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At the boundary between speech and writing: fostering productive interdisciplinary collaboration on multimodal communication courses

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At the boundary between speech and writing:
Fostering productive interdisciplinary collaboration on multimodal communication courses

by

Casey D. White

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Rhetoric and Professional Communication

Program of Study Committee:
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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2014

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DEDICATION

To Grandpa Peachee, for his steadfast support.

To my parents, for always believing in me and pushing me to be my best.

To Kristene, for inspiring me in all of my studies.
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ABSTRACT

First-year composition courses have long been a focus of considerable research and pedagogical development in English studies. In recent years, we have seen a movement to transform the traditional first-year composition course from one that focuses exclusively on writing to one that is “multimodal,” integrating elements of oral and visual communication to better prepare students for communication practices in the twenty-first century. The successful development of these multimodal communication courses requires collaboration between faculty in various disciplines such as speech and design. However, little research has been conducted on the ways in which interdisciplinary collaboration on multimodal communication courses could be made more productive. Particularly in the case of English and speech departments, a long history of separation has made it difficult for faculty and scholars in these disciplines to work together.

This dissertation presents a study conducted on the interdisciplinary collaborative experiences of speech and English faculty at a small Midwestern liberal arts university who came together to develop a multimodal communication course. Through one-on-one interviews with faculty who participated in creating this course, I was able to determine some of the discontinuities that arose between members of the two disciplines. I apply Sanne F. Akkerman and Arthur Bakker’s model of boundary crossing learning mechanisms to illustrate the ways in which the collaboration between speech and English faculty could have been more productive. Ultimately, this study calls for a reuniting of speech and composition in the service of creating more effective multimodal communication classes that effectively integrate the pedagogical traditions of each discipline.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that communication habits and methods have radically changed in recent years, due in large part to the increased ubiquity of computing and networking technologies. No longer must we talk on the telephone or write a letter to someone in order to participate in discourse together; no longer are we tied to face-to-face interactions in order to spark friendship or even romance; no longer is writing the sole form of official documentation. Indeed, we live in a world permeated with word, image, and sound. Our day-to-day communication could consist of not only face-to-face interactions but also text messages, blog posts, video chats, podcasts, listserv discussions, and online videos. Nearly every place we go, we’re surrounded by opportunities to participate in these activities with our computers, smartphones, tablets, and countless other devices that put the world at our fingertips.

Although dominant forms and modes of communication have been changing rapidly, teachers of first-year composition (FYC) courses have largely continued their robust tradition of teaching students how to critique professional writing and compose traditional academic essays, subscribing to what Lester Faigley has called the “grand narrative of alphabetic literacy” (“Material” 172). Indeed, the common outside perception of college composition courses is often that it is just a writing course, one that teaches students how to do things like write thesis statements and use punctuation correctly. This might have been the aim of FYC 40 years ago, but since the early 1970s, the discipline has embraced rhetorical and cultural theory in order to take the class beyond a skills-and-drills course.
The Council of Writing Program Administrators, a national association comprised of college and university professionals, released an outcomes statement in 1999 (revised in 2008) for what students should be learning in FYC courses. These outcomes include not just knowledge about writing conventions but also development of rhetorical and cultural knowledge as well as information literacy. The statement also acknowledges the importance of electronic spaces for fostering student writers. How, then, can Composition as a discipline expect to develop this rhetorical, cultural, and digital knowledge with our students if teachers only look at these issues through a purely textual lens?

As some scholars have pointed out, the field of Composition has struggled with defining its identity since the 1970s. In her extensive history of the discipline, Sharon Crowley explores some of the remarkably varied aims of first-year composition over the years:

It has been argued that students should be required to study composition in order to develop taste, to improve their grasp of formal and mechanical correctness, to become liberally educated, to prepare for jobs or professions, to develop their personalities, to become able citizens in a democracy, to become skilled communicators, to develop skill in textual analysis, to become critical thinkers, to establish their personal voices...to become oppositional critics of their culture. (*Composition* 6)

What is similar among these varied and often overlapping aims of composition? Whether we are trying to help students understand rhetoric, become critical thinkers, prepare themselves for a career, learn communication skills, or avoid error, these learning
objectives require attention to contemporary persuasive discourse techniques, which go beyond the traditional written word.

Recently, we have seen increasingly more attention paid to other modes of communication in FYC courses including oral, visual, and digital texts that carry just as much (if not more) importance as articles and essays in twenty-first century literacy. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) released an official position statement in 2005 arguing that “[i]n personal, civic, and professional discourse, alphabetic, visual, and aural works are not luxuries but essential components of knowing” (emphasis mine). Furthermore, the NCTE claims that

The use of multimodal literacies has expanded the ways we acquire information and understand concepts. Ever since the days of illustrated books and maps texts have included visual elements for the purpose of imparting information. The contemporary difference is the ease with which we can combine words, images, sound, color, animation, video, and styles of print in projects so that they are part of our everyday lives and, at least by our youngest generation, often taken for granted.

With this position statement, The NCTE, arguably the most respected professional organization in the field of Composition, clearly articulates the importance of oral, visual, and digital modes of communication to students’ rhetorical learning. The college composition class should no longer be a site reserved exclusively for reading and writing; rather, if we hope to educate students to become critical, literate citizens, we must be attentive to the multiple modes of communication that they will encounter and produce in the 21st century.
Because of increased calls for attention to multiple forms of communication in FYC courses—lauded by prominent scholars such as Cynthia Selfe, Anne Wysocki, Douglas Kellner, Kathleen Yancey, Andrea Lunsford, and the New London Group—what began not long ago as a niche movement has quickly become a fertile area of study and practice in 21st-century scholarship and pedagogy. One needs only to browse the programs from the last several Conference on College Composition and Communication meetings (the theme for the 2014 conference was “Open | Source(s), Access, Futures”) or peruse articles from the last several years of prominent journals like CCC and Computers and Composition to notice the emphasis on incorporating oral, visual, and digital modes of communication in the FYC course. In the last ten years, many writing and communication programs across the country have begun developing frameworks for integrating multimodal composition into their first-year courses (see Adsanatham et al.; Anderson; Lunsford; and Tulley). In fact, some prominent universities have already made this shift, including institutions like Purdue University, Iowa State University, Miami University, Stanford University, and Georgia Tech.

One major implication of expanding the teaching of composition to include multimodal work is that it requires a new set of skills and pedagogies for which administrators and FYC instructors are rarely prepared or trained. How, for instance, are FYC teachers to incorporate elements of speech communication, visual design, web design, or sound design into their teaching if their primary experience is in teaching writing? In order for multimodality to be advantageous for teachers and students, it seems there should be cooperation between relevant departments in the university. If, for example, a writing program administrator wanted to shift her FYC course toward multimodality, she
would likely need to collaborate with faculty from other departments like speech communication and design in order to incorporate those communication modes into her own curriculum effectively. This collaboration can become a site of fruitful curricular and pedagogical development, but it can also present challenges for teachers and administrators coming from different pedagogical traditions who must reconcile those traditions in order to work together. Gunther Kress has argued that the complexity of multimodal composition requires the student to “understand the semiotic principles of each mode—sound, visual, speech—and orchestrate them to accord with his or her design” (12). Teaching this understanding, it seems, should come from the collaboration between faculty in various fields that deal with communication. They must learn from each other’s experiences, philosophies, and pedagogies. This difference in traditions is particularly evident in the disciplines of English and Speech Communication.

Historically, the relationship between English and Speech has been an interesting one. In his comprehensive history of speech communication studies, Martin J. Medhurst identifies growing tensions in the early 20th century between English departments and public speaking scholars. According to Medhurst, many speech communication faculty felt that The NCTE did not “meet the needs of public speaking teachers, some of whom, by 1912-1913, had decided that only a separate national organization would suffice” (27). At the 1913 NCTE meeting, James Milton O’Neill presented a heavy criticism of English departments, stating that public speaking programs were disorganized, that they were treated as less important than English composition courses, that professors of public speaking were often not promoted, and that oral communication principles were different from written communication principles (Medhurst 28). Thus, O’Neill and James A. Winans
formed the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (now known as the National Communication Association), which also sparked the publication of the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* (now the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*). Speech had begun identifying itself as a discipline distinctly separated from traditional English departments, and throughout the first half of the 20th century, entire departments were formed around speech and public address at universities across the country. This separation exists to this day, and while some universities still house combined English and Speech Comm departments, the two disciplines have distinguished themselves by having their own professional organizations, their own scholarly journals, and their own pedagogical identities.

So, while the multimodal turn has gained a lot of traction within the discipline of composition, little research has been done on the ways in which programs make the curricular and pedagogical transition toward teaching multimodal communication in their FYC classes. We do not know enough about how these courses are formed through the collaboration of different departments or how administrators and faculty make the decision to create the class, develop the curriculum, and establish support infrastructures for faculty and staff. Due to the lack of scholarship on what happens when an FYC course decides to “go multimodal,” I conducted a study of “Oakherst” 1 University a small Midwestern liberal arts institution that recently formed a multimodal composition course integrating mostly elements of writing and public speaking but also elements of visual communication and digital literacies.

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1 “Oakherst” is a pseudonym in order to protect the university’s identity in this study.
The course itself, which I will call "Bedrock" in this study, is described in the Oakherst’s course catalog as “an integrated communication class” that emphasizes multiple modes of communication such as written, oral, visual, and electronic. The course satisfies required core coursework in both composition and speech communication. It was developed as a result of a first-year experience study conducted by the university, and its creation was a collaborative effort between members of the English Department and Communication Department along with representative faculty from several other disciplines in the liberal arts. In short, the course is a multimodal communication course—with an emphasis on writing and speaking—that is offered for first-year students at the university.

I chose to study the Bedrock course at Oakherst for several reasons. First, Oakherst is a small liberal arts institution that emphasizes undergraduate education and boasts a 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio, making it a prime site for talking with faculty and administrators about undergraduate communication courses. Rather than focusing on research, most of the faculty at this institution put the majority of their energy into teaching undergraduates, which isn’t always the case at larger universities with lots of graduate programs. Moreover, at this university, these first-year communication courses are taught not by mostly graduate students, as is the case at larger institutions, but by tenured faculty or adjunct instructors. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this university has very recently created this course to fit within a multimodal framework, making it an ideal site for talking with the individuals responsible for this curricular shift and learning about their experiences.
The intent of the present study is to explore the ways in which this Bedrock course was developed and, more specifically, what the collaboration process was like between the various departments involved in its creation, particularly the Speech and English departments. By talking with the faculty involved in the development and teaching of this course, and by examining various documents related to the course, I was able to discover how the collaboration came about and how the departments worked together to develop the course. Specifically, I have attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What was the exigency of the Bedrock course and how were decisions made about the shape of its curriculum?

2. In terms of the collaboration between departments on Bedrock, what kinds of disagreements, both curricular and pedagogical, arose between faculty of the English and Speech departments?

3. How were these disagreements managed or reconciled in order to move forward with the course?

4. In what ways did faculty learn from each other during the collaborative process?

5. How might participants’ experiences developing Bedrock inform the creation of future multimodal communication courses?

By exploring these questions, I hope to expand the scholarship on developing multimodal FYC courses by identifying sites of possible discontinuity between faculty coming from the differing pedagogical and disciplinary traditions of speech and English. Using the theoretical model of boundary crossing, I attempt to offer insights into how the collaboration between speech and English could be made more productive. My hope is that
this study will help to inform administrators on the considerations involved in the process of creating a multimodal FYC course, reveal new ways for scholars to conceptualize the implications of the multimodal turn, offer detailed and reflective insights about the process of developing a multimodal FYC course, and suggest ways in which interdepartmental collaboration on these courses could be more productive.

This study is divided into five chapters. In Chapter One, I have broadly sketched the subject of the study and indicated my research objectives. Chapter Two consists of a literature review that explores the theoretical framework of my study. In Chapter Three, I will explore the methodology I used to study the development of the Bedrock course. Chapter Four will reveal the results of my study. Finally, Chapter Five will explore the implications of those results and offer some final observations and suggestions for making the interdepartmental collaboration process as fruitful as possible.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to better understand and contextualize the collaboration between English and speech faculty at Oakherst, I consulted a number of scholars from the disciplinary traditions of speech and English composition. In the first section of this chapter, I describe the calls for multimodality in the discipline of Composition, taking note of the major reasons that many scholars provide for shifting first-year writing curricula away from exclusively textual forms of communication. Next, I briefly trace the history of the English-Speech relationship, examining what caused the initial split in the disciplines and what factors have kept the disciplines separated for so long. In the third section, I explore the calls to bring both disciplines together in the service of a broader, more integrated rhetorical education. Finally, I describe the theoretical model of boundary crossing, a model that is useful for illuminating the interdisciplinary collaboration experience that occurred at Oakherst and offering ways of making collaboration more productive.

The Multimodal Turn in Composition

It would be appropriate to start by establishing how “multimodality” is operationally defined in this study. A common definition comes from Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen in their widely cited 2001 book Multimodal Discourse. As researchers on semiotics, and in response to the increasingly visual communication culture, Kress and Van Leeuwen define multimodality as a phenomenon “in which common semiotic principles operate in and across different modes [word, image, sound, etc.]” (2). The
authors break this system of communication into four “domains of practice” for meaning making: discourse, design, production, and distribution. They contend that meaning can be conveyed through multiple modes of communication, integrating text, sound, and image to provide a dynamic and comprehensive system of signs and symbols. Kress and Van Leeuwen maintain that educators should embrace a global communication, one which is liberated from only words.

Drawing from theories on multimodal communication, composition scholar Anne Wysocki provides a nicely articulated metaphor for the complexity of communication in the twenty-first century:

Imagine, for example, that this book now before you were bound in leather or in large fish-like scales. Imagine that you were reading this online. Imagine that this ink were violet instead of black, or that this was a video of me speaking (or signing) these words…. Imagine that this chapter were appearing paragraph by paragraph in an Instant Messenger window. Each of these changes in the material instantiation of my words would change your attitude toward this text, certainly… (Writing 12)

A number of scholars in composition have found great potential in the prospect of shifting writing classes to a multimodal curriculum, and this trend has led some to advocate for a paradigm shift in the teaching of first-year composition (Clark; Hawisher, “Becoming”; Lunsford, “Writing”; Selfe, Multimodal; Takayoshi & Selfe; Wysocki & Johnson-Eilola; Yancey, “Writing”). In the past ten years, Kathleen Blake Yancey has published several articles that explore the implications of teaching composition with a multimodal focus. In one article, she points out that we must explore with our students notions of
communication circulation and modality, that these considerations are just as important as matters of style and organization in modern composing. Yancey's work expresses a clear call to action for all composition teachers: “What I'm proposing is that we move to a new model of composing where students are explicitly asked to engage in these considerations [circulation, medium, transfer], to engage in these activities, to develop as members of a writing public” (“Made” 311). Yancey insists that if we are to adequately prepare students for the communication expectations of their personal, academic, professional, and civic lives, we must engage them with how contemporary communication is formulated, how a medium is chosen, and how the communication is delivered to the public. Similarly, Daniel Anderson, et al., view traditional writing as “one modality among many that individuals should be able to call on as rhetorical and creative resources when composing messages and making meaning” (59). If students are expected to learn to communicate effectively inside and outside the university, they must participate in projects that require them to work within and between the various modes. Each of these calls for a multimodal focus in composition stresses the complexity of synthesizing writing, speaking, and design in the twenty-first century, and we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of books and articles published on multimodality over the last decade.

Much of the scholarship advocating multimodal pedagogies focuses on the “multiple literacies” that our students carry into the classroom, and these multiple literacies are used as motives for embracing multimodal communication. The traditional form of literacy incorporated into the composition classroom is essayistic, or, as Douglass Hesse explains, “characterized by texts of a certain length, complexity, and expected integrity” (34). Traditional notions of multiple literacies have dwelt upon social and cultural negotiations
of meaning, but more recently they have extended to include oral, visual, and electronic literacies, as well. Douglas Kellner contends that “we need multiple literacies for our multicultural society,” calling for educators to “develop new literacies to meet the challenge of the new technologies...literacies of diverse sorts...are of crucial importance in restructuring education for a high tech and multicultural society and global culture” (67). Scholarship on multimodal composition consistently emphasizes the importance of multiple forms of literacy on preparing students to communicate both within and outside the university setting.

Much of the literature on multimodality in composition maintains a focus on visual rhetorics. In an early call for including visual literacy in the composition curriculum—and for distinguishing it from the design work done in technical communication classrooms—Diana George insists that “it is crucial to understand how very complicated and sophisticated visual communication is to students who have grown up in what by all accounts is an aggressively visual culture” (15). Discussing literacies in terms of technological development, Stuart Selber calls computer literacy a “vexing and ongoing problem,” one which teachers, as solely instrumental users of technology, cannot begin to address without a critical understanding of technological literacies (2). Hawisher also articulates multiple literacies in an electronic context, describing a “cultural ecology of literacy” which should “signal the complex web within which both humans and computer technologies coexist, and all communication takes place” (644).

Other calls for multimodality in composition come from scholars who see technology as a driving force that shapes our communication habits in dramatic ways. Therefore, our composition classes should reflect the importance of technology in
producing and circulating communication. In a recent article, J. Elizabeth Clark argues that “the composition classroom should immerse students in analyzing digital media, in exploring the world beyond the classroom, in crafting digital personae, and in creating new and emerging definitions of civic literacy” (28). According to Clark, multimodality is a fruitful pedagogical direction in composition because it can help illuminate the various roles that networking and composing technologies play in the communication process. Other scholars such as Selfe, Hawisher, and Takayoshi have emphasized technology as an important element in teaching communication in the twenty-first century.

These and more calls for a multimodal turn in first-year composition have been met with general agreement in our field. In fact, NCTE, the leading professional organization for teachers of English, has made clear its official position:

The use of multimodal literacies has expanded the ways we acquire information and understand concepts.... It is the interplay of meaning-making systems (alphabetic, oral, visual, etc.) that teachers and students should strive to study and produce.

Clearly communication methods and modalities have evolved beyond the traditional printed word in isolation to a more integrated, complex process that requires attention to the synthesis of multiple modalities. Many scholars and teachers of first-year composition have recognized that if we want to prepare our students for their lives and careers in the 21st century, we must remain attentive to the complex ways in which they will be expected to communicate. This includes attention to not just writing but also to oral, visual, and digital modes of communication, as well. More importantly, students should learn to work
within and between these modes in order to create a rhetorically effective synthesis that can draw upon these various modes of expression.

Because of this new trend in the composition discipline, I wanted to look at how these multimodal composition classes are formed. I learned of a recently created multimodal communication course at Oakherst University called “Bedrock.” I decided to investigate the creation of Bedrock and the development of its curriculum. My expectation, as noted in my introductory chapter, was that I would learn about the ways in which the university was incorporating technologies and digital literacies into the class. However, as I talked with faculty and administrators in the program, it became clear that this course focused primarily on written and oral communication, integrating the two modes into a single class. This was an interesting development because very little scholarship on multimodal composition focuses on the oral components, looking instead at visual or technological components. Moreover, the Bedrock course was the result of a collaboration between faculty from across the university, notably from the English and Communication departments.

What became clear after talking with these individuals was that there were discontinuities between the English and speech faculty during the planning and development stages of the Bedrock course, and these discontinuities soon became the focus of my research. I will explore some of the discontinuities in Chapter 4. Because their collaborative experience became the focal point of most of my conversations with these faculty members, I needed to learn more about the relationship between these two disciplines in order to understand their respective points of contention.
In the following section, I detail a brief history of the English-Speech relationship and point to places where the two fields seemed to take different pedagogical and disciplinary paths.

**Public Speaking Courses and The Split From English**

Public speaking as an academic discipline has existed since the birth of classical rhetorical instruction in Ancient Greece. Indeed, rhetorical instruction by Aristotle, Quintilian, and the Sophists was seen as fundamental for a liberal arts education, and their teachings focused solely on the spoken word, on students’ abilities to move and persuade a live audience about civic or legislative matters. Very few sources, however, present a comprehensive history of the teaching of public speaking in the modern university. William Keith has said, “The interest of disciplinary history should be widespread and durable. And yet, it is not…. [W]e tend to skim off the best bits, turn them into a comprehensible strategic narrative, and ignore the rest” (“We Are” 85). Though detailed histories of public speaking in the university are few and far between, Martin J. Medhurst’ chapter from *The Handbook of Public Address* is a stellar example of historical writing. According to Medhurst, it was not until the 18th century that Hugh Blair’s *belle lettres* tradition displaced oratorical rhetoric with written rhetoric, ushering in a new emphasis on the style and composition of poetry, essays, and dialogues over the art of public speaking. By the 19th century, the elocution movement of speaking became the primary means of teaching public speaking in the academy. Started by Irish stage actor Thomas Sheridan, the elocutionists focused on the

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2 I will not endeavor to detail the development of the centuries-old discipline of speech communication in this chapter. For more thorough analyses of this history, see Medurst and Wallace.
memorization and delivery of oral performances, focusing less on political or civic oratory and more on speaking for performance or entertainment. Elocution soon became the preferred method of public speaking education while composition and rhetoric, with its emphasis on the written word, began to rise in prominence in the university. During the last half of the 19th century, the two disciplines were each teaching separate canons of rhetoric: the elocution movement was teaching primarily the memorization and delivery of speeches while composition and rhetoric was teaching invention, arrangement, and style (Medhurst 23-24). This was arguably the beginning of the diverging paths taken by rhetorical scholars and teachers in composition and public speaking.

By the turn of the 20th century, public speaking scholars were attempting to distance themselves from an elocution movement that ignored entire canons of rhetoric in favor of memorization and delivery. Medhurst points out that James A. Winens of Cornell University was influential in this movement, shifting his own classes back toward public debate and public speaking in the context of civic and political rhetoric (Medhurst 25). In 1904, Winens became the head of a new department at Cornell, the Department of Oratory and Debate, and from then on the Cornell school became a leader in bringing the discipline of speech back to matters of rhetoric and debate. The distancing from elocution was virtually complete by 1906, when the National Association of Elocutionists changed its name to the National Speech Arts Association in order to start attracting new educators to its ranks.

At this time, in the early 20th century, the majority of public speaking teachers were housed in English departments. The discipline of English was also experiencing internal conflicts between teachers of literature and teachers of composition, each vying for importance in an increasingly large university department. In 1911, the National Council of
Teachers of English (NCTE) was formed partially as a venue for compositionists to distinguish themselves from their colleagues in literature, and many teachers of speech followed to this new organization. But as Medhurst explains, “[J]ust as the composition teachers had found themselves treated as second-class citizens by their literary colleagues, so the speech teachers soon found themselves marginalized by teachers of composition” (27). At the 1913 NCTE meeting, James Milton O’Neill launched a diatribe against the treatment of speech teachers in English departments, stating that public speaking programs were disorganized, that they were treated as less important than English composition courses, that professors of public speaking were often not promoted, and that oral communication principles were fundamentally different from written communication principles. It was becoming increasingly clear that the NCTE was not meeting the needs of public speaking scholars, and the following year would see a historic split that has impacted the relationship between speech and writing scholars ever since.

At the 1914 NCTE meeting, O’Neill, Winans, and fifteen other leading public speaking scholars walked out, meeting instead on the second floor of the same hotel and creating the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (now known as the National Communication Association). This new organization would devote itself to the concerns of public speaking faculty and scholars and not be catered to the needs of compositionists, as they felt the NCTE was. Leaders of the NAATPS also initiated the publication of the Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking (now the Quarterly Journal of Speech), and in its first 1915 issue, Clarence E. Lyon published a fiery call for public speaking teachers to separate themselves from their colleagues in English composition:
So, if independent organization is what we want and what we need, let us have it! Let us be awake to changing conditions and evolutionary tendencies. Let us not fall into the intellectual pit of accepting things as they are just because “they are.” Let us not labor under the fallacious impression that “what has been, always should be.” Whenever an existing condition becomes a bar to progress and development, then there is sufficient justification for the creation of a new condition. (50)

Lyon, along with many other public speaking scholars, saw the split from the NCTE as an opportunity for the discipline of speech to form its own disciplinary identity. Stephen Mailloux has argued that for these scholars, “the establishment of autonomous Speech departments before and after that year [1914] encouraged the formation of a disciplinary identity and professional affiliations separate and independent from scholars and teachers in English departments” (6). Now that speech faculty were finding their own departments separate from English, their discipline needed to work to establish itself as important to research universities. Mailloux notes that many scholars and teachers of speech began calling for an identity as a scientific discipline. If they were to establish acceptance with the wider research university community, the discipline needed to take a research-focused, science-based approach to speech. Thus, much of the public speaking research in the early-to mid-twentieth century was derived from scientific disciplines like phonology, psychology, and physiology. Rather than taking a rhetorical or pedagogical focus in research on public speaking, the discipline looked to empirical research as the answer to its prestige in the academy.
In a response to Mailloux’s characterization of the history of speech research, Michael Leff largely agrees: speech rhetoricians have mostly adhered to a scientific conception of their discipline. Leff explains that “for most of [the twentieth] century, the primary concern of Speech-Communication critics has been method, and specifically method conceived as equivalent to method in science” (Leff 88). Early speech scholars needed a way to legitimate their discipline and systematize their approach, so they looked to method—with its unwavering emphasis on rigid steps and taxonomies—as the solution. Leff maintains that this method-based approach still dominates current discussions of communication as well as the textbooks in the field.

Of course, the entire discipline did not fully subscribe to the scientific conception of speech communication. William Keith has argued that Mailloux and Leff ignore fundamentally important aspects of 20th century speech programs, pointing out that several prominent programs like The Cornell School were still focusing on civic and political rhetoric during this period of scientific research. In fact, Keith argues that the central “animating myth” of speech communication has always been civic rhetoric, to produce better citizens, and that the science that arose in the early development of the discipline was not positivistic but pragmatic. This science did not “focus on formalized theories, but on distrusting authority, inspecting evidence and outcome, and situating knowledge in a context of use” (Keith, “Identity,” 96). Thus, while much of the research on speech communication was indeed scientific in nature, the discipline itself never seemed to lose sight of the importance of rhetoric and practical public speaking as fundamental to its identity. But the scientific aspects of speech—those having to do with physiological and psychological concerns—still remained quite prominent in 20th century literature.
(Mailloux; Leff). So as speech came into its own as a discipline, its scholarly pursuits diverged from those of composition, reinforcing the chasm that still separates the disciplines today.

**Diverging Scholarly Identities**

As noted above, after the split from NCTE in 1914, speech and composition scholars began to develop distinct disciplinary identities, shaping them into fields that both treat rhetoric as the primary learning objective yet have different approaches to thinking about pedagogy. When talking with participants at Oakherst University, it became clear that research in first-year public speaking pedagogy focuses more on pragmatic rather than theoretical issues. Pedagogy scholars in public speaking tend to focus on practical classroom issues like assessment (Meyer & Hunt; Pearson, et al.; Reynolds, et al.), speech apprehension (Hodis & Hodis; Dwyer & Fus), course objectives (LeBlanc, Vela, & Houser; Williams), and teacher training (Quigley, Hendrix, & Freisem; Hendrix). While indeed there are examples of integrating theory into pedagogical discussions of public speaking, the vast majority of the literature on first-year public speaking is practical in nature, dealing with day-to-day classroom and training issues.

This trend of focusing on pragmatic issues can be seen one academic journal\(^3\) dedicated to the first-year communication course: *Basic Communication Course Annual*. A small yearly journal, *BCCA* hosts articles dealing with various issues in the first-year public speaking course. After indexing all 26 volumes of the journal, dating back to 1989, I

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\(^3\) Other journals devoted to communication pedagogy exist but are not exclusively devoted to the first-year course. See *Communication Education* and *The Communication Teacher*. 
discovered that the majority of the articles published have to do with pragmatic pedagogical issues. Table 1 below illustrates the topics covered most often in the history of the *BCCA*.

**Table 1: Common topics covered in the 26 volumes of *BCCA*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th># of Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Students</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objectives</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Issues</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Apprehension (Anxiety)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Teaching Assistants</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connected Classroom Climates</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race &amp; Ethnicity Issues</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 shows, most articles published in *BCCA* deal directly with practical classroom topics like assessment, course objectives, teacher and student gender issues, and communication apprehension or anxiety. There are also a number of articles dealing with connected classrooms, race and ethnicity, and fostering student engagement. What seems to be missing from this small journal, and indeed from the field of public speaking as a whole, is widespread attention to how theory can inform practice.

Unlike their colleagues in speech departments, scholars in composition have theorized the first-year writing course using a number of different lenses and methodologies. Volumes and volumes fill up the shelves of compositionists trying to make sense of their pedagogies by applying to their teaching theories from varied disciplines like
philosophy, gender studies, cognitive science, social science, and others. While prominent composition journals like *College Composition and Communication*, *Composition Studies*, and *Computers and Composition* have widely covered practical classroom issues, it is their attention to theory that distinguishes them from journals like *BCCA*.

The scientism in speech research is well-known, but composition was not immune to the influence of empirical research, either. As composition was becoming a more prominent scholarly discipline in the 1970s and ‘80s, many noted scholars looked to empirical research as a means of legitimizing their scholarly work. For example, Mina Shaughnessy's groundbreaking empirical work *Errors and Expectations* became a cornerstone for writing research in the way that it described the problems associated with struggling first-year writers. Influenced by linguistics and using examples from her own students' writing, Shaughnessy's work “argued that the errors of the least skilled writers possessed their own underlying structure” (Nystrand 95). Invoking a similar scientism, influential 1970s and early-'80s scholarly work on the cognitive process involved in writing became a force in how writing pedagogy developed. These cognitive theories from scholars like Nancy Sommers, Sondra Perl, Andrea Lunsford, as well as Linda Flower and John Hayes looked at writing through the internal mental processes occurring when students sit down to write. According to cognitivists, teaching students to write involved understanding and fostering the development of the various “stages” in the writing process (pre-writing, researching, writing, revising, etc.). Each of these stages was determined by the mental processes happening in the individual writer's mind, and cognitivists turned to these mental processes for answers on how to create better student writers.
There are plenty of examples of compositionists taking a scientific approach to pedagogical research, but as Leff points out, by the 1980s, "compositionists had come to define [their] professional discipline in terms of its communal rhetoric and shared interpretive strategies rather than in terms of an idealized rationality or an objective body of knowledge" (88). Indeed, theory became more prominent by the 1980s, as many scholars began navigating away from positivistic, empirical classroom research and instead toward broader theorizations of how writing works, its role in society, and how it is interpreted. The field became more attentive to theories on the role of audience in writing (Ede & Lunsford; Kroll; Park), on how collaboration works in the writing process (Bruffee; Lunsford & Ede; Spear), on critical pedagogies that interrogate cultural myths (Berlin; Bizzell; Duffelmeyer), on feminism (Annas; Brody; Ratcliffe), and a host of others.

Composition research has integrated Foucault’s theories of power, Derrida’s theory of deconstruction, Lacan’s mirror stage, and Bakhtin’s dialogism in order to theorize not just the role of writing in the academy but how meaning is created and interpreted through writing.

In short, the field of composition has a rich tradition of theorizing its first-year course, and no analogous body of scholarship exists for first-year public speaking courses. Matt McGarrity and Richard Benjamin Crosby have noted, “Whereas public speaking has tended to neglect a theoretical interrogation of the introductory course, composition has produced copious scholarship on the subject” (165). This distinction in scholarly traditions, I think, is an important factor contributing to some of the collaborative struggles of English and speech faculty. On the one hand, there is a discipline that has developed a thorough body of scholarship applying various theories to its pedagogy, and on the other there is a
discipline that has focused its pedagogical research extensively on practical classroom applications. These differences in scholarly traditions can make it difficult for these disciplines to communicate about pedagogy, as I will argue in Chapter 5 of this study.

**Bringing the Disciplines Back Together**

It has been 100 years since the speech faculty walked out of the NCTE meeting, and the two disciplines remain largely separated to this day. Most universities have some incarnation of a Department of English as well as a Department of Communication (or Speech), and it seems quite rare for faculty teaching in one department to interact with their colleagues in the other department. But with the increased calls for multimodality in first-year writing courses, with the newfound emphasis on oral and visual communication, it makes sense for the two disciplines to rebuild the bridges they tore down a century ago.

Unfortunately, the calls for unity between departments have been few. Multimodal composition is discussed in the research almost exclusively within the context of digital media and technologies, as this literature review has discussed, and not much attention has been paid to how oral rhetorics can factor into the multimodal communication situation. Furthermore, only a few scholars have published calls for the two disciplines to come together. One of the most vocal proponents for unification is William Keith, who has published a few articles on finding commonalities between the disciplines in the interest of a more comprehensive rhetorical education. In his most recent 2014 article, Keith presents a clear call for rhetoricians in English and Speech to come together, a century after the NCTE split:
One hundred years later, we are confronted with the opportunity to reconsider the decision to allow rhetorical pedagogy to be fractured. One hundred years later, we assess the strengths and benefits of the separation, and find it wanting. One hundred years later, we find ourselves to be sophisticated scholars, dedicated teachers—and under-appreciated professionals....We call all scholars and teachers of rhetoric, whatever their professional and departments homes, to work together on this project. (“The Mt. Oread” 4)

Keith’s manifesto, collaboratively generated by attendees of the “Rhetoric in/between the Disciplines” Seminar at the 2013 Rhetoric Society of America Institute, argues that speech and composition have more in common than we think, that they share common objectives for rhetorical education that could bring the disciplines closer together. Echoing the sentiments of speech teacher Clyde Dow, Keith explains that both disciplines share an attention to matters such as organization, invention, evaluation, vocabulary, clear thinking, and civic engagement. Communication in the 21st century, with its integration of digital technologies, no longer draws strict distinctions between speaking and writing. Keith argues that “the integration of digital technologies into our teaching confirms that the formal divisions between speaking and writing are untenable and indeed, in practice, are beginning to dissolve” (“The Mt. Oread” 2). If rhetorical education is to remain relevant to the shifting methods and modalities of communication, scholars in writing and speaking must begin working together to craft pedagogies that serve our modern students.

While direct calls for a unification of the disciplines are rare, some Composition scholars have addressed the importance of orality in modern multimodal composition
practices. Cynthia Selfe has argued that the field's traditional allegiance to print literacy ignores the contributions that other semiotic principles play in modern composing, particularly aural and oral principles. Selfe maintains that students in composition need “opportunities to realize that different compositional modalities carry with them different possibilities for representing multiple and shifting patterns of identity, additional potential for expression and resistance, [and] expanded ways of engaging with a changing world…” (“The Movement” 645). McGarrity and Crosby, both scholars of speech communication, argue that public speaking pedagogy and textbooks lack a productive focus on rhetorical invention strategies, relegating these strategies to simple mental brainstorming and predicting of audience demographics. Invoking scholars such as Karen LeFevre and Linda Flower, the authors maintain that Composition has addressed invention as a social act, one that involves collaboration and dynamic thinking processes that expand beyond the individual communicator's mind. McGarrity and Crosby call on public speaking teachers to think about the ways in which Composition's research on invention could be applied in the speech classroom.

Another noted scholar, Peter Elbow, has published on how speech can inform the writing process. In his 2012 book, Vernacular Eloquence, Elbow explores the various functions that speaking can bring to the writing process, including “talking onto the page” and “reading aloud to revise” (5). Similar to other scholars, Elbow questions writing pedagogy’s traditional resistance to speaking and listening as valuable rhetorical skills, maintaining that teachers can help students harness the ability to write by utilizing their innate vernacular skills.
Thus, scholars such as Keith, Selfe, McGarrity and Crosby, and Elbow have located sites where English and Speech can learn from each other, can complement one another, can combine to form more effective rhetorical pedagogies. This kind of interdepartmental collaboration will be essential for the development of effective multimodal communication courses. Although there has been some discussion of the relationship between speech and composition in recent issues of journals and in conference presentations, not enough research has been done on how to foster more productive collaboration between the two disciplines. In order to better understand interdepartmental collaboration, we can draw from the theoretical model of boundary crossing. What follows is a brief overview of one comprehensive model of boundary crossing.

**Boundary Crossing**

In the last several decades, the concept of boundaries has been used in various disciplines to describe the challenges associated with interdisciplinary collaboration. Education researchers Sanne F. Akkerman and Arthur Bakker have argued for using boundary mechanisms as a useful theoretical framework for fostering diversity and mobility in education and work. Akkerman and Bakker define a boundary as “a sociocultural difference leading to discontinuity in action or interaction. Boundaries simultaneously suggest a sameness and continuity in the sense that within discontinuity two or more sites are relevant to one another in a particular way” (132). By this definition, boundaries exist as differences that arise when individuals must learn to work or collaborate outside of their professional discipline, even when those disciplines have many similarities, as in the case of English and speech. Many scholars have used the term
“boundary crossing” to describe the attempt to work both within and outside these boundaries.

In a 2011 article, Akkerman and Bakker develop a comprehensive understanding of working with disciplinary boundaries during collaborative experiences. Upon reviewing over 180 studies on boundaries from a wide range of disciplines, Akkerman and Bakker propose a model for understanding boundary crossing that is useful for illuminating the collaborative process between disciplines. Their review proposes that scholars understand work at the boundaries through the theoretical lens of dialogicality, the Bakhtinian notion that understanding and knowledge are created through dialogue between multiple individual minds. This dialogical model indicates that learning or working at the boundary is “a process that involves multiple perspectives and multiple parties” (137). In their proposed model, Akkerman and Bakker identify four learning mechanisms that can occur at boundaries: identification, coordination, reflection, and transformation. Table 2 below lists and describes each learning mechanism, and a more detailed discussion follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Mechanism</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>Othering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legitimating Coexistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>Communicative Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Efforts of Translation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Routinization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Perspective-making</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perspective-taking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crystallization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintaining uniqueness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous joint work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each learning mechanism in this model describes a different process that occurs during work at boundaries. The first mechanism described by Akkerman and Bakker is identification, in which “previous lines of demarcation between practices are uncertain or destabilized because of feelings of threat or because of increasing similarities or overlap between practices” (142). Through the identification mechanism, individuals begin to define their practices in relation to the practices of those in other disciplines. In doing so, they both establish and question their identities as members of their professional disciplines.

The second mechanism of boundary crossing, coordination, looks at “how effective means and procedures are sought allowing diverse practices to cooperate efficiently in distributed work, even in the absence of consensus” (Akkerman & Bakker 143). In coordination, participants are “creating cooperative and routinized exchanges between practices” (150). Coordination at the boundary includes the process of collaborating itself, the communication that occurs between parties. Important to this mechanism is translation, or the ability of one party to communicate concepts and ideas effectively to another party.

The third mechanism of boundary crossing proposed by Akkerman and Bakker is reflection, in which participants come “to realize and explicate differences between practices and thus to learn something new about their own and others’ practices” (144-45). It is through the mechanism of reflection parties in an interdisciplinary collaboration expand their perspectives on not just the other party’s discipline but on their own discipline, as well. In the case of my study, participation in the interviews provided one site and opportunity for reflection by allowing faculty to look back at their collaborative
experience to locate sites of discontinuity. These reflections often provided new insights about disciplines outside of their own.

The final learning mechanism of boundary crossing described by Akkerman and Bakker is transformation. It is through transformation that parties develop new practices or alter existing practices to accommodate the boundary work. As Akkerman and Bakker explain, transformation includes boundary work that “leads to profound changes in practices, even the creation of new, in-between practice, sometimes called a boundary practice” (146). Through collaboration, parties can come to transform their own practices as well as influence the practices of those outside their disciplines. In my research study, the transformation mechanism was apparent in participants’ responses on how their pedagogy had changed since teaching the Bedrock course.

Akkerman and Bakker’s model for describing work at the boundaries is a useful tool for understanding some of the discontinuities in the collaboration between speech and English faculty at Oakherst. In collaborating on the Bedrock course, faculty contended with their own identities as instructors and scholars, coordinated with other faculty from outside of their department on complex curricular and pedagogical decisions, reflected on that collaborative experience, and transformed their own practices and the practices of others in order to serve the pedagogical needs of students in the new course. As I will argue in later chapters, more attention to these boundary crossing mechanisms as well as to the language of the speech and English disciplines might have provided faculty who worked on Bedrock with a more productive collaborative experience and pointed the way to approaches for such collaboration in the future.
Qualitative research is often used when a researcher is interested in the ways that people experience, perceive, understand, and interpret their lives and the world around them. Theorists Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln assert that qualitative research “is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (3). For this research study, I employed a qualitative approach in order to make visible the ways in which faculty at Oakherst University came together to develop the curriculum and pedagogy of the Bedrock multimodal communication course. This approach involved conducting personal interviews with a number of faculty at the university responsible for developing and teaching the course as well as collecting documents relevant to the course.

In this chapter, I will first briefly trace my theoretical rationale for this methodology, including an overview of phenomenological approaches to case studies as well as the grounded theory approach to data analysis. Then, I will describe the steps taken in this methodology to select the research site, choose participants, collect the data, and analyze that data.

**Phenomenological Case Studies**

Two important qualitative research frameworks that guide the methodology of this study are phenomenology and case studies. This section will briefly describe how each of these frameworks informed my approach to this study.
Phenomenological research focuses on the exploration of a particular event, artifact, or phenomenon with the goal of understanding its essence. According to research theorist John W. Creswell, phenomenological studies are typically conducted when a researcher wants to explore a phenomenon with a group of individuals who experienced it. Creswell notes, “The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individuals’ common or shared experiences of a phenomenon...in order to develop practices or policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon” (81). Typically, phenomenological researchers collect data through interviewing individuals who experienced the phenomenon being studied. Thus, in the case of this dissertation, where the phenomenon was the creation of the Bedrock multimodal communication course at Oakherst, the most effective way to obtain information about this experience was to talk directly with the faculty involved in the course’s development. Furthermore, by conducting these interviews through a phenomenological approach, I was able to set my own experiences aside in order to focus on the experiences of the individuals in the study and allow those experiences to tell the story. This permitted me to understand the phenomenon through those faculty members’ lived experiences and reflections on creating Bedrock rather than through my own assumptions about the experience.

While I took a phenomenological approach to conducting the interviews and learning about faculty’s collaborative experiences on Bedrock, it is also important to note that this is a case study of one particular phenomenon at one particular location. Simply put, a case study is defined as “the study of a case within a real-life, contemporary context or setting” (Creswell 97). The aim of a case study is for the researcher to understand the
activities, events, and behaviors present within a particular bounded system. This study of a “bounded system” explores activities and behavior through in-depth interviews, documents, observations and other data collection instruments. Because I chose to study the development of one particular course at one particular university, I approached my research with the understanding that I was conducting a case study. Research theorist Robert E. Stake has pointed out that while case studies are not methodologies per se, they do offer an important lens through which we can understand a phenomenon being studied. A successful case study requires a detailed description of the site, the individuals involved, and the themes or issues that arose within the case. These themes or issues might be presented chronologically, through comparison across cases, or as a theoretical model, as is the case in this dissertation (Creswell 99).

What is important to understand about case studies is that because they describe one phenomenon in one place at one time, it is difficult to apply the findings to any possible case that may arise, no matter how similar the case may be. Indeed, the localized context and specific procedure for creating the Bedrock course make it even harder to apply any themes or issues to the creation of any multimodal course at any other university. However, case studies like this one can illuminate certain trends that might appear in other similar cases and can help us to understand these trends if and when they do arise.

The Grounded Theory Approach to Data Analysis

A third qualitative research method that guides my study, particularly my data analysis technique, is the widely-used grounded theory approach. The grounded theory approach to qualitative research was first developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss
in 1967 as part of their research on dying hospital patients. According to these researchers, the aim of grounded theory is to *discover* theories through the collection and analysis of data. Rather than beginning a study with theories already in place and allowing those theories to guide the study, researchers using the grounded theory approach derive theories from the collected data.

Strauss eventually collaborated with Juliet Corbin to focus on a systematic approach to grounded theory that incorporated what they termed “microanalysis,” or a line-by-line analysis of the data (57). By looking at the data line by line rather than holistically, the researcher can generate initial codes that can then be grouped into categories to discover relationships among concepts. This detailed microanalysis can reveal similarities and differences in the data.

Two key operations in the Strauss and Corbin model are asking questions and making comparisons in the data. In asking questions, researchers explore various angles of the data like situational context, definitions, actors, and processes. These kinds of questions keep the researcher attuned not only to the complexity of the data but to the multiple meanings that the data can suggest. In tandem with line-by-line microanalysis, asking questions of the data is a vital operation in deriving the codes and categories that could eventually go on to generate theories.

A second key operation in the Strauss and Corbin model is making comparisons. When the researcher makes comparisons, she or he constantly compares incidents in the data with other incidents, looking out for similarities and differences. The similarities in data can be used to generate “higher-level descriptive concepts” that can then be categorized for further analysis. Strauss and Corbin explain, “This type of comparison is
essential to all analysis because it allows the researcher to differentiate one category/theme from another and to identify properties and dimensions specific to that category/theme” (73).

In short, the Strauss and Corbin model of grounded theory offers a useful, widely-used methodology for data analysis. Because the method of data analysis is not bound by existing theories, it is malleable to new findings and comparisons that wouldn’t be available in a stricter model. Furthermore, the grounded theory method, in tandem with a phenomenological approach, allows the data to do the talking, opening up possibilities for discovery and interpretation that can generate important insights into what the data mean. For these reasons, it is the Strauss and Corbin model that I used for the present study.

Site Selection

I chose to study the creation and teaching of the Bedrock course at Oakherst for a number of reasons. Firstly, Oakherst is a small liberal arts university with an emphasis on undergraduate education. The university boasts a 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio, making it a prime site for talking with faculty and administrators about undergraduate communication courses. Rather than focusing on research, most of the faculty at Oakherst put the majority of their energy into teaching undergraduates, which isn’t always the case at larger universities with lots of graduate programs. Moreover, first-year communication courses at this institution are taught not by mostly graduate students, as is the case at larger institutions, but by tenured faculty and adjunct instructors.

A second reason I chose this site is because of the relative recentness of the Bedrock course development. At the time of the study, Bedrock had only been offered for three
years and was being considered as a permanent offering by the school’s administration. Therefore, because of its newness, most of the faculty involved in its creation were not only still employed with the university but also still involved with the Bedrock program. These faculty had vivid recollections of what the collaborative process was like. They were also able to provide valuable insights about how their teaching of the course had changed over the three years since its inception. These kinds of insights could not have been gained without a purposeful sampling directed at the particular people involved in developing the curriculum and teaching the course.

A final reason I selected Oakherst as my research site was because I could obtain access to it. This study required a site that was easily accessible, allowing for multiple campus visits. Additionally, I was able to gain consent from a co-director of the course to talk with both her and the faculty involved in the creation of Bedrock about their experiences.

Upon deciding on the site location, I received IRB approval from Iowa State University for my research and interview questions. This approval was attained on October 22, 2013.

**Participant Selection**

In selecting the participants for my research, I followed what Joseph A. Maxwell has called *purposeful selection*, in which “particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that can’t be gotten as well from other sources” (88). This selection method was most appropriate for my study because as a researcher, I needed the ability to choose participants based on their affiliation with
Bedrock. Using purposeful selection also allowed me to derive additional participants from the data collected from initial participants, creating productive developments for my investigation.

In selecting the sample of participants, I began by contacting one of the co-directors of the new course by email to explain my research goals and obtain her participation. Using a “snowball sampling” method, I asked the administrator to direct me to faculty members who were involved in planning, developing, and sustaining their new course. This purposeful sample selection led me to a variety of individuals who actively participated in the process, ensuring that the data I collected was relevant to the research questions was exploring.

In total, I was able to speak with 10 individuals involved in the development and teaching of this course. Table 1 below lists each participant and tells the department that he or she works in. To protect the anonymity of participants, departments outside of English or Speech have not been identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patricia</td>
<td>Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*All names are pseudonyms*
As Table 1 illustrates, I was able to talk one-on-one with a number of faculty involved in planning, coordinating, and teaching the new course. The purposeful selection of these participants allowed me to gather relevant information about the process of creating the course from the individuals directly responsible for its development and implementation.

**Research Instruments and Data Collection**

Drawing from the grounded theory approach to qualitative research, I gathered data by conducting personal interviews with participants as well as collecting documents related to the course such as proposals, syllabi, and assignment sheets. This section details my methodologies in obtaining and conducting the interviews as well as collecting the documents.

**Interviews**

Because I sought to gain insight into the planning, development, and execution of the Bedrock multimodal communication course at Oakherst, it was logical to talk directly with the individuals responsible for undertaking that project. These conversations took the form of semi-structured qualitative interviews, which do not aim for quantification but rather “seek qualitative knowledge as expressed in normal language” and “aim at nuanced accounts of different aspects of the interviewee’s life-world” (Kvale & Brinkmann 32). Unlike surveys or ethnographic observation, interviews allow the researcher to ask questions that will provoke dynamic and detailed responses. The researcher can then
follow up with additional questions, leading to richer qualitative data than could be obtained solely through a survey or other collection method.

As mentioned previously, to obtain the interviews, I first contacted a co-director and founder of the Bedrock course, Patricia, via email. I told her about my study and research questions and asked if she would be willing to talk with me about her experiences developing the Bedrock course. Patricia proved to be immensely helpful, setting me up with a series of appointments during a one-day campus visit to chat with her and additional faculty who were involved in creating Bedrock. After completing the first set of interviews, I emailed several additional faculty members to request their participation. This resulted in a second campus visit for another series of interviews. All 10 faculty participants were willing to talk with me, and no faculty members who I contacted refused. I requested follow-up interviews from two faculty participants. One participant, Patricia, agreed to the follow-up and the other participant, Nancy, could not fit it into her schedule on the day I was visiting. The first campus visit occurred in November of 2013 and the second visit occurred in December of 2013.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured way, in which I as the interviewer played “a neutral role, never interjecting [my] opinions of the respondent’s answers” (Fontana & Frey 364). Unlike rigorously structured interviews, there were opportunities for follow-up questions based on participants’ responses. This allowed me to ask for clarification or elaboration on ideas brought up during the course of the conversation. The interview questions were determined beforehand and were designed to elicit responses that would help me explore the research questions outlined in Chapter 1 of this study. Interview questions are listed in Appendix A. All interviews were conducted
face-to-face on the Oakherst campus. Participants Jennifer and Lisa were interviewed in the same session, while all other interviews were conducted one-on-one. Interviews were recorded using a digital recorder, and the audio files were labeled, placed into a secure folder, and backed up on an external hard drive. After I conducted the interviews, I transcribed them into a word processor for coding. To preserve their anonymity, I assigned pseudonyms to all of the participants. Transcriptions were completed within in a week after each campus visit. Altogether, interviews made up 7.5 hours of recordings and 187 pages of transcription.

During the course of my research, the interview questions changed according to trends in the responses. As explained in Chapter 1 of this study, I had originally planned to explore the ways in which the course developers were integrating digital literacies and multimedia into their new multimodal course. However, as I began speaking with participants, I discovered that they were still in the early stages of integrating digital rhetoric into the course and that the primary focus of the class, in its current incarnation, was in combining oral and written communication. Therefore, I shifted the interview questions for my second campus visit in order to more fully explore the collaborative experiences of English and speech faculty.

**Document Collection**

In addition to the semi-structured personal interviews, I also collected various documents related to the new course. These documents included course syllabi, instructor resources, curricular plans, and official university documentation regarding the Bedrock class. Documents were collected from participants and from the university’s website.
Obtaining these documents allowed me to supplement the data collected in interviews by offering further insights into the shaping of Bedrock, most importantly the primary curricular objectives of the course.

**Data Analysis**

The interview data and collected documents were coded qualitatively using a grounded theory approach, described earlier in this chapter. I used data reduction to code key concepts in the data. As Strauss and Corbin explain, concepts “represent an analyst’s impressionistic understandings of what is being described in the experiences, spoken words, actions, interactions, problems, and issues expressed by participants” (51). These concepts provide a way for the researcher to organize the data in a way that reveals common themes running throughout participants’ responses.

Drawing from Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, I engaged in conclusion drawing and verification, in which I began to “decide what things mean—noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows, and propositions” (11). In order to “decide what things mean,” I developed a series of ten concepts which I derived as common themes in my reviews of the interview transcripts and collected documents. I then coded these concepts line-by-line in the transcripts in order to mark important passages in participants’ responses and locate patterns in their recollections. Table 2 below lists and defines the concepts used for coding interview and document data. Concepts are listed in alphabetical order according to the code used.
Table 4: Final Study Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Participant discusses methods of assessment in her or his discipline or in Bedrock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued Course Development</td>
<td>CCD</td>
<td>Participant expresses his or her views on the future of Bedrock or on ways the course is still being developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptions of Collaborative Process</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Participant describes aspects of the process for developing Bedrock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreements between Speech and English Faculty</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Participant recalls specific disagreements between English and speech faculty during the development of Bedrock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivations for Developing Bedrock</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Participant describes reasons for creating the Bedrock course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Qualifications</td>
<td>PG</td>
<td>Participant remarks on the pedagogical qualifications for teaching first-year communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process and Product</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Participant discusses communication process or product in her or his discipline or in Bedrock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Participant discusses the role of rhetoric in her or his discipline or in Bedrock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory and Practice</td>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Participant discusses the role of theory or practice in her or his discipline or in developing Bedrock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applying these concepts to the transcripts revealed interesting themes in the data, which are discussed in the next chapter. Once the concepts and themes were determined and coded in the interview transcripts, I applied Akkerman and Bakker’s model of boundary crossing learning mechanisms—which were defined in the previous chapter—in order to begin developing an understanding of the results through that theoretical model. Coding and analyzing the data using the flexible grounded theory approach allowed me to discover patterns and recurring themes in the data as I researched, keeping me from drawing conclusions about the data until I completed the coding and categorization process.
The next chapter of this dissertation will discuss the results of my study and explore the themes that arose in my analysis of the official documents and interview transcripts.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter explores the results of my study on the development of the Bedrock multimodal communication course at Oakherst University. The chapter is divided into seven sections. The first section uses collected documents as well as participant interview responses to detail the motivations for developing the Bedrock course. The next five sections each detail a common theme in the interviews regarding the collaborative experience between speech and English faculty in creating the course, as follows: the second section explores participants’ assumptions about pedagogical aptitude to teach first-year writing or first-year speech; the third section discusses participants’ views on the roles of theory and practice during the collaborative process; the fourth section discusses participants’ varying perspectives on teaching communication as a process or as a product; the fifth section details participants’ views on assessing student work; and the sixth section includes reflections from participants on the results of the collaboration as well as the effectiveness and direction of the current Bedrock course. The final section of this chapter will apply the four learning mechanisms from Akkerman and Bakker’s theory of boundary crossing to these various themes in the interview data.

Exigencies for Creating the Bedrock Course

As described in the introduction to this study, the Bedrock course at Oakherst University provides students with a two-semester course sequence that emphasizes written, oral, visual, and electronic communication. Students take the Bedrock course
during their freshman year and have the same instructor and classmates in both the fall and spring semesters. By taking the course, students satisfy both the writing and the speech requirements in the common core classes. The Bedrock program is co-directed by one faculty member from the speech department and one faculty member from the English department, making it a collaboratively administrated course between the two departments. Similar to other universities’ multimodal classes, students in the Bedrock course are expected to compose a variety of academic essays, deliver oral presentations, conduct responsible research, attend university seminars, and engage with challenging arguments and ideas. The course was designed to emphasize writing and speaking as foundational literacy skills for students’ success in their academic, personal, civic, and professional lives as well as engage students with intellectually challenging materials that expand their worldviews and encourage them to become active and responsible citizens. However, the impetus for developing the Bedrock course goes beyond the content of multimodal communication and research skills.

After examining official documents related to the course such as proposals and docket memos, and after speaking with the ten participants, the various reasons for creating this multimodal communication course became clear. In developing the class, faculty and administrators hoped, first and foremost, to foster a rich first-year experience meant to acclimate students to the university and help them become successful students. Indeed, the university had already developed a first-year philosophy statement that recognizes the importance of the first year in orienting students to the college experience. The statement, included in a docket memo about Bedrock to the state’s Board of Regents, reads:
A positive first-year experience is the cornerstone of students’ success in college, and by extension, their careers and lives. [Oakherst University] recognizes the importance and value of this positive first-year experience for students, and the need for the university to facilitate students’ effective transition to the university by providing a variety of experiences, opportunities, and foundational skills to help them become successful students.

Additionally, in an original proposal for the Bedrock course presented to university administrators, the course developers clearly indicate the importance of retaining students after their first year:

With the cost of recruiting one student to [Oakherst] totaling nearly $500, it is clear that retaining students is less expensive than recruiting them. Our expectation is, with the creation of a first year [Bedrock] experience, [Oakherst] will intentionally guide the first year experience and assist students to acquire the skills they need to succeed (11-15).  

This goal for a first-year experience was also indicated in an interview with Patricia, a co-founder of the course and faculty member in the speech department. Patricia explained, “[O]ne of the things we realized is that at [Oakherst] we really didn’t have a common curricular first-year experience for our students [...] we needed to come up with a common curriculum that we could develop. So we were looking at best practices and

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5 Numbers in document and interview citations indicate line numbers on the documents and transcripts.  
6 All participant names are pseudonyms in order to preserve their anonymity.
models of first-year seminars” (1.68-69; 79-81). Thus, Bedrock was developed essentially because of a university-wide commitment to developing a first-year experience course for students. Another participant who helped develop the course, Lisa, also asserted the importance of a productive first-year experience: “I think that being able to talk about what it means to be a good student is really important for students. And especially in that context of doing academic work [...] I think there’s something pretty unique about that particular experience, being able to talk about what it means to be a college student as you’re being a college student in this particular class” (84-85).

Jennifer, another developer of the course, described the usefulness of having a course that students take for their first two consecutive semesters:

“[I notice the] relief of those students who come back after their first semester, after all of this change, after they’ve gone home and realized they’re so different than everyone that they grew up with now, they come back after that experience and all of that stuff that happened in the fall and they have this same community [...] I think you can only do that with one class because they need to meet people and they need to switch, but for many of our freshmen, having that comfort zone right away in January, not feeling that they’re totally starting over, is so important. (55-62)

Thus, the idea of a common first-year experience was a major driving force in the creation of the Bedrock course. After conducting extensive research on first-year college experiences, the developers of Bedrock shaped the course to create a positive and

7 Patricia was the only participant interviewed twice. Therefore, citations of Patricia’s responses will include a “1” indicating the first interview or a “2” indicating the second interview.
productive first-year experience for students in order to keep them in college and develop them into active, interested learners.

However, in addition to the first-year experience and student retention, the second primary impetus for creating Bedrock was to provide students with skills in writing and speaking, combining the learning objectives of the existing writing and speech courses (both of which are still offered). Similar to much of the scholarship that calls for multimodal communication courses, some participants indicated the importance of integrating writing and speaking into a single course. One faculty, Sandra, explained the importance of an integrated communication course: “I think that teaching [writing and speaking] in tandem is definitely more effective, especially if you take a disciplinary approach [...] Teaching them in tandem can really help you to show your students how the field they’re studying enacts those types of communication” (55-60). A co-founder of the course, Nancy, also detailed a career-oriented motivation for integrating writing and speaking into the same course:

What we know is that what employers are looking for in the qualities of a good employee, and what I consider to be some of the qualities of a well-educated person,...would be communication skills: speaking, writing, working in groups, ethics. So, when you look at what I would call these "portable skills," at the heart of being able to demonstrate these portable skills are writing, speaking, critical thinking. To me, there’s nothing more important than that. (19-25)

Becky, a current co-director of the course, said, “I think that communication is integrated in actuality. You can’t separate, more as technology comes through, face to face
communication [and] writing.... it's very artificial—it always has been but maybe even more so now—to separate out speech and writing” (319-323). Each of these participant responses reflects a larger narrative—running throughout all of the interviews and many of the official documents—that writing and speaking are foundational skills for students' success and that teaching these skills in tandem can illustrate to students important connections between the modes and facilitate learning that better prepares them for their post-university lives.

So, in short, the data reflect that the Bedrock course was developed both as a first-year experience for freshmen and as an integrated, multimodal communication course emphasizing writing and speaking. The remaining sections of this chapter explore themes in the collaborative process between faculty who developed the Bedrock course, and how this process demonstrates many characteristics of boundary crossing.

**Assumptions about Pedagogical Aptitude**

The first important theme in participants’ responses was their views on the pedagogical qualifications required for teaching first-year composition or first-year public speaking. Because Bedrock was designed as an introductory exploration of writing and speaking, some participants expressed confidence that they could effectively teach it without necessarily being familiar with the various theories and pedagogies developed in the respective disciplines. On the other hand, some participants acknowledged that they had to learn a lot about the process of teaching writing or speaking. In fact, English faculty Mary described some of the trepidation felt by colleagues in her department regarding the Bedrock course. Mary explained, “There was a lot of tension and territorialism that
continues to be in our department much more so than in oral comm, real anxiety about
giving up the teaching of writing, letting it go outside of the department” (48-50).

In terms of the pedagogical aptitude for teaching outside of one’s discipline, English
faculty John described the attitudes of some faculty members attending the initial meetings
for developing the Bedrock course: “There was this sense that, well, we can all speak, right?
So therefore almost anybody can teach speaking. [...] And since we all write, and we’re all
academics who have written a dissertation or at least a thesis-like paper, therefore we’re
also qualified to teach writing. It was like those kinds of long documents are just like giving
a formal presentation” (300-306). The sense was that as scholars, and regardless of
discipline, faculty usually find themselves writing as part of their work. Therefore, they
should be qualified to teach writing. And since faculty have experience delivering
presentations and talking in front of groups, they should be qualified to teach speech. This
sentiment was reflected in the comments of speech faculty Jennifer, who expressed that she
already felt comfortable teaching writing at the beginning of the process of developing
Bedrock. “I had a K-12 background, and so I had always talked to my students about
writing across the curriculum and that I will, in any paper you write for oral comm, edit it
and catch prepositions at the end of sentences, and I will do all of this stuff because you
need to learn how to write well” (558-561). In this response, Jennifer reveals her comfort
with teaching writing by indicating her familiarity with grammatical conventions. She came
back to this idea of correctness later in the interview, as well. As a phenomenon of
boundary crossing, had Jennifer been more familiar with composition’s pedagogical goals
for first-year writing, she might have been more attentive to aspects other than style and
correctness in her characterization of what it means to teach writing.
A faculty participant from outside the English or speech department, Lisa, acknowledged some of the Bedrock faculty's assumptions about pedagogical aptitude. Lisa said:

It's a really interesting thing, this notion that somehow we can all be trained to teach writing and oral comm, but given my academic field, I'm not sure I would want just anybody teaching [it]. I don't think the chemists want just anybody teaching chemistry. But we do have this idea about speaking and writing because they're somehow integrated into all of our disciplines in lots of ways. [...] One thing I learned by teaching [Bedrock] is how little I actually knew about teaching those things. (724-732)

So, as a result of each discipline's lack of familiarity with the pedagogical approaches and researched theoretical bases of the other, assumptions were made about the content of a first-year course in speech or in writing as well as the qualifications required to teach it, and these assumptions influenced parts of the collaboration. If participants had possessed a stronger awareness of the nature of boundary-crossing mechanisms (which I will return to later in this chapter), there might have been more productive conversations about the theoretical and pedagogical foundations of each first-year course and the considerations required to effectively teach it.

In fact, when asked about faculty's pedagogical aptitude for teaching the Bedrock course, Lisa recognized that there needed to be more faculty development in teaching first-year writing and speaking:

"[A] lot of faculty have students do oral reports. A lot of faculty have students write. And they grade papers like papers were graded for them but they don't
necessarily have any kind of idea of what helpful feedback might look like....
And we come and we make all these assignments and we do all this stuff and we have no idea what the hell we’re doing. We don’t get what we want but we don’t know how to make it better. Of course faculty should be taught how to teach” (536-539; 543-545).

Another faculty participant from outside the English or Speech departments, Elizabeth, explained that she learned how to teach writing simply by doing it. Elizabeth said, “I know if you teach something, you learn a lot about it. So I never in my whole life ever thought about teaching writing. I’ve never been a writing teacher or an oral comm kind of person; that’s just not in my bag. But I knew if I was teaching people how to do that, I would learn a lot about it” (110-114). When I asked Elizabeth how she made the adjustment to teaching writing having not come from a writing pedagogy background, she replied, “Slowly and with difficulty. The first time I heard somebody talking about rhetoric I thought, ‘What the hell? What does that have to do with what we’re doing?’” (120-121; 125). Similarly to Jennifer, because of her inexperience with the traditional curricular goals of first-year composition, Elizabeth had assumed that teaching writing meant teaching craft and style, not necessarily rhetorical theory.

Through my interviews, I learned that more speech faculty than English faculty were involved in initially developing the Bedrock course. Co-director Mary said, “Maybe because [speech comm] people were so much more involved in putting [Bedrock] together in the first place, and so it seemed like ‘Did you really not care? You think it’s that easy to teach writing?’ There was all this being offended, probably with some reason. I mean they didn’t learn until the first year that teaching writing is actually not easy” (170-174). Therefore,
according to several participants’ responses, there was some sense during the development of Bedrock that teaching first-year communication did not require extensive training because of its introductory nature.

**The Roles of Theory and Practice**

Another discontinuity in the collaboration on Bedrock came in the form of participants’ views on the roles of theory and practice in first-year writing and speaking. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, speech and composition scholars have taken distinctly different paths in their research on first-year pedagogy. While composition has worked extensively to theorize the work of teaching first-year writing, much of the scholarship on first-year speech courses tends to emphasize more practical, classroom-focused matters such as assessment and communication apprehension (or anxiety). Moreover, the body of research on first-year composition is significantly larger than the body of research on first-year speech.

These differences in scholarly traditions are manifested in several of the participants’ responses and were indicated as possible obstacles to a more productive collaboration between English and speech faculty. Mary, a faculty member from English, said, “I think [oral comm has] not nearly the degree of reflectiveness about pedagogy that writing studies has. It’s so interesting that the teaching of writing—comp studies—has now years of grounding in research of various sorts. I don’t think there’s any comparable [scholarship] about teaching oral comm. I mean, first-year writing pedagogies fill up shelves and shelves out there” (201-205). Echoing this response, speech faculty member Patricia stated, “I think there’s more developed pedagogical theory in teaching writing than
there is in teaching speaking. Now we’ve certainly got *Basic Communication Course Annual* and we’ve got places for communication education. But when I look at the journal articles in those, they’re not about [first-year] public speaking....I just don’t see the same kinds of arguments, the same kinds of disagreements in our field as I do in writing" (2.410-415).

These differing scholarly traditions seemed to impact the collaborative process for creating the Bedrock course. One participant from the English department, John, talked about the disconnect between theory and practice for speech and writing faculty during the collaboration. As a self-proclaimed theorist in the English department, John found himself trying to communicate some of the rich theoretical traditions in first-year composition to faculty in the speech department. John said, “I kept sending them emails about, ‘Well look, here is composition theory. I’m trying to inform you.’ [...] One was a summary of Jim Berlin’s take on the main strands of composition theory... current-traditionalism, expressivism, and social epistemicism” (261-268). According to John, although he provided summaries of various theories in first-year composition, the speech faculty were not very receptive to his emails. Patricia also made mention of John’s emails, pointing out that “when I would look at his emails that he would send—and his emails would be pages long—I had no idea what they meant. And I’d have to read them multiple times.... Some of the folks who had never been used to collaborating at all were like, ‘Seriously, I get five emails from [John] a day, and I can’t deal with this’” (1.365-371). In our second interview, Patricia elaborated on the notion of speech faculty being unfamiliar with the theories and terminology used in first-year composition pedagogy: “We don’t even understand the first paragraph because they’re using words and language that we haven’t used before. I like Peter Elbow because I can understand him” (2.445-447). Therefore, while John had
attempted to provide information about various composition pedagogies, the speech faculty were unable (or unwilling) to digest these theories because they were unfamiliar with the terminology and concepts being used. Had the mechanisms of boundary crossing proposed by Akkerman and Bakker been more consciously implemented in this collaboration, participants might have entered the process with an understanding that it was going to necessitate encountering unfamiliar material for both parties. With an understanding of boundary crossing mechanisms, the discontinuities between parties might have been seen not as obstacles but as productive junctures for learning. Instead, John found himself sending information to participants outside of his discipline who could not properly engage with the material, and he expected that they would learn the material simply by reading his messages. This act also did not contribute to the dialogicality discussed by Akkerman and Bakker in that it was a one-way communication of information.

In addition to faculty outside the English Department finding composition theory unfamiliar, there were also discontinuities among participants about the role of freshman composition in the curriculum. A few participants from outside the English department expressed that over-theorizing first-year composition might be obscuring the more practical purposes of the class, which they saw as grammar. Lisa explained:

There’s a huge difference between teaching English majors to write versus teaching college freshmen how to write. We need college freshmen who can write well in business, who can write well in education, who can write well in any curricular area that they go into. They need to know how to do APA
citations, they need to know how to write a five-paragraph essay, they need to know how to utilize grammar.... they need some skills, folks. (233-238)

Speech faculty Jennifer expressed a similar view: “Teach them how to love to write, that’s fine. And if students want to be writing majors or English majors then that is the spot for that. [Bedrock] is the spot for, ‘I am going to edit the bejeezers out of your paper’” (246-248). So for some of the non-English faculty, it seemed that their perceptions of first-year composition as strictly a skills-based class influenced their engaging with the theoretical aspects of composition pedagogy. When asked why he thought the non-English faculty were resistant to his emails about composition theory, John said, "If I had to speculate, I think a lot of people just sort of went into this like, "Well, it's just first-year writing. It can't possibly be anything as [complicated] as that" (295-296). These sentiments connect closely with participants’ claims about their ability to teach first-year writing without being familiar with the theory, which was discussed above.

It is important to remember that not only were speech and English faculty collaborating on the Bedrock course but also faculty from other departments on campus. As the data show, some faculty outside the English department found it difficult to understand the necessity of complexly theorizing the first-year writing course. This is unsurprising, given that faculty in other departments tend to view first-year composition as a product- and correctness-based course and have less familiarity with the theoretical work done in composition over the last several decades. Furthermore, those who did attempt to understand 25-30 years’ worth of composition theory found themselves overwhelmed by abstract concepts and terminology that were not commensurate with their own traditions
of more practical, classroom-focused pedagogical issues, issues focused on the “product” of a speech.

**Teaching Communication as Process or Product**

Another theme revealed in my conversations with the faculty who developed the Bedrock course was the difference between teaching communication as a process and teaching it as a product. Since the 1970s, composition pedagogy has embraced a process-based model for teaching writing, moving the focus away from the final product (the essay) and toward the various recursive steps and iterations that writers go through to complete a work. This writing process is dynamic and continues even after submitting a finished paper (often in the form of portfolios or revisions). While public speaking is certainly taught as a process of steps leading to the final speech, the speech itself is seen as the final product of the student's work.

This product-versus-process issue came up multiple times in the interviews. One instructor from outside the speech and English departments, Elizabeth, expressed her views on the differing philosophies between the two camps. “My perception is that the writing people had very doctrinal ideas about how one goes about writing. And the oral people, their doctrine was, ‘Everybody has to practice these kinds of speeches but we don’t really care so much about how they get to the point of doing the speech.”’ (186-189). English instructor John explained that there was “very little examination of process” in the discussions of pedagogy during the creation of Bedrock and that discussions moved almost immediately to issues of assignment types and assessment. The boundary between disciplines manifests clearly here, as faculty from outside the English department were
unfamiliar with the process movement of composition pedagogy, so matters of process were left out of the discussion in favor of classroom-focused issues like assessment and assignment development.

Bedrock co-director Patricia offered a potential explanation for why the speech faculty didn’t immediately embrace conversations centered on the writing process. “In writing, the philosophy is that you get to the place where you never reach a final draft, okay? It’s always in draft form. In speaking, when you’re delivering the presentation, even if you could go back and do it differently, you’re in front of a live audience. It’s your final draft. You can’t go back and redo it” (2.72-77). Patricia said that she took cues from the writing faculty and has been offering a revision to students on their final speeches, but no student had accepted that offer at the time of the interview. Another participant, speech faculty Carolyn, also mentioned this difference in process versus product for English and speech faculty:

[Speech] is all about getting people up to speed to be able to participate in discussion of complex and difficult ideas. Well, at that point it really doesn’t matter what your rough draft was. You don’t go through revisions. The important part is that actual confrontation. Now that we’re here in this space, can we structure the space better? Can we be more articulate in how we talk? All of the delivery and the mnemonics and the rapport building and all of those things are so much more important, but not when you’re teaching writing. (402-407)

Participants in the study conceptualized the differences in the processes of writing a paper and delivering a speech, and these differences are not difficult to see for oneself. Both
forms of communication are dynamic processes that begin with similar considerations such as invention (brainstorming, audience analysis, etc.), organization, substance or content, style, and delivery. These rhetorical principles can be seen as commonalities across speech and writing. However, the differences arise when the student submits that product, whether it is an essay or a speech. For essays, students are typically given opportunities to revise and improve their submissions after receiving feedback from their instructor or their peers. This revision can come in the form of a revised essay or as part of an end-of-semester portfolio of the students’ work. In contrast, students in speech courses are working toward that 5-10 minutes in which they stand in front of their peers and deliver an oral presentation. That presentation is the last work that the student typically does on a given speech assignment; then he or she moves on to the next speech. Therefore, the process of composing a speech stops once the speech is given, while the “final draft” of an essay is really only another step in an ongoing process of revision and refinement.

One way that the English faculty at Oakherst tried to instill the importance of process in the formation of Bedrock was by introducing peer workshopping to the course. Elizabeth, a faculty member from outside the English department, was already familiar with peer review because of her experience with Writing Across the Curriculum initiatives at her previous university, but the speech faculty reported not having been exposed to peer workshopping until the formation of Bedrock. Patricia, in particular, seemed excited about the process of learning peer workshopping and using it for her speech assignments. Patricia said, “I remember taking a whole summer and reading an old book now called *Nuts and Bolts* that [had been] recommended from the Iowa Writing Project, and taking lots of notes on how to go about doing workshops, how to go about doing peer reviews” (1.577-
580) John said that he and Patricia have very productive ongoing conversations about peer review in Bedrock: “She has been really interested that I have thought about and really worked up peer review because I’ve gone through those peer review experiences where someone hands it off to a complete stranger in the room and they’re like, ‘Great, I like it.’ These are the kinds of things that I thought needed to be discussed. What does peer review mean?” (332-336). According to the Co-Directors of Bedrock, Patricia and Mary, all Bedrock instructors are strongly encouraged to implement peer review with students on all assignments, both essays and speeches. These reviews typically work by partnering one student with another and having them read each other’s essay drafts or speech outlines. Based on participants’ positive reflections on the value of peer review, the act of peer review could serve as a potentially useful boundary object—a tool that both disciplines see as valuable and can work on together—that would allow more productive collaboration between the two disciplines of speech and English.

Writing teachers and speech teachers have differing approaches to the process of composing, and these approaches impacted the collaborative process of creating the Bedrock course. While speech faculty viewed students as working toward a final product in their assignments, English faculty tried to emphasize the importance of revising and improving writing after a student submits a draft. These two approaches are still being reconciled by the program through faculty workshops dedicated to process theory and effective peer workshopping.
Assessing Student Work

One of the most often mentioned disconnects between the Oakherst English and speech faculty during the development of Bedrock was how to assess student work. The culture of student assessment in the speech department at Oakherst was one of standardized rubrication, with faculty providing clear categories of assessment to students for each of their major speeches. In contrast, the culture of student assessment in the English department was one of faculty autonomy over how student work was graded. Unlike speech faculty, the English faculty were not used to implementing rubrics for their assignments, and this difference impacted the collaborative process for creating the Bedrock course. One participant, Elizabeth, who teaches in neither speech nor English, indicated the disagreements over using rubrics for assessment. “I’m sure that writing people implemented it very differently than oral comm people did. So even though [writing faculty] are doctrinal, their way of going about things is much more open than [speech faculty]. [Speech faculty] want everything specified and rubrics and count this and do this, and you know [writing faculty] are more processy” (199-204).

One participant from the English department, Becky, expressed her initial concerns over assessment during the development of Bedrock. Becky said, “It wasn't exactly the way we would teach writing.... When it came to the writing end, it took a lot of work to sort of de-emphasize breaking down the writing into very discrete parts and rubricating them. That was to us not a good writing pedagogy. To skip to that stage early is really constraining to students” (70-73). English faculty John expressed concern that the standardized rubrics proposed by speech faculty were derived from a series of rubrics published by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). According to John, rather than
developing unique rubrics for the Bedrock assignments, faculty developing Bedrock had decided to use these generic rubrics provided by the AAUP. This decision did not sit well with the English faculty. John explained, “I think that if we had used those weekly meetings in order to do some dynamic criteria mapping and come up with our own rubric—what do we expect our students to have done at this point in the year?—I think that would have been work and time well spent instead of being talked at like, ‘Here’s what we need to do and here’s how you do this, and by the way here’s the assessment we’re going to use in two weeks, a national assessment” (366-371). For Becky, the emphasis on standardized rubrics from the speech faculty made the collaboration with the English faculty more difficult. “It felt really like their [English faculty] wings were clipped, and some of the goals they really held dear to themselves in terms of writing, revision, critical thinking, were being kind of cast aside in favor of a standardized assessment. And so that was rocky” (89-92).

Faculty from the speech department also expressed concerns about the collaborative process of standardizing the course assessment. Carolyn pointed out, “Every speech course in the entire country is taught basically the same way. And most of us come from big PhD programs where you have 60 or 70 sections. I mean, you can’t not standardize. And I don’t know why the English people don’t seem to want to standardize the same way” (415-417). Patricia expressed a similar view:

In oral comm we always use rubrics. I don’t know of any speech teacher that doesn’t have a rubric. Not all faculty assume that you should use rubrics. In fact, some of the faculty that teach College Writing who have come into the [Bedrock] course, they talk about how they don’t give grades. And then at the
very end of the semester they have this portfolio approach to grading.... In oral comm, each thing is individually graded and you move on. (2.132-143)

Patricia also pointed out that during her first semester of teaching Bedrock, she attempted to avoid using rubrics for her students’ speeches but was not comfortable with the results. “Basically I was giving a score for each category. But they didn’t see that. They just saw the overarching score at the end. And so they didn’t have as much information. So I said, ‘For this next speech I want to go back [and use rubrics]; is this okay with you all?’ And they were all like, ‘yeah.’ They needed that feedback as to why I was giving them the grade they were getting” (234-238). Nancy, a co-founder of the course, expressed some positive outcomes of wanting to use standardized rubrics in Bedrock: “We have worked really hard to create a course that is assessable. We can actually tell people how well the students can write. We can give them examples of what they can do and what they can’t do” (31-33).

For one participant, Lisa, the lack of standardized rubrics in Oakherst composition classes spoke to a larger issue of ambiguity regarding what students in first-year composition were actually doing in class. “We asked [the English faculty] over and over again, ‘What kinds of assignments do you require students to do in these classes?’ And there was never an answer to that question. We’ve never gotten it. We still don’t have it…. Students can do lots of stuff. They may or may not write a research paper, they may or may not whatever” (278-282). Thus, participant responses indicate that as a boundary-crossing experience, one important decision about the Bedrock course that the various disciplines had to reach came in the form of assignment types.
Based on the data collected through participant interviews, there was discontinuity between speech and English faculty about using standardized rubrics for assessing student assignments in the Bedrock course. This discontinuity eventually led to a stalemate in the discussion, and because faculty were pressured to implement the course as soon as possible, there was no time to continue debating the strengths and weaknesses of using rubrics for assessment. In the case of rubrics, no consensus was reached in developing Bedrock, and it is expected that faculty who prefer to assess with rubrics do so while others choose other assessment methods. At the time of these interviews, there were no mandatory rubrics implemented in Bedrock classes, for any of the assignments. However, given the relative newness of this course, it is suspected that they will create rubrics as time goes on.

**Reflections on the Course as Developed**

In each interview, participants were asked for their perceptions of the end product of their collaboration, the Bedrock course. At the time of the interviews, the course had been implemented for three years and was being considered as a permanent offering by university administrators, so I asked participants to reflect not only on the process of creating the course but also on the value of the course in its current incarnation.

Some participants gave positive responses about the effectiveness of the course. English faculty Becky expressed confidence with the development of the course. Becky said, “I really feel like it's moving in the right direction” [198]. Speech faculty Jennifer explained, “I love teaching the course, and I think it provides our students with several things. First of all, the introduction of some pretty rigorous writing and reading and speaking, [...] having a
common read, [and the fact that] it’s a year long” (48-50; 52-54). Elizabeth expressed that the first-year experience element of Bedrock was an important aspect of the current class, as well. Elizabeth said, “You’re teaching them how to be students while they are students, how to be a good student, how to do well in college, not just this assignment in this class, but these are skills that you will need” [95-97].

Other participants explained that they would like to see more changes happen as the Bedrock course continues to evolve. Co-Director Patricia said that while the current incarnation of Bedrock seems to serve students well, it isn’t necessarily more effective than teaching writing and speaking separately:

> Do I think that [Bedrock] is a better way of teaching writing and oral comm? I would say it’s a good way but I would say it is equally as good [as teaching them separately]. I would not say it’s better. And I’ve had students say to me that they wish they’d taken...some students say they love it this way, and others say, ”You know, I really would just have liked to focus on speeches and not have to do writing and speeches.” It feels a lot heavier, even in a two-semester sequence. (480-485)

Co-Director Mary indicated that she would like to see more faculty development for Bedrock instructors: “What I want—the big change I would like to see—would be to have actual [Bedrock] appointments that teachers would interview for and be prepared for. It would include in the job description responsibilities to do workshops and do [professional] development” (448-451). Elizabeth expressed that she would like to see more awareness across campus about the purpose and usefulness of Bedrock: “I would like the campus to understand more about it because they seem kind of ignorant on what it is and what the
purpose is. They think that people are going to come out star writers. Well that’s not what it's about” (510-511).

In reflecting on the current state of Bedrock, participants largely found the course to be effective in its current state but also expressed that it had room for improvements. The absence of consensus during some aspects of collaborative process certainly led to stalemates in the pedagogical approach to the course. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, boundary crossing is not about consensus—it is about moving forward even when everyone doesn’t agree. In fact, boundary researcher Susan Leigh Star has explained that her framing of the boundary concept was motivated by a “desire to analyze the nature of cooperative work in the absence of consensus” (604). Thus, while there were several disagreements about pedagogical practices in Bedrock, participants realized that they needed to move forward with the course in a way that would serve students.

In conclusion, the document and interview data in this case study reveal interesting themes in the collaboration of Oakherst University English and speech faculty on the Bedrock course. The data reveal the motivation for creating this multimodal communication course, faculty’s views on pedagogical aptitude, important differences in the roles of theory and practice in speech and English, the differing perceptions on teaching communication as a process or a product, and the varying philosophies on how to assess student assignments. In the following section, I apply Akkerman and Bakker’s four learning mechanisms of boundary crossing to these various themes found in the data.
Boundary Crossing during Bedrock Development

Now that I have described several themes regarding the Bedrock collaborative process, derived from participant interview data, I will discuss how Akkerman and Bakker’s four learning mechanisms of boundary crossing can be applied to these themes. As explained in Chapter 2, Akkerman and Bakker’s model of boundary crossing describes the “various ways in which sociocultural differences and resulting discontinuities in action and interaction can come to function as resources for development of intersecting identities and practices” (132). Viewing boundary crossing in this way can serve to illuminate the various learning potentials of interdisciplinary collaboration and can reveal potential reasons for discontinuity between disciplines. For convenience, I have reprinted Table 2 from Chapter 2, which lists and describes the characteristics of each learning mechanism of boundary crossing. I will then explain how each mechanism played a role in the collaboration of developing Bedrock.

Table 5: Akkerman and Bakker's four learning mechanisms for understanding work at the boundaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Mechanism</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<td>Identification</td>
<td>Othering</td>
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<td>Transformation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Crystallization</td>
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<td>Maintaining uniqueness</td>
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<td>Continuous joint work</td>
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Identification

In the first learning mechanism described by Akkerman and Bakker, identification, “previous lines of demarcation between practices are uncertain or destabilized because of feelings of threat or because of increasing similarities or overlap between practices” (142). At their core, identification processes often involve the act of defining one practice in light of another, or “othering.” This was apparent in participant interviews, where most faculty participants seemed confident in asserting their own pedagogical identities and describing how those identities were different from faculty outside their department. At the same time, this recognition of identity differences led to an othering of each discipline, creating some confusion in pedagogical motivations and discontinuities in the collaborative process.

The debate over using rubrics in Bedrock is a prime example of the identification mechanism. On one hand, the speech faculty felt secure in their department’s practice of using standardized rubrics for assessing student speeches, viewing this as a core element of their pedagogical identities. In contrast, the English faculty were uncomfortable developing rubrics for writing assignments, preferring instead to provide students with feedback on their assignments through comments on the essays. English faculty saw the imposing of rubrics on their assessment as a challenge to their identities as writing teachers. So, in this case, each discipline asserted its own identity in terms of student assessment, and the meeting of these identities at the boundary led to discontinuities about assessment that remain in the current incarnation of the Bedrock course.

Another discontinuity in disciplinary identities among participants came in the form of the pedagogical qualifications needed to teach first-year communication classes. Some participants felt secure in their ability to teach first-year writing without necessarily being
familiar with the theoretical and pedagogical traditions that have shaped composition for the last several decades. Speech faculty Jennifer, for example, expressed her comfort with teaching writing as a skills-based class. She viewed herself as a “good teacher,” one that had enough familiarity with writing skills to teach composition to freshman students (157). Furthermore, as Mary said above, the creation of Bedrock led to some feelings of threat on the part of English faculty, who preferred that the teaching of writing not go outside the English department. English faculty viewed others outside their discipline teaching writing as a challenge to their own pedagogical identities, identities that were formed through knowledge of the language and theory of composition pedagogy. These same feelings were also likely present in the speech faculty regarding the teaching of public speaking, though no participants expressed it explicitly.

In short, it could be argued that participants’ own pedagogical identities, paired with their unfamiliarity with identities outside of their disciplines, created a discontinuity in the interdisciplinary collaboration on Bedrock. However, it is important to note that in identification processes, “boundaries between practices are encountered and reconstructed, without necessarily overcoming discontinuities” (Akkerman and Bakker 143). The act of identification is not always reconciled between parties during work at the boundary, and in the case of Bedrock, the meeting of these identities often served to reinforce existing pedagogical practices in each discipline. However, it also served as a way for faculty to see their own teaching in a different light. Jennifer expressed an interesting sentiment about how her pedagogical identity has changed since she started teaching Bedrock: “I have got to stop thinking like an oral comm teacher. That is not who I am anymore in this class. I am a [Bedrock] teacher, and that is so much different” (210-212).
Coordination

The second learning mechanism of boundary crossing described by Akkerman and Bakker is coordination, in which “effective means and procedures are sought allowing diverse practices to cooperate efficiently in distributed work, even in the absence of consensus” (143). Coordination at the boundary involves communicative connections between parties, efforts to translate concepts between different disciplines in order to find a balance between “a diversity of possible understandings,” and routinization of these communicative connections and translations (144). Activities of coordination during the development of Bedrock can be seen in the participant responses above.

In collaborating on Bedrock, faculty from English and speech established various communicative connections in order to develop the materials and pedagogy for the course. As Akkerman and Bakker explain, communicative connections are often created by “instrumentalities (boundary objects) that are shared by multiple parties” (143). In this case, the boundary object was the Bedrock itself, and the communicative connections consisted of the weeks-long process of meeting to develop Bedrock as well as the email exchanges that occurred between parties regarding various aspects of the course.

Another important aspect of the coordination mechanism is efforts of translation, in which parties attempt to describe or explain concepts and processes to other parties outside of their disciplines. English faculty John’s lengthy emails on composition theory to his speech colleagues serve as an attempt at translation. By sending these emails, John attempted to translate some of the complex theories that have informed contemporary composition pedagogy, such as cognitivism, expressivism, and social constructionism.
However, as Akkerman and Bakker emphasize, learning at the boundary is a dialogical process, one that involves mutual participation in the translation process. John’s emails thus did not serve as productive translation activities because he was not engaging in mutual dialogue with his colleagues in the speech department, engaging in a one-way transmission of information.

Throughout the collaboration process, it became clear to some participants that translation was not occurring productively. Jennifer said, “I really began to see that we were essentially saying the same things but using very different language in saying it” (213-214). Had participants in the Bedrock collaboration been more attentive to the importance of dialogical translation in work at the boundary, there might have been more fruitful communication of discipline-specific concepts and practices in order to foster productive collaboration between speech and English.

A final aspect of the coordination mechanism of boundary crossing is routinization, in which activities of coordination become “part of an automatized or operational practice” (Akkerman and Bakker 144). In this study, participants reported that there were several week-long seminars as well as weekly meetings during the first semester and preceding summer of the Bedrock course. During these seminars and meetings, faculty would discuss curricular and pedagogical decisions regarding assignments, class activities, and assessment, and guest speakers would visit to talk about various pedagogical practices. However, these seminars and meetings eventually stopped because of the course’s rapid growth. Over 25 sections of Bedrock existed at the time of the study, so it was difficult to find a time for all faculty teaching it to meet in one place. Thus, the routinization of this
faculty development ceased, though several participants expressed a desire to continue it in the future.

Another attempt at routinization in Bedrock comes in the form of the ongoing debate about the use of rubrics for student assessment, with speech faculty using them and English faculty not using them. While the imposition of standardized rubrics is not presently occurring in Bedrock, faculty do engage in ongoing discussions about using rubrics to assess student work. This routinized conversation about rubrics allows participants to continue debating the merits of using standardized assessment tools in their Bedrock courses.

**Reflection**

A third learning mechanism of boundary crossing is reflection, in which participants come to “realize and explicate differences between practices and thus learn something new about their own and others’ practices” (Akkerman and Bakker 144-45). It is through this reflection that participants in interdisciplinary collaboration both establish their own perspectives on issues (perspective making) as well as understand their opinions through the perspectives of others (perspective taking). Both perspective making and perspective taking are inherently dialogical processes because of the necessity for interaction between participants.

In this study, participants often realized that they were coming from different disciplines and that the differences in their traditions led to discontinuities during the collaborative process. But through reflection, every participant seemed willing to view the collaborative experience through not just their own perspectives but also the perspectives
of their colleagues in other disciplines. For example, the speech faculty engaged in perspective making by establishing their confidence that the kinds of practical, classroom-focused research occurring in their discipline was serving their first-year speech classes well. However, they also engaged in perspective taking by often commenting on their own discipline’s lack of deep pedagogical theorization and how that might look to their colleagues in the English Department. Some participants from the speech department, like Patricia, even reflected that they would like to see the kinds of theoretical research done in composition to show up more often in scholarly journals dealing with public speaking pedagogy.

While faculty engaged in reflection throughout the collaborative process, they were also able to reflect simply by engaging in these interviews. By talking with me about the collaborative experience, they were constantly engaging in both perspective making and perspective taking by explaining and affirming their own motivations as well as trying to understand the motivations of their colleagues through their perspectives. This kind of reflection seemed fruitful for all participants, and most of them expressed a relief at being able to discuss these collaborative issues with a third party.

Transformation

The final learning mechanism described by Akkerman and Bakker is transformation, which leads to “profound changes in practices, potentially even the creation of a new, in-between practice” (146). Transformation typically begins with a confrontation of practices that results in the recognition of a shared problem space (often the boundary itself) and a willingness to engage in practices that cross that boundary.
The most salient example of transformation in this study came in the form of peer response, where students share their work with each other in order to receive feedback and suggestions for revision before a final draft is submitted to the teacher. Peer response is arguably a defining feature of composition pedagogy, as compositionists have established a long tradition of scholarship and practice in asking students to respond to each other’s writing. While faculty from English working on Bedrock saw peer response as a vital aspect of their pedagogy, faculty from speech were mostly unfamiliar with the practice. Because a considerable amount of class time in public speaking courses is allotted to students for delivering their speeches, it was not common for faculty to also block off class time for peer response sessions. However, after acknowledging this confrontation of practices, many speech faculty members were willing to engage in peer response with their students during their writing assignments in Bedrock. In fact, by the time of our interviews, participants Patricia and Jennifer were both implementing peer response not just in Bedrock but also in their public speaking courses. This fundamental transformation of their pedagogies came out of their collaboration with English faculty on Bedrock.

Another notable example of transformation occurred when faculty from English and speech began discussing the amount of detail to put into student assignment sheets. Faculty in speech were accustomed to including considerable information on assignment sheets about the expectations for assignments and the evaluation criteria that would be used to grade it. Oakherst English faculty, on the other hand, preferred more open-ended assignment sheets that left room for interpretation and allowed more freedom for students’ responses to the assignment. According to some participants, confrontations about the amount of detail to place on assignment sheets occurred quite frequently during
the work on Bedrock, but some participants reflected that this confrontation led to a transformation in their own teaching practices. As noted earlier in this chapter, English faculty John—who was the most vocal about his resistance to detailed assignment sheets—came to realize that perhaps giving students more information about an assignment could be a good thing. In order to keep his students' understanding of the assignment as a priority, John explained that he now includes considerably more detail about his expectations for student assignments. This transformation in John's pedagogy came out of his work at the boundary with speech faculty on Bedrock.

In short, my conversations with Bedrock faculty revealed all four learning mechanisms of boundary crossing during their collaboration on Bedrock. Participants engaged in identification of their own pedagogical practices, coordinated with colleagues outside of their discipline to create a unique multimodal course, reflected on their own perspectives as well as the perspectives of their colleagues, and transformed their practices and pedagogies as a result of the interdisciplinary work.

It is important to keep in mind that these results are derived from a single case of developing one particular course at one particular university and therefore cannot be seen, on their own, as representative of all interdepartmental collaborations between English and speech. However, the results do indicate some important implications about English faculty collaborating with speech faculty to develop a multimodal communication course. The following chapter discusses these implications in detail.
CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Now that I have explored some of the themes that arose during my conversations with Oakherst faculty, I will use these themes to explore the implications of my study on the development of the Bedrock multimodal communication course. I will use participants' responses as well as scholarship on multimodal communication and boundary crossing to explore answers to the research questions posed in the introduction to this study. I have repeated these research questions below:

1. What was the exigency of the Bedrock course and how were decisions made about the shape of its curriculum?

2. In terms of the collaboration between departments on Bedrock, what kinds of disagreements, both curricular and pedagogical, arose between faculty of the English and Speech departments?

3. How were these disagreements managed or reconciled in order to move forward with the course?

4. In what ways did faculty learn from each other during the collaborative process?

5. How might participants’ experiences developing Bedrock inform the creation of future multimodal communication courses?

In the next four sections, I will discuss each of these questions and explore some of the implications that can be drawn from the Bedrock collaborative experience. I will
conclude this chapter with a call to action that urges speech and English to rebuild the bridge between disciplines torn down a century ago with the walk-out at NCTE.

**Exigencies of Multimodality**

My first research question regarding the development of the Bedrock multimodal communication course was an obvious one: why did they do it? I was curious to know why a liberal arts core program with existing courses in first-year writing and speech decided to create a course that integrates both modes of communication into a single curriculum. Was Bedrock, like many other multimodal communication courses, a result of the university's acknowledgement of evolving communication practices and faculty's desire to integrate these practices in a single course, in order to reflect the dynamic and multimodal communication that occurs in the twenty-first century? I found that the answer to this question is partially yes, but there were other factors that shaped the exigency of the course, as well.

As mentioned in the results chapter of this study, the primary exigency for developing Bedrock was that the university needed a year-long course that would include elements of first-year experience for freshman students in order to acclimate them to university life and develop them into successful students. This first-year experience would involve students attending campus seminars and guest lectures on a variety of topics such as binge drinking and sexual violence defense strategies. Students would use class time to engage in debates and discussions about these and other campus-related issues. Bedrock Co-Founder Nancy explained that the first-year experience also combines “peer mentoring, early alert systems, living learning communities, common experiences, and civility” (59-
Additionally, the first-year experience would teach students how to be effective students, how to think and communicate in a way that will help them succeed in their four years of coursework.

Because the university didn’t want to add a year’s worth of credit hours to the existing core curriculum, it was decided that the first-year experience should be worked in to the existing liberal arts core classes. A committee was assembled to develop ideas for the first-year experience course, and they presented an idea for a class that would integrate both writing and speaking. According to participants, it made the most sense for the two classes of writing and speech to come together. Bedrock Co-Director Patricia articulated this clearly:

I think we all understood that there are commonalities between writing and speaking [classes]. When you look at the kinds of things that we do, a student will typically take oral comm the first semester and then writing the second, or vice versa, of their first year. They would both have a library tour. They would both have an emphasis on information literacy. They would both have emphasis on adapting to an audience. They would both have some description of genre and choices and strategies of language and organization as it relates to genre. They would both talk about language stylistic issues. They would both talk about persuasion and persuasive appeals and messaging. So because we had that in common, there was thinking initially that we can go deeper into these things when we don’t have to cover just the basics again, first semester/second semester, and we know what these students have had. (2.22-33)
The thinking of the committee was that because the classes in writing and speaking had many commonalities in terms of curricular objectives, they would be the most natural classes to combine into one. In one proposal of Bedrock to the university, the committee lists examples of several other universities’ first-year experience courses, all of which emphasize oral presentations, research, and writing as central curricular objectives. These programs include the first-year seminar programs at Appalachian State University, the College of Charleston, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Michigan. Each of these universities, it seems, developed a course similar to Bedrock, one that acclimates students to the university but also teaches core skills in writing, speaking, and critical thinking. The first-year multimodal communication program at my own institution, Iowa State University, could be seen as a similar example of this kind of course. Called ISUComm, the program rests on a strong rhetorical base and involved input from both speech and design faculty in its development. Furthermore, ISUComm courses work to get students out to campus events and implements assignments that ask students to explore their campus and learn more about it. In fact, representatives from Oakherst actually visited our campus during their research on multimodal communication curricula because

So, for Oakherst, developing Bedrock was a matter of finding a way to integrate first-year experience elements, based heavily in rhetorical principles, into its existing core curriculum. However, faculty involved in developing the course were also cognizant that integrating speaking and writing into one course could promote fruitful communication practices that teach students how to work within and between each mode. English faculty Nancy said, “I think that you do pick up synergy between oral comm and writing. I think
there are some efficiencies that allow you to go deeper in both of those areas by combining
the course, so I think there's something really nice about that” (160-163). Other
participants expressed their feeling that contemporary communication is inherently
multimodal and that teaching writing and speaking in tandem can be beneficial for
students’ academic development. As Becky explained, “I think that communication is
integrated in actuality. You can't separate, more as technology comes through, face to face
communication [and] writing.... it's very artificial—it always has been but maybe even
more so now—to separate out speech and writing” (319-323). Thus, while Bedrock was
conceived as a first-year experience course, faculty recognized the value of teaching
different modes of communication in a single course.

This emphasis on the integrated nature of contemporary communication and the
variety of modes used to express thought can be seen as a primary exigency for the
multimodal turn in composition studies as a whole. As discussed in Chapter 2, a large part
of the multimodal movement in composition focuses on “multiliteracies,” or teaching
students how to read and compose not only written essays but also oral, visual, and digital
communication projects. Perhaps the most widely cited call for attention to multiliteracies
in education comes from The New London Group (NLG), a global team of literacy scholars
who came together in 1994 to “rethink the fundamental premises of literacy pedagogy in
order to influence practices that will give students the skills and knowledge they need to
achieve their aspirations” (3). It is the NLG’s contention that the new global economy and
the prevalence of networking technologies have had such an impact on information
delivery that educators must begin incorporating “multiliteracies” into their curricula. A
pedagogy of multiliteracies “focuses on modes of representation much broader than
language alone. These differ according to culture and context, and have specific cognitive, social, and cultural effects” (New London Group 4).

This increasingly popular notion of multiple literacies has done much to bring discussions of multimodality to the composition discipline. Visual literacy, for example, has become a popularly theorized skill in composition research. Diana George masterfully lays out a brief history of the visual rhetoric movement in composition, illustrating that various scholars in the last fifty years have encouraged the uses of television, film, and advertising as subjects for analysis. Proponents of visual literacy in composition generally argue that students will gain the same kinds of analytical skills by critiquing visuals that they would by critiquing written text, and they will also pick up new analytical tools, as well. Robert E. Horn has outlined the myriad ways in which visual language exerts rhetorical functions such as guiding readers through a document, focusing their attention on certain aspects of the document, clustering visual and verbal elements, and providing lightness and humor. These rhetorical devices can be unpacked and analyzed just as effectively as an article from a magazine or journal.

Digital literacy is also an often-cited reason for composition to shift its attention toward multimodal communication. Cynthia Selfe and Richard Selfe have been at the forefront of the digital literacy movement for over two decades. In their widely-cited 1994 article “The Politics of the Interface,” Selfe and Selfe argue that digital spaces like online forums “have the potential for supporting student-centered learning and discursive practices that can be different from, and—some claim—more engaging and democratic than those occurring within traditional classroom settings” (482-83). This sentiment about the importance of technological literacy can be seen throughout composition scholarship of
the last 25 years, making it arguably one of the cornerstone pedagogical issues in our
discipline today. Scholarly journals like *Computers and Composition* and *Kairos* devote their
content exclusively to discussions of technology and communication, while prominent
journals like *College Composition and Communication* also cover these issues often.

Thus, many calls for developing multimodal communication projects or classes use
the concept of multiliteracies—the importance of learning how to read and compose in a
variety of modes—as a linchpin for the movement. However, much of the scholarly
discussion on the multimodal turn tends to focus on visual and digital literacies, largely
ignoring oral literacies like listening and speaking. As mentioned in chapter 2, some
scholars such as Cynthia Selfe and Peter Elbow have published on the uses of orality in
composition, but these discussions are uncommon in the vast pool of literature on visual
communication and digital literacies. As I will argue later in this chapter, more research
should be done on the various ways in which orality can figure into multimodal
communication frameworks.

**Discontinuities in the Bedrock Collaboration**

The aim of my second and third research questions was to learn from participants
about the discontinuities that arose during the collaboration between English and speech
faculty on the Bedrock course. I also wanted to know how these discontinuities were
managed or handled in order to move forward with the class. Chapter 4 of this study
discussed some of these discontinuities. In this section, I will briefly summarize the
discontinuities mentioned by participants during interviews, and I will close the section
with an exploration of how these discontinuities were managed.
The primary discontinuity between speech and English faculty at Oakherst seemed to be on matters of student assessment. As mentioned previously, faculty in the English department had not traditionally used rubrics to assess student projects, as faculty in the speech department did. Therefore, when it came to combining writing and speaking into a single course, there were disagreements about whether or not rubrics should be used in evaluating the Bedrock projects. This discontinuity led to a number of discussions about the use of rubrics, with speech faculty and most faculty outside of English or speech being comfortable implementing them and faculty from English expressing concern at the idea.

A second discontinuity between Oakherst English and speech faculty, as described in Chapter 4, was on the roles of theory and practice in pedagogy. While the English faculty seemed to recognize the composition discipline’s long tradition of incorporating various philosophical and pedagogical theories into its teaching, the speech faculty recognized their discipline’s tradition of focusing on practical classroom issues like assessment and speech apprehension. When English faculty John sent various materials about theories of composition to the speech faculty, these materials were met with resistance. As mentioned previously, this one-way communication does not align with effective coordinating efforts, which rely heavily on dialogicality in order to work. Thus, the roles of theory and practice in each discipline were never reconciled during the development of Bedrock.

A third discontinuity that arose during the collaboration was approaches to organizing a piece of communication. While the speech faculty were used to teaching the basic five-section speech—introduction, three body sections, and conclusion—the English faculty did not subscribe to that model with essays. In fact, according to Patricia, most of the writing teachers avoided teaching the five-paragraph essay. Patricia said, "I've since
learned that the five-paragraph essay is not something that a lot of writing faculty think we should be teaching toward. So I understand that now, but I didn't know that at the time” (2.115-117). Many faculty from the English department viewed the five-paragraph structure as needlessly limiting on students’ expression. English faculty John said, “[O]ftentimes communication [studies] is like, ‘Hey, five-paragraph theme, what a wonderful thing.’ And we’re like ‘Oh my god, this is terrible’” (191-192). According to John, scholars from outside the university were brought in to discuss process and organization in writing, and many faculty outside the English department responded well to these workshops.

A final discontinuity between English and speech faculty collaborating on Bedrock regarded the composition of assignment sheets. Speech faculty Patricia pointed out that many of the English faculty were not accustomed to distributing detailed assignment sheets to students. Patricia explained,

Typically assignments are very spelled out in the oral comm world. These are my expectations, here’s what it is. In the writing world, the student may not have a clue what exactly you’re wanting them to head towards. In fact, there’s some hesitancy even in giving them an example paper, which is what I used to always do in all of my classes, not just oral comm and [Bedrock]. (2.173-178)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Lisa and Jennifer also described issues with the English faculty being unclear in their assignment expectations. The sense I got from my conversations with many participants outside the English department was that they were never quite clear about the writing faculty’s expectations for student assignments. There seemed to be considerable leeway in English faculty’s decisions on assignments for first-
year composition, and this led to some discomfort for speech faculty, who were accustomed to developing assignments with clear requirements and evaluation criteria.

Despite the discontinuities that arose during the collaboration on Bedrock, the course was still developed during a summer and implemented the following fall. Thus, any disagreements between faculty needed to be managed in order to move forward with the course. Based on participant responses, much of the disagreement during the collaboration came from representatives from the English department. Other faculty from outside of English or speech seemed to be agreeable to the pedagogical and curricular suggestions made by the co-directors of the course. Co-Director Patricia used an interesting metaphor to describe this idea:

I don't know if you've ever watched those boat races where they have a caller in the back of the boat, you know, where there are multiple rowers. "Row. Row. Row." And so we were much like that, and [the other co-director] probably would have been the caller at the back of the boat at that point. I would relieve her every once in a while, but she was probably the caller at the back of the boat, okay? And so all of us were pretty much in lockstep. So that first year our syllabi, our assignments, almost everything were lockstep, except for [an English faculty member]. [...] I don't know how much of what we were doing was groupthink and how much of it was that we really thought we had good ideas, and he would always be the devil's advocate, and at some point...we just wanted to teach this course. We can't always question everything. (1.316-322; 330-333)
When I asked English faculty John about the handling of disagreements, he too expressed that the collaborative process was frustrating at times. John said, “The frustration was mounting, right? And so some of it was just like, ‘Let’s avoid it.’ And speaking of me personally, I have an issue on the table and then you continue to avoid it, I get even more frustrated” (237-239). Other participants also reflected that some of the disagreements between faculty such as rubrics and assignment sheet guidelines were simply avoided in order to move forward with the course. Because the committee was under a close deadline to develop and implement Bedrock, there was no time for extended dialogues and debates to reconcile the differences in pedagogical philosophies. Faculty member Elizabeth, who teaches outside the English or speech department, explained that the process of reconciliation became one of a give-and-take. Katheryn said, “Well we just kept talking to each other and giving a little here and stretching a little there. But when it comes right down to the teaching of it, everybody implements it the way they understand it to be. [...] Some people didn't play. And I'm kind of in the middle trying to figure out how I do these pieces” (197-199; 205-207). Thus, rather than coming to a consensus in making decisions on the shape of Bedrock, committee members made concessions so that the course could be implemented on time. This connects closely with theories of boundary work that suggest consensus is not required for successful interdepartmental collaboration. After the course was implemented, English faculty seemed to break away from the agreed-upon assignments and structure of the course in order to make Bedrock fit within their existing pedagogical framework.
Interdisciplinary Learning Experiences

Although a number of disagreements arose between English and speech faculty during the development of Bedrock, some participants reflected that they had learned a lot about their own teaching as a result of the collaboration, an example of perspective taking described in the previous chapter. While collaborating on Bedrock, the committee met regularly to develop assignments, course objectives, in-class activities, and assessment tools. Lisa, an instructor from outside the English or speech department, said that these meetings were sometimes very fruitful. “I mean, it was grueling in the sense that we met for 8 hours a day for three weeks in the summer, in a windowless room in the basement of the Union. But we had interesting guests, and I learned a ton” (170-172). In addition to the extended development sessions over the summer, faculty also attended weekly meetings during the first semester of Bedrock to talk about their experiences and collaborate on ideas for the course. Elizabeth expressed that while the disagreements could be frustrating during meetings, she actually came out of the process learning a lot about teaching writing and speaking. Elizabeth said, “We met every week and then we kind of stretched them out a little bit toward the end. [...] And so that’s how I learned. We had people come in, we had workshops, and then trying to teach it to people is how I learned about [teaching writing and speaking]” (131-134). Other participants also reflected on how productive the weekly meetings were during the first semester of Bedrock, though since the course has grown to over 25 sections, these weekly meetings no longer occur.

Some faculty mentioned a number of pedagogical methods that they learned by collaborating with colleagues outside of their discipline. English faculty John, for example, expressed that although he had trepidation about providing students with detailed
assignment sheets and evaluation criteria, teaching Bedrock has shown him that these can be useful for students. John said, "And I would say [collaborating with speech faculty] caused me to reflect a bit more deeply on the explanation on some of the assignments and making it more clear because if I can't convince other people with PhDs who are in the same general profession I am, if they're not getting it, then my students aren't, either" (425-429). Because his colleagues expressed frustration over his reluctance to spell out every requirement and criterion of an assignment, John reflected that perhaps his students would feel that same frustration. He has since begun providing more specific assignment sheets to his students to make them feel comfortable and confident in their multimodal work.

Another pedagogical method that participants learned from collaborating on Bedrock was the value of peer response, where students exchange projects and provide each other with substantive feedback meant to assist with the revision process. Speech faculty Patricia explained that she had never used peer response in her oral communication classes until she started teaching Bedrock. Patricia said, “I don't ever remember doing peer reviews or workshopping, huge things that are to me foundational for how you teach writing. So if I go back and teach an oral comm class again, we're going to do all of those, as much as we can” (314-317). Patricia explained that now, even in her upper-division communication courses, she implements peer response on student projects because she discovered the value in it during her work with English faculty on the Bedrock course. She said, “In my intro to research methods class, just as an example, they had to do a group project that was a quantitative write-up of data. And so each group had to peer review another group’s literature review” (319-322).
Some participants expressed that during the collaboration process, speech faculty seemed more willing to learn from the writing faculty than vice versa. Surprisingly, most of these comments came from English faculty. Mary, for example, explained that she would like to see more faculty development on teaching oral communication, but that many writing faculty seemed reluctant to accept that development. Mary said, “I would like to see the writing people more interested in learning from the oral comm people. I think because of the political pressures, the English department is holding back, so we have to accommodate what they need. [...] almost all of the [faculty] development sessions have focused on writing” (359-336; 545). Similarly, John mentioned that he would like to see more faculty development that applies oral communication principles to student collaboration. John explained, “One of the things that I think compositionists can learn a lot about from communication scholars is the kinds of interpersonal rhetoric that go into workshopping, providing comments, peer editing, all of that kind of group work stuff. There’s a lot that we can tap into there” (745-748). Interestingly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, there were lots of examples of transformation like this, in which faculty thought about their teaching differently as a result of their work on Bedrock with colleagues from other disciplines.

A Call for Unity

Although this single case study cannot hope to apply the themes found in the Bedrock collaboration universally, I believe that the collaboration between Oakherst English and speech faculty reveals a number of implications regarding the development of multimodal communication courses in general. In this final section of my study, I would like
to propose a call to action for faculty and scholars in composition: if we truly want to embrace multimodal communication pedagogies in all of their wonderful complexity, it is time for us to bring speech back into the conversation. As William Keith, a trailblazer for bringing speech and composition back together, notes, “Rhetoricians should cross departmental and disciplinary lines and collaborate to design and implement an integrated curriculum in rhetorical education to replace separate introductory courses in communication (public speaking or presentation) and first-year written composition in order to develop citizen participants, not simply future employees or more literate students” (“The Mt. Oread” 3). Echoing Keith, I argue that we need to locate places where the disciplines can come together, where they can work together in the service of providing our students with a comprehensive rhetorical and multimodal education that takes into account both written and oral expression as distinct but interlocking forms of communication.

The first step to bringing speech back into the wider multimodal conversation is for compositionists to recognize that oral expression is a vital element in multimodal communication. While visual and digital modes of expression are indeed important aspects of multimodality, the vast majority of scholarship in composition focuses on these matters at the expense of oral communication. As discussed in chapter 2 of this study, scholars such as Keith, Peter Elbow, Cynthia Selfe, Matt McGarrity, and Richard Benjamin Crosby have published on ways for compositionists to bring oral communication into their pedagogies, and vice versa. And certainly others have presented at professional conferences on the value of oral communication to writing pedagogy. It cannot be said that nobody is talking about the relationship between speech and writing. However, there should be substantially
more research done by multimodal composition scholars on ways that speech can inform writing and on how orality factors into the multimodal equation.

Bringing the disciplines back together, calling on compositionists to pay more attention to oral communication, makes sense because of the many curricular and pedagogical similarities inherent in the two disciplines. In fact, several participants in this study described the similarities inherent in teaching writing and speech, similarities that they discovered while working together on Bedrock. English faculty Nancy said, “If you talk to students about rhetoric in general, and you talk about communication, and you talk about the basic elements of the speaker, the rhetor, the audience, the purpose—it’s the same [for both modes]” (62-65). Indeed, when discussing the composition of either a piece of writing or a speech, the same kinds of rhetorical issues arise. What is your purpose? Who is the audience? What are their expectations? How will you organize your communication? What style will you use? Each of these questions addresses significant rhetorical considerations in both modes of communication, and both disciplines see these considerations as essential to communicating effectively. This idea, I think, is central to the argument for bringing the two disciplines back together: rhetoric is the tie that binds us; it is the central focus of both first-year composition and public speaking and can be the foundation on which the bridge between disciplines is rebuilt. But as Patricia comically remarked, “We both have Aristotle as our father, though our mothers were different” (2.458). While speech and English faculty often teach in their own separate departments, sometimes never interacting, they are teaching very similar rhetorical principles about the role of the communicator, the audience, and the message.
Keith has expressed his disappointment at the lack of scholarship on how rhetoric connects the teaching of speech and the teaching of writing. He laments:

The centrality of rhetoric to the learning of speaking and writing is rarely articulated, and the work of teachers of writing and speaking to develop common learning outcomes is sadly uncommon. Though their history within separate disciplines obscures it, rhetoricians have a common interest, an interest that is disguised by the current separation of writing and speaking instruction.” (“The Mt. Oread 2).

Increased scholarly discussions on how speaking can inform writing—and vice versa—could help to foster more successful collaboration between the two disciplines. Had there been a more explicit conversation on ways that rhetoric bridges the two modes of speech and writing, collaboration between Oakherst speech and English faculty on Bedrock might have happened more smoothly. As Patricia remarked, “We recognized that there were these commonalities, except that sometimes our vocabulary was different” (60). These different vocabularies made it difficult for the disciplines to communicate with each other, causing discontinuities in the collaboration that might have been avoided with a consideration of interdisciplinary rhetorical connections. Of course, it is important to remember that Bedrock was not created out of speech and English faculty’s desire to combine their first-year courses but rather out of a need to integrate first-year experience elements into the existing core curriculum. Therefore, the Bedrock collaboration itself did not arise out of a mutual desire for interdisciplinary work but out of necessity. Furthermore, this situation didn’t seem to allow participants the time to learn about and understand the traditions of their colleagues in another discipline, but as we have seen in
the development of our ISUComm program, modification and refinement certainly continue past the inaugural two or three years of a multimodal course.

So, if we recognize that writing and speaking are important elements in multimodal communication, and if we agree that rhetoric is the central concept in both first-year composition and public speaking, then it makes sense for speech and English to bridge the divide created a century ago in order to collaborate on multimodal communication courses. But how can we contend with the disparate vocabularies, concepts, and pedagogical traditions that have shaped each discipline’s identity? As I have pointed out in this study, I believe that Sanne F. Akkerman and Arthur Bakker’s theory of boundary crossing learning mechanisms can help to foster more productive collaboration between speech and English faculty. Their model provides a wonderful articulation of the various ways that collaboration can foster learning at the boundary between disciplines, and the four learning mechanisms (identification, coordination, reflection, and transformation) serve as useful tools with which to frame interdisciplinary work. In the context of this study, I would suggest that a deeper knowledge of identification and coordination would have led to a more productive collaboration between speech and English faculty at Oakherst.

First, had Oakherst faculty been more familiar with the learning mechanism of identification, there might have been more emphasis on understanding each discipline’s pedagogical traditions and identities. Many participants were quick to assert their own pedagogical identities, and they seemed confident in their approaches to teaching within their disciplines. However, during the collaboration, they lacked a mutual understanding of these identities and how they impacted each discipline’s methods and practices, leading to discontinuities that stalled the development process. Rhetoric scholar Gerard A. Hauser has
suggested that this kind of cross-tradition dialogue is vital for the success of creating rhetoric-centered curricula. Discussing the differences between public speaking and writing classes in terms of invention, performance, workshops, and reflection, Hauser contends that the “basic differences between oral and written communication are a fruitful domain for continued dialogue about the strengths, limitations, and complementarities of the first-year rhetoric classroom” (47). But the only way to have this dialogue is for parties from both writing and speech to learn from each other’s experiences and pedagogical identities. Of course, the element of time was quite critical here, as Oakherst faculty were under a strict deadline to finish developing the course and likely did not feel they had the time to engage seriously in these kinds of discussions about identity.

More attention to the second learning mechanism of boundary crossing, coordination, could also have fostered more fruitful collaboration between speech and English faculty on Bedrock. Participants certainly coordinated their efforts during the initial development of the course, engaging in workshops from outside experts and attending daily meetings about the structure and assignments in the course. However, ongoing communication between English and speech faculty about the curriculum and pedagogy of Bedrock has not continued with much routinization. There are no longer weekly meetings about the course, and the workshops have become few and far between. More coordinated, routinized meetings and discussions about the continued development of the course could foster not only better collaboration but also better understanding of each discipline’s approach to rhetorical education.

In short, an understanding of Akkerman and Bakker’s boundary-crossing learning mechanisms of identification and coordination could allow parties in interdisciplinary
collaboration to avoid some of the pitfalls that can arise in boundary work. The authors suggest that learning at the boundary “requires people to have dialogues with the actors of different practices, but also to have inner dialogues between the different perspectives they are able to take on” (140). This is a challenging process, and more research on boundary learning in the context of multimodal composition could lead to more practical advice on how various disciplines like speech, English, and design can collaborate on multimodal communication courses. In our current drive to transform traditional writing and communication courses into multimodal ones, I would like to see scholars in composition and communication look more closely at Akkerman and Bakker’s learning mechanisms in order to locate ways in which faculty in public speaking and writing can better communicate with each other, can understand each other’s pedagogical identities, and can work together to create multimodal communication courses that draw from the knowledge and traditions of both disciplines.

**Conclusion**

Multimodality has become a central concept in contemporary composition scholarship and pedagogy. English departments and faculty across the country have recognized the need for first-year composition to include the analysis or production of oral, visual, and digital artifacts that transcend our traditional allegiance to the paragraph-driven essay. As this study has argued, oral communication should be viewed as a central mode in any multimodal composition course, yet English and speech have maintained distinct identities ever since the NCTE split in 1914. In the interest of developing productive and sustainable collaborative practices on these first-year multimodal courses,
and in the interest of fostering a more centralized rhetorical education, I side with scholars like William Keith in calling for increased collaboration between speech and writing faculty. As this study has argued, Akkerman and Bakker’s theoretical model of boundary crossing learning mechanisms might hold a key that unlocks new, useful ways for us to think about this collaboration.
WORKS CITED


APPENDIX

Initial Interview Questions

NOTE: These questions formed the basis for my interviews with faculty participants during my first campus visit. Because these were semi-structure interviews (see Chapter 3), additional questions were asked based on each participant’s response. Additional questions were added for my second visit to the campus (see following page).

1. What were the primary influences/forces that led the university to undertake this new multimodal course?

2. Why do you think the Bedrock course is an important offering for first-year students at Oakherst?

3. In what ways were you involved in planning and developing the course?

4. Could you describe the research and planning process your department used for incorporating multimodal communication into the course?

5. Did you run into any significant challenges or obstacles as you planned and researched? How did you overcome them?

6. What has your experience been like working with faculty and administrators from other departments on this Bedrock course?

7. What kind of institutional or external support have you requested or received during the development of this course? Were there challenges in gaining certain kinds of support?

8. What was your experience like teaching the Bedrock course for the first time? What kinds of challenges did you face that first year, if any?

9. How would you like to see this course, or other multimodal courses in general, continue to be developed on your campus?
Interview Questions (Second Campus Visit)

NOTE: After learning more about the course and the process of developing it, I added some additional questions that focused on the collaboration between speech and English faculty.

1. So you decide to put together this course that integrates writing and speaking. Were there any initial concerns about this idea of an integrated communication class?
2. I’ve learned that there were several areas of contention between speech and English folks during the development of this course. Could you talk about that?
3. What major differences in pedagogical philosophies do you notice between the speech faculty and the English faculty?
4. Can you remember any specific changes that you made to the pedagogy of Bedrock as a result of feedback from English faculty?
5. Can you remember any specific decisions you made that came directly from speech faculty?
6. Do you feel like there was mutual respect between speech and English faculty during the development of this course? How would you characterize each discipline’s willingness to learn from the other?
7. Do you or did you ever have reservations about the course being housed in Student Affairs?
8. Are you comfortable with the way that Bedrock is being run right now or are there changes you would like to see?