?

Another study could isolate the collaborative relationship of the students. Group dynamics plays an important role, especially in light of future employment needs. Can we teach students how to survive the group paper or is it just instinct? Would a class session spent
instructing group relationship skills improve the group experience?

The instructor's view could be studied in light of how much work this method saves or creates. This instructor mentioned that the paper load seemed lighter but it was difficult to keep up with the student’s questions and answer their writing problems on a moment’s notice, especially with more than one answer. If this method should prove an advantage for both student and instructor, how could a course be developed that would teach it? Would one be needed?

Does this method affect the instructor’s writing? One of this instructor’s suggestions was to bring in her own work for her students to critique. The one time she did this, she found that the students reacted positively. Just how does this interjection of personal writing affect students’ writing. They would learn by critiquing the instructor’s efforts but would the fact that there were errors in her work affect their attitude towards her? Would she write differently knowing the students were going to edit it?

Clearly research into the instructor/student collaborative composition relationship should continue. Instructors are always looking for improved techniques to reach the novice writer. If any of the work in this study serves that end, it has been of value by contributing to a change in basic writing philosophy and to a:
"fundamental change of our institutions to accommodate collaboration by radically resituating power in the classroom and by instituting rewards for collaborative work that equal rewards for single-authored work. [Ede and Lunsford] conclude with the injunction, 'Today and in the twenty-first century, our data suggest, writers must be able to work together. They must, in short, be able to collaborate' (Single . . . cover)."
WORKS CITED


Herrmann, Andrea. Teaching Writing with Peer Response Groups: Encouraging Revision. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Bloomington, IN, May 89. ERIC ED 307 616.

Houston, Linda S. Collaborative Learning: A No-Lecture Method of Teaching English. Viewpoints (120) -- Guides --


I would like to thank Dr. Charlotte Thralls for her input during the planning and drafting stages and Dr. Grace Kunz for her draft input and consenting to join my committee on short notice. I express special thanks and appreciation to Dr. Don Payne who served as my major professor, giving not only research guidance and invaluable draft input, but the moral support needed to make this thesis possible. I also express a special thank you to my husband and family members for offering their encouragement and understanding, and for allowing me the time out necessary to complete this project.
Researcher Iris Coffin
Spring 1992

TO: Participating Student

This class has been selected for participation in a research project designed to investigate collaborative teaching. The purpose is to examine how much time your instructor can spend in collaborative efforts with you as opposed to the typical head of the class teaching methods.

This will involve a high level of group work as well as instructor participation in planning, revising and critiquing of papers.

Your reaction to this method will also be investigated through a pre- and post-semester survey as well as audio and/or video taping. Your participation in these elements will in no way effect your grade and you may withdraw from the project at any time. All information will be kept strictly confidential so that you will not be identifiable by name or situation. This information can only be used in this project and further written consent must be obtained for use of this information in any other project.

It is hoped that you will benefit through a higher level of personal attention from your instructor, a higher level of scrutiny to your work, and an increase in interest through higher involvement in class participation.

If you have any questions, please ask your instructor prior to signing the attached consent form. Thank you for your participation.

I have read and understand the contents of this letter.

Name _____________________________________________
Date ________________________________
APPENDIX B CONSENT FORM (STUDENT)

Researcher: Iris A. Coffin
English Department
206 Ross Hall
Iowa State University Phone: 294-8379

Research Dates: January 21, 1992
May 15, 1992

I, the undersigned, hereby give consent to the above named researcher to use information gathered from my participation in English 105, Freshman Composition, Spring 1992 in this research project only. I understand that all information will be kept confidential and will not be used in any other project without my written consent. I further understand that my participation in the elements of this project will in no way influence my grade for this session and that I may withdraw at any time in accordance with the drop and transfer procedures of Iowa State University.

I affirm that I have read and understand the information letter accompanying this form.

Section______________________________

Date________________________________

Name________________________________
This class will contain a high level of collaborative work both with your instructor and with peers. To facilitate your participation, I would like to know your experience with collaboration. Following the general information section of this form are questions pertaining to your past collaborative work. Please answer them to the best of your recollection. Feel free to ask any questions you might have.

Name________________ Local Address______________________________

Local Phone_________ Home Town_______________________________

Age____ Class: Fr. So. Jr. Sr. College__________________________

Major______________________________

Advisor____________________________

Briefly list your extracurricular activities, hobbies, etc. I'd like to know if you think a job, varsity sports, and so on might interfere with your work in this class since the load is moderately heavy.

List some of your favorite movies and actors, books and authors, TV programs, games, places, etc. There will be small writing and discussion tasks in class and your favorites make them more interesting.

Describe any problems you've had in the past or any fears you have about English or writing. If I should know anything else about you that will help me to teach you effectively, please tell me here. (health or family problems that might interfere, etc.)
Collaborative work is defined as any product produced with help or discussion from others, whether producing a single product for two or more participants or producing a product for each of two or more participants.

The following questions pertain to any subject taken in both high school and college.

When you were in high school, did your parents ever help with homework? yes no

Have you ever gone to your instructors for assistance? yes no

Do you ever discuss class projects with others? yes no

Have you ever participated in study groups? yes no If yes please explain.

Have you ever participated in a group project resulting in a single product? yes no
If yes describe briefly.

The following questions pertain to writing classes only, both high school and college.

Have you ever taken a composition course prior to this one? yes no
If yes, please list as best you can.

Do you have others read your work for grammar or proofreading errors? yes no

Have you ever participated in peer editing? yes no

Do you enjoy group work in the classroom? yes no If no please explain.
Would you be willing to work on a group project producing a single project that receives one grade for all contributors? yes no If no please explain.

Finally: Please write a brief paragraph containing your personal opinion of collaborative projects and group work.
This semester you have been participating in a research project designed to investigate the collaborative time used by your instructor. Please take time now to answer the following questions concerning your reaction to this class. Space has been left for comments on all of the questions. Please feel free to qualify any of your answers with extra comments.

Your instructor will not see these surveys until after your grades have been turned in.

* * * * *

Did you find that extracurricular activities or other classes interfered with your due dates for this class?
always often sometimes seldom never

Have any of your attitudes about composition changed? yes no
Please explain.

Did you have your peers critique your work?
always often sometimes seldom never

Did you write any papers in collaboration? yes no

If yes, how many? _____
If you answered yes to the previous question, do you feel the work was evenly divided among group members?
   always  often  sometimes  seldom  never

Has your opinion of group work changed? yes  no  Explain

How would you rate your work this semester compared to other classes that involved writing?
   much better  better  no change  worse  much worse
Please explain.

Was your instructor able to attend to your questions in a timely manner during class?
   always  often  sometimes  seldom  never

Did your instructor return completed work in a reasonable time?
   always  often  sometimes  seldom  never

Did your instructor explain procedures clearly?
   always  often  sometimes  seldom  never

Did your instructor give helpful suggestions that you feel improved your work?
   always  often  sometimes  seldom  never
In your opinion, how much time did your instructor spend collaborating with you and your peers? _____ % Please explain.

How much did you use the textbook as a guide?  
always often sometimes seldom never

Would you recommend using this text again? yes no Please explain

Did you meet the deadlines outlined in your beginning proposal? yes no (If yes, congratulations) If no please explain.

Did you use the topics outlined in your beginning proposal? yes no Please explain.

Did you find working in the classroom conducive to learning? yes no Please explain.

How would you rate the personal attention you received in this class compared to other college classes you have had? much more more same less much less Please explain.
How would you rate this workshop method of instruction compared to other college classes you have been in?

much more helpful  more helpful  same  less helpful  much less helpful
Please explain.

Would you take another class using this group workshop design?
yes  no
Please explain.

Please comment on your general impressions of this semester. Address your interaction with your group, classmates and your instructor. You may make any other comments you wish. Your instructor will not have access to this survey until grades have been turned in.

Thank you for your participation. It is much appreciated.
Instructor

Name______________________________

Position_________________________

You have been selected to participate in a research project during your teaching assignments of Spring 1992. Please answer the following questions to the best of your recollection.

This survey follows a one hour introductory informational meeting briefly explaining the collaborative style in question.

Briefly outline your past experience with collaborative teaching methods.

Give a brief outline of your collaborative experiences as a student.

Do you feel a high level of collaborative teaching would be an advantage to you and your students? Explain

Do you feel peer editing works for your students? Explain

How do you feel this style of instruction will affect your preparation time?
Explain briefly your idea of the difference between directing students collaboration with each other and becoming a collaborator with the students.

How do you plan to educate the students as to your status change from a 100% head-of-the-class authority figure to an active collaborator involved directly in their decision making?

What percentage of time do you expect to spend in collaboration with your students? Explain

What problems do you anticipate with this project?

Do you have any other information helpful to this project as you understand it? You may include any observations from past experiences in collaboration.
APPENDIX F POST-SEMESTER QUESTIONNAIRE (INSTRUCTOR)

Iris Coffin: Researcher
English 105 Freshman Composition
Spring 1992

Instructor

Name______________________________

Position__________________________

This semester you have been participating in a research project designed to investigate the percentage of collaborative time used with your students. Please take time now to answer the following questions concerning your reaction to this method of instruction.

Please explain your answers wherever possible. Feel free to use the backs of the sheets if needed.

* * * * *

Do you feel peer editing worked for your students as set up by this course design?

Did your students in general meet the work deadlines agreed upon at the beginning of the semester? Describe

Did any of your students not produce collaborative papers?

If so, why not?

How did your students respond to your style of teaching? Please give beginning, mid-term, and ending impressions.
How did the relationship between you and your students this semester compare to that of previous semesters?

How did you encourage your students to see you as a fellow writer and collaborator rather than an authority figure?

Do you feel your students saw you as a collaborator rather than an authority figure?

What percentage of time do you think you spent collaborating with your students?

Were there any differences in student attitudes towards this course design between the two sections taught?

How did this style of teaching effect your preparation time?
How did your paperload change?

What problems did you have adjusting to this style of teaching?

Did you enjoy this method of instruction as compared to that of other semesters?

Would you use this method in the future if you were to remain in teaching?

What changes would you make in this course design?

Please express any other opinions you may have about this experience.
APPENDIX G PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT

Iris Coffin
English 105, M2
Proposal
Jan 21, 1992

PROPOSAL

This assignment is designed to allow you to plan your writing assignments for the remainder of the semester. During the next four weeks you will be guided to the areas of your text that will help you design this course.

Semester requirements:

* 7000 words of text including this proposal, mid-term, and final.
* You must demonstrate three methods of argument chosen from the following:
  - definition
  - causal
  - resemblance
  - evaluation
  - moral
* You must write a research paper of 1250 words minimum using at least five sources, either primary (interviews, surveys, etc.) or secondary (library). This paper must answer a question or defend a position on a question.

The mid-term and final should take approximately 1000 words, the research paper 1250 words and this proposal 750 which leaves you 4000 for the remaining three papers. Keep in mind these are minimums. You may use all five forms of argument if you wish or you may combine them subject to my approval. You may collaborate on any papers except this proposal, the mid-term, and the final. Papers that use sources must follow the MLA format.

The proposal must use the format set out in chapter 15 of your text and show the three part structure discussed: problem, solution, justification.

Turn in two copies of this proposal on or before February 20. Your proposal must set deadlines for your other papers. These deadlines must be spaced at least two weeks apart. Your research paper is due on or before the last day of class; May 7.
This paper will be discussed at length in class so come prepared to ask questions.

Evaluation Criteria

-- All three parts listed above are represented
-- Well organized
-- Fulfilled the assignment
-- Mechanics
English 104 and 105 form a two-semester composition sequence that combines work in three closely related areas: reading, language, and writing. Learning to read analytically and developing a critical awareness about the working of language serve as means to the primary objective of these courses—achieving university-level competence in written communication.

Goals of 104 and 105

1. To understand that both writing and reading are three-way transactions involving writer, text, and audience.

2. To understand that writing is a process involving a number of steps from generation of ideas to completed product.

3. To understand how audience, purpose, and context influence writers' composing decisions.

4. To practice observing, inferring, analyzing, concluding, summarizing, synthesizing, and evaluating through writing and reading assignments.

5. To understand that academic and professional writing require specific conventions governing choice of evidence, arrangement, style, and documentation.

6. To understand how structure at all levels (sentence, paragraph, section) shows the relationships among ideas.

Writing Objectives

1. Through writing assignments, to use the conventions and strategies of several kinds of discourse.

2. Given an assignment or topic, to generate and elaborate on ideas for both the writer's purpose and the audience's understanding.

3. To organize materials in patterns appropriate for subject, purpose, and audience.
4. To extract appropriate material from sources as support for a claim and to incorporate the material accurately in context.

5. To use effective sentence structures and precise diction to create a consistent tone and style appropriate for the purpose of the message.

6. To revise and polish draft versions of assignments effectively.

7. To master the conventions of standard edited English.

Reading Objectives

1. To summarize, paraphrase, and abstract.

2. To understand how authors structure ideas, using various ordering principles (cause/effect, climactic order, emphatic order); develop them through use of concrete detail; and support their theses or individual propositions.

3. To read a text critically, recognizing assumptions and implications, making inferences, and evaluating content and structure.

4. To defend orally and in writing an analysis of texts.
Diagnosing Writing

Please write at least two pages double-spaced describing your writing process as it now stands. Review your steps from first idea to final product.

The following questions are not to be answered specifically but are to help you in your planning of this essay. This paper must be in essay form.

Do you spend time planning? Do you think on paper or use invention techniques? Do you only use a computer or word processor? Do you write more than one draft? Do you revise as you write or use a pencil on hard copy? Do you have someone review your work? Do you proofread in one step alone? What atmosphere do you like for your best work? (music, favorite chair, favorite pen or pencil, food, etc.) Do you ever have writer's block? Are you a last minute producer?

This paper must be handed in on Thursday, January 23, and may be hand written. This work will be used to place you in peer editing groups and although it will not receive a grade it will be used in the final grade decision so do your best work.
APPENDIX J POLICY STATEMENT

ENGLISH 105 POLICY STATEMENT

Iris Coffin
English 105 Sec M2
Spring 1992

Office: Landscape Arch Bld Rm 108 Desk 42
Office Hours by appointment.
Messages may be left in my mailbox in 206 Ross Hall UNDER my name or phone Freshman English - 294-3516.

Course work: Most of your work will be done in class in collaboration with your peers. However, you will be expected to do outside reading and research as well as final writing. Good writing cannot be achieved without extensive revision and re-thinking. Come prepared to work.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE FINAL EXAM.

The proposal, mid-term, and final must be done as individual papers. All other papers may be done in collaboration. You will keep a loose leaf writing journal of your class experiences. These writings will be done in class and placed in a notebook when handed back to you. You will be expected to produce this notebook during your final exam. These pages will not carry a letter grade but will be part of the final grade decision.

Format for final papers: Out-of-class papers must be typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins on all sides and must be handed in stapled together. Erasable bond paper and draft mode are not acceptable and will be penalized. For in-class papers please write in blue or black ink on white paper using every other line also with one inch margins. It is, after all, difficult to make marginal comments without a margin. All assignments should be on one side of the paper only. Cover sheets are not necessary. The first page must have the following information in the upper left-hand corner (inside the margins):

Your name
My name
English 105, Sec M2
Assignment
Date
Each succeeding page must have your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner (also inside the margins):

Name 2

You must keep copies of all work turned in. Considering the number of papers handled, I cannot be responsible for lost assignments. You will have 48 hours after the loss is discovered to provide me with a copy of the assignment.

Writing folder: The department requires that I maintain a file of your completed work. Please hand in, by the end of week one, a 9 X 12 manila folder with your name neatly printed on the tab. (last name first please) Grades are not final until your papers are returned to me.

Class attendance: To do well in this or any university level class, it is necessary to attend each and every class session. You may have three unexcused absences during the semester without suffering penalties. I must be notified before class time for an excused absence.

Students with more than three unexcused absences will have their final grade lowered by one-half letter for every absence after the third!

Grading: Your grade in the course will be based primarily on your composition assignments and class participation. Papers will be graded on the basis of material, organization, expression, purpose, and mechanics. The department standard of no more than one (1) error per one hundred words must be maintained.

LETTER GRADES DEFINED

A Outstanding work relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements; work that shows virtual mastery of the techniques in the course. Stimulating, ingenious, original, and prepared with great care, an "A" assignment distinguishes itself from the general run of assignments by exhibiting insight, verbal dexterity, and above all, thought.

B Work significantly above the level needed to meet course requirements; interesting and
superior work, although minor problems remain. The "B" assignment is organized logically and conveys its writer's good judgment about how to deploy ideas to cover the topic appropriately for the writer's intended audience and purpose. It is good, but not great.

C Work that meets every basic requirement of the course and of the assignment; acceptable work that shows the student's understanding of the materials taught in the course, although not a total mastery of them; work in which problems need to be corrected, or work that would have risen to the "B" level were it not for one glaring fault.

D Work that fails to meet some of the basic course requirements, or the requisites of the assignment; substandard work in which many problems occur but which does have some redeeming features.

F Unacceptable work. Work that fails to meet the basic requirements of the assignment or doesn't demonstrate knowledge of even the most basic course material or techniques.

English 104 and 105 are Iowa State University requirements for all disciplines. You cannot graduate without them! You should check with your department for specific grade requirements concerning English 104 and 105. I will work with you in any way I can to see that you achieve your goal but you must, at the very least, meet me halfway. I am willing to help if you are willing to try.

Books Required:


APPENDIX K CONSENT FORM (INSTRUCTOR)

Instructor

Researcher Iris Coffin
English Department
206 Ross Hall
Iowa State University Phone: 294-8379

Research Dates January 21, 1992
May 15, 1992

I, the undersigned, hereby give consent to the above named researcher to use information gathered from my participation in instructing two sections of English 105, Freshman Composition, Spring 1992 in this research project only. I understand that all information will be kept confidential and will not be used in any other project without my written consent.

I have attended a one hour pre-semester informational session prior to signing this consent form and do understand what is expected of me during the semester.

Name

Date