COLLEGE WRITING TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF DIGITAL LITERACY AND
TECHNOLOGY RELATED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By

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A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Rhetoric and Writing - Doctor of Philosophy

2014

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation explores definitions and perceptions of both digital literacy and technology related professional development of community college writing teachers. Specifically, through interviews with six writing faculty at the college level, I discuss how faculty think about, talk about, and learn digital tools and technology in the community college setting. My analysis presents a rich understanding of how the writing faculty at my own community college perceive the connection between digital writing and their core responsibilities as writing teachers as well as reveals key traits of effective technology related professional development program design for community college writing faculty.

To my father, Edward Joseph Sauvie.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the love and support of my wife, Amanda Lee, whose acceptance of my various and inconsistent moods and ramblings truly exceed that of any rational level of marital expectations. For that, I love you.

To my daughters, MCCS and LCCS, for understanding why I couldn't play with you on occasion, especially towards the end. I owe you both a great deal of play dates and ice cream sandwiches.

To my mother, Marcia, who, many years ago, started me down the digital path by supplying me with ample amounts of technology support and resources. You inspire my teaching and have been a valuable sounding board and advocate for my studies.

I would like to thank Amy, Steve, Pat, Dale, Lori, and Erin, as well as the six faculty members mentioned in this study for their support and help in making my many aspects of my research possible.

Thank you to my dissertation chair, Dr. Danielle DeVoss, for keeping me on track and on task even when I felt derailed and defeated. I greatly admire your work ethic and never ending encouragement. You are fantastic.

I would also like to thank my committee members Dr. Julie Lindquist, Dr. Jeff Grabill, and Dr. R. Candace Epps-Robertson for dedicating your time, energy, and having the patience to see me to the end of the tunnel.

Lastly, thanks to Dr. Janet Swenson, for encouraging me not give up even when the odds seemed against me and for helping me reconsider my options. Had we not talked that day, this document would not exist.

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Chapter 1: Introductions

Situating This Study: The Why and What

At my current institution, one of my roles is that of a Faculty Technology Consultant for our Professional Development Office, the Center for Teaching and Learning. For the last three years, I have been working to encourage other faculty and staff to become more digitally literate and adopt more technology in whatever roles they might have at the college. To some degree, I have been successful. Overwhelmingly, however, it has been a challenge to get faculty and staff to attend professional development sessions, workshops, and other training opportunities dealing with technology and digital tools.

I had some guesses as to what keeps people from wanting to learn about digital tools and become more digitally literature. At first, I though the problem might be with faculty access to technology. Perhaps the age of the instructor or seniority was a factor. Maybe it was the teaching load and that faculty were pulled in so many different directions they didn't want to invest the time in learning about digital tools and teaching. I just didn't know. And I wanted to find out.

Though my role as Technology Consultant demands I work with all faculty and staff on campus, my primary role is that of an English faculty member. Since I am especially interested in how my fellow writing faculty viewed digital literacy and technology related professional development, I thought I would concentrate on just writing faculty perceptions for this study.

This study is an attempt to understand why some of the community college writing faculty at my institution are eager to learn technology while others seem hesitant.

I wanted to discover what connection they see between digital literacy and their roles as writing teachers. I also wanted to know how writing faculty perceived technology related professional development at the college and better understand if the ways in which we offer ~~we~~ technology related professional development on campus aligns with how faculty say they best learn new digital tools and technology. The following questions, then, guide the research project I undertook at my institution.

1. How do community college writing faculty perceive the connection between their roles as writing teachers and digital literacy and learning?

2. What perceptions do community college writing faculty have of technology related professional development?

3. What are the reasons community college writing faculty have for adopting or being hesitant to adopt digital tools in their classroom teaching?

This study is an enactment of my desire to not guess any more, to not wonder why technology related professional development was not working as well as I believe it could. My hope was the results of my study could help my own institution rethink how we conduct technology related professional development on campus, especially for writing faculty

My Digital Identity: Personal History and Professional Frustrations

My desire to encourage other faculty to become more digitally literate is something I feel is both a professional obligation as well as something I find personally meaningful. In order to understand why I have dedicated much of my time and energy to being a digital advocate, I feel it is important to discuss a bit about my own history with

digital literacy as well as how this personal interest melded into my professional interest in digital technology and literacy.

My Digital History

On the last day of school, in 1982, I remember my mother bringing home our first computer – a Commodore 64. I was 8. To be honest, we didn't actually own it; the computer was on loan to us for the summer. The high school where my mother worked as an English teacher received two Commodores at the beginning of the school year. The librarian, whom my mother recalls was an early digital advocate, understood that in order to encourage faculty and thus students to use technology, they should be familiar with them. The Administration was being very protective and worried about computers being stolen, but she thought it would be a good idea to allow two teachers to take the computers home for the summer in order to be more comfortable using them during the school year. My mother, whom I have always viewed as an early digital advocate, was one of the two chosen by the librarian.

So, my mother, on the last day of school, without any official permission of the administration drove off the high school property with a strange, altogether mysterious computer and a lightly used printer in the trunk of her '81 Chevy Cavalier and brought it home. (She also added the computer to our house insurance, just in case.)

At first, there wasn't much for my brother (he was almost 10) and I do to with this device. The only program it came with was a very basic word processing program and a printer. We already had a typewriter in the house and that is all we viewed the computer

as – a glorified typewriter. The Commodore 64 seemed very similar to our typewriter, only the words would appear on a screen before they appeared on paper.

Though it wouldn't occur to me (or my mother) for many years after this particular summer, the reason we had a hard time imagining what we could do with this new device was because we lacked any training or help imagining the ways in which we could use it. We had no mentor or place to go for help. My mother, on break for the summer, had no access to any technology professional development. The school didn't have anything (nor would it for many more years after). That was how it worked, early on. We were given the gift of hardware, but were left to our own creative resources to know how and what do to with it.

Late into that summer, however, two very important events took place that would awaken my understanding and appreciation of digital technology and create a life-long love of using and investing in new technology and hardware. The first event occurred in mid-July on 1982, when my mother took us to see TRON. It was, of course, one of the most amazing films I had ever seen (granted, I was 8). It was futuristic, graphically beautiful, inspiring, thought-provoking, etc. My mother explained that all of the special effects were accomplished using computers and that computers could very well take us to another world - just we wait.

The second event happened a few weeks later. My mother got a call from the same high school librarian saying she found out about a man who lived down the road from the high school who was a tester for new programs and games for Commodore. AND, she said, he had the ability to copy the games. As soon as she hung up the phone, my mother asked us if we wanted to visit a real life "programmer like Kevin Flynn?"

Of course we did.

Our worlds became a bit bigger that week. "Android Nim," "Starfleet Orion," "Paladin." That was the summer of the computer and I was hooked. The games, mostly sci-fi shooting games fascinated me. My brother and I would wake up early, just to get computer time. We would fight over who got to play first and then who got the highest score (my brother). I am pretty sure my mother didn't intend for us to just play games on the computer. The "Programmer" hooked my mother up as well. He let her have two programs, a more robust word processing program and very simple data base creation program (of his own design). She began keeping track of our personal bills, her school assignments and grades, etc. Again, she taught herself, but she had a purpose now.

That following school year, "our" computer went back to the high school. However, my own elementary school received two PET computers. I soon realized this wasn't much to get excited about. We rarely had individual time on them. They were kept in the Janitor's office and we were allowed in there only once or twice a month, mostly to program printout robots. We never played games or used them to support the work we were doing in school. They were merely a commodity to be used once a month, at most.

The same year my mother and father decided to personally invest in our very first home computer - an Apple IIe. Ever since then, our family had at least one computer in our house. A few years later, when I was in junior high, my mother was transferred to the same junior high and put in charge of the media center. Before school, during lunch, and after school, I would play on the Apples in the library. It was at that time I started branching out. I started keeping my own diary on a floppy disc (I still have it – though

lack the ability to open any files). At time, my mother would ask me to help maintain

and set up the computers in her small lab – all Apples.

Over the course of my time there, Apples gave way to PCs. As more advanced

equipment arrived (projectors, and design, word, and learning programs), my mother

would allow me to play around, learn them, and in turn, teach her what they could do.

My knowledge and appreciation for technology widened. Games were still my favorite,

but I started understanding the various ways computers could be used in education.

As I got older and started high school, I began typing all of my papers. I would

print out poster displays, graphs, charts, etc. for class projects. I worked on the newspaper

staff and was one of the few students who would type my own articles at home. I can

remember typing papers for other students as well (for a minimal charge).

When I went away to college, I took along my parents' Mac Classic II. Whereas

most of my roommates had to go to the computer lab to type and print their papers, I had

my own computer and printer. After I transferred to another institution, closer to my

home, my computer came with me. That year I spent quite a bit time in the labs on

discussion boards and being fascinated with e-mail.

In the fall of 1995, I started working in the Writing Center at my undergraduate

institution. We had several computers for student use (they mainly were used for word

processing only) that I would help update and maintain. Occasionally, I would help

students understand how to use some of the basic chat programs and database research

tools our school had to offer. My familiarity with computers helped me to become one of

the first Computer Writing Classroom Tutors. The school had just received a grant to

build and maintain a classroom with around 30 PC computers. Teachers would schedule

times to bring in their classes and I was one of the tutors who would help facilitate group

discussions (usually around a shared reading) using the Daedalus Writing Interaction

Program.

My senior years (yes, I had two of them, 97-98 and 98-99 because I was given a

chance at teaching writing in an "At-Risk" urban school which caused a delay but added

richness to my experiences), I bought my own computer – a PC laptop with the ability to

tap into the Internet from my own dialup. I was quite fond of the newly created AOL

Instant Messenger and Chat programs and spent more than I probably should have buying

chat time.

When I finally graduated from undergraduate school, I moved out West to attend

graduate school. I was given a teaching assistantship that started my path looking at the

various ways I could connect my own interest and love of technology to my classroom

teaching. It was difficult. There were very few "smart" classrooms and few, if any,

support communities on campus for faculty or TAs.

I still was able to stay up to date with all the new programs, the evolution of the

internet, and something relatively new to me at the time (1999), web design. A semester

into graduate school, I was lucky enough to share a duplex with a journalism student who

also taught web design for the college. I spend many hours working with him,

independently, learning web design. I took this knowledge, without any administrative

mandate, and applied it to my teaching.

As rooms in the building where I taught became better equipped, I began

introducing technology into my own teaching. I put together my own website for my own

classes where I hosted documents and gave students links to readings and videos instead

of using a traditional textbook. I collected papers via email and used Microsoft Word to evaluate them (time consuming, but helpful). I had my students play around with blogs and music sites, but I didn't get much fancier than that and I kept most of what I was doing to myself. I didn't collaborate with others. I didn't learn from others.

When I moved back home to begin my PhD (in 2005), my immersion into educational technology really took off. As a TA, I had access to computer labs and laptop carts for my students. My students were more involved in technology than my previous classes. Facebook was becoming more popular and we used that in the class. My students kept blogs instead of typed reading responses. They watched Youtube videos more than they read books. Their research was multimodal.

Because of access, support, and a changed student demographic, I began incorporating digital assignments into every class I could. With the help of the Writing Center laptop cart and their very helpful digital writing consultants, I began assignments that allowed my students to demonstrate their learning via digital means. They created "researched music videos," created and critiqued blogs, they designed flyers to hand out on sidewalks, and they made video and audio podcasts. Every day they used or discussed or reflected on digital literacy. Moreover, we talked about how technology was changing how we write. I began having conversations with my students about how audience and purpose shift when writing enters the digital.

As the semester progressed, I realized there was a lot I had yet to learn. Some of my peers were doing things in their classrooms with digital technology that I had yet to try. Their digital literacy levels were more advanced. So, though it wasn't officially a part of my academic planned academic path, I did two things:

First, I took my very first course in understanding, academically, digital technology and design. This course helped me understand the importance of presentation design and to better understand how color, layout, and other specific choices affect meaning. My professor (and current dissertation chair), Danielle DeVoss, introduced to me an unusual, but fascinating teaching style. Long before I understood what "flipped classrooms" were, she was doing it. We would work on assignments (she called them "Modules") at home and on our own, and use class time to discuss and play around with the technology. The course was held in a computer lab – a first for me. Over the next few years (and still today) I took most of her lessons (freely available for download on her website) and used them in my own teaching – altering them to fit a new audience.

The second situation that helped further my digital literacy level was when I became a Digital Writing Consultant in the Writing Center. My fellow Digital Writing Consultants and I, during downtime, would talk, share ideas and technology, and challenge each other to learn the newest, most useful tools. We would talk hardware, software, and design. We would share resources and gadgets, give presentations on various topics, and host workshops. This collaboration was invigorating and absolutely vital to my growth as a digitally-leaning educator. Needless to say, my digital literacy level increased.

Though I used technology in my own life and in my own teaching, it would be 2007, the year I was hired as a full-time faculty member at a medium sized community college near my home, that I would begin to help other faculty members embrace and use technology in their teaching and professional work.

When I was hired at a community college as a full time faculty, I began to understand that though my abilities in teaching with technology were, in my mind, average at best, quite a few of my colleagues didn't use any technology at all in their teaching. At first I was frustrated. I realized I didn't have many peers willing to converse with me about technology. This wasn't because the technology wasn't available. We had a good number of computer labs, desktop PCs in our offices, and plenty of free and open software available to use with a click of a button. Though we didn't (and still don't) have laptop carts to use in our classrooms and only a handful of labs we can take our students to, technology for teachers wasn't something we lacked.

Things were quite different in a small community college than at a large university. One of the first major changes and obstacles for being a digital advocate/teacher was ready and consistent access to technology IN my classroom. At my graduate school, I had access to a laptop cart most any time I wanted it. Further, these were Macs – a computer and platform that makes designing easy (albeit generic) for students to understand.

At the community college, there were no Macs for general student open access. Those few computer labs on campus that did have Macs were so coveted by the faculty who successfully argued for their acquisition that no other faculty or students were allowed in.

Our school has a handful of PC computer labs. But these labs are shared by ALL of the faculty at the institution. There were hundreds of class sections and a handful of labs. The sign-up sheet for reserving these labs fills out at least two months or more in advance. It would be impossible to hold every class in a lab, let alone get time in them

on a weekly or even monthly basis. In other words, teachers had access and students had access, but a space where *both* students and teachers had access at the same time was lacking.

Not only was computer classroom space on campus scarce, but I soon discovered that quite a few of my students, especially my developmental students, had limited digital literacy skills when it came to anything beyond cell phone apps, games, word processing, and social medial (I discuss this more in Chapter 4). Though I tried to find ways to bring these devices and literacies into the classroom, most other teachers, both in and out of English, told their students to not bring them, use them, and had draconian policies if they did.

Another major change and obstacle was the amount of collaboration among faculty to share, teach, and learn new technology and how it could be applied to the classroom. Though some might argue differently, graduate teaching assistants at larger universities are quite privileged in terms of the amount of peer collaboration and institutional support we get concerning teaching with technology. There is a rich collaborative environment. We learn in our own classes and seminars and can immediately test those ideas, theories, pedagogies, and tools in the classrooms we teach. We see immediate results (or not) from this type of relationship.

Community college instruction seems different. At my college, we have a range of faculty in terms of age, different digital literacy levels, levels using technology at our institution, and of course different understandings of what it means to be digitally literate. First, we have little time to collaborate or discuss digital tools and literacy. Our English

Faculty meetings, for instance, although mandatory, only take place for one hour once a month.

In addition, some faculty have been teaching for well over 40 years. The last time most of them were in a classroom or seminar learning about technology and teaching learning was well over two decades ago– some of them finished graduate school without touching a computer, knowing email, or the internet. We also have very little time to collaborate as a group.

This doesn't immediately translate into ineffective teaching - not at all. I have great respect for instructors who have kept at it for so long. When I started teaching community college, my own officemate, Keith, was one of the most senior faculty on campus. By the time I got there, he had been teaching for over 42 years. I remember a conversation we had once about my frustrations on this exact topic – how I wish more faculty would find ways to become more digitally literate. He kindly replied that even though he respected me and honored my commitment to technology, he wasn't that interested in learning how to use any of this new technology in his classroom. He pointed to the stacks of materials in his cabinets – handouts, quizzes, assignments, and course packs – all of them worked for his needs and his student (as he understood them). "Why would I want to change now?" he would say (personal interview, September 18, 2013).

He was 68. Digital tools and programs were foreign to him. Not teaching. It was the digital elements. And that was why he resisted. He didn't see a connection between his work as a writing teacher and the need to discuss or use digital technology.

Frustrated, I began see my teaching future in bleak terms. I had to take several pedagogical steps back and implement less technology than I did before or wanted to.

My Professional Frustrations

I am approaching this study from three distinct and quite different perspectives. First, I am an English faculty member responsible for teaching four, 3-credit courses a semester. Second, I am the Composition Coordinator, responsible for a range of duties throughout the school year, including running monthly faculty meetings, mentoring over 40 part-time instructors, organizing writing events and training sessions, as well as conducting classroom observations. Third, I am a Technology Consultant for the Center for Teaching and Learning, responsible for deciding, designing, running, and reviewing a plethora of opportunities for all faculty and staff on campus to learn about, how, and why faculty should use educationally and professionally minded technology programs, hardware, and tools.

In other words, when it comes to technology professional development on campus, I create, I teach others, and I use. This allows me the unique vantage point of understanding how technology professional development works on my campus. I understand the accomplishments and frustration at all three levels.

Though unfortunately, I seem to be more often introduced as "the tech guy" on campus, the role I primarily identify with concerns my teaching. I am an Associate Professor of English. With this role, I have to teach a minimum of 12 credits a semester, with the option of teaching more (I often do). Our courses are capped at 29 students. Since I teach at a community college, often a first step for students moving on to the larger college down the road, most of my courses are introduction to composition, what we call 101 and 102. Our college also offers 3 different levels of developmental writing,

097, 098, and 099. Each focuses on preparing students for entry level English. Our department has ventured out of this routine and has started creating and teaching accelerated learning courses.

Personally, I spend a lot of time with students and grading and office hours. My students are overwhelmingly non-traditional and come from diverse and often-underprivileged backgrounds.

My second role is more administrative in nature. I am currently the English Coordinator. The responsibilities for this job included supervising and helping our Part-Time teaching staff, currently around 40 part-time/adjunct faculty, and exactly 15 full time faculty. There are several initiatives coming out of the English program that I help facilitate. The job requires me to help write program reviews, update objectives and divisional governance, provide training to faculty, choose texts, conduct part-time evaluations, etc.   The role has little power in mandating anything specific. It's more about organizing dates, meetings, and creating and set agenda items.

My third obligation is quite removed from my first two. And how I landed this position is important to spend some time with – considering the aim of this study. For several semesters after I was hired at the college, I volunteered to conduct workshops on technology (using cell phones in the classroom, fair use in the classroom, presentation design, etc.) for the Center for Teaching and Learning –our PD flagship department. Two years into my work at the college, I was asked to meet with the Executive Dean of Professional Development in the Center for Teaching and Learning. The Vice President of Academic Affairs had just invested quite heavily in building a new Professional Development department. Because I was one of the few faculty who had shown interest

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in using technology in the classroom (I had conducted several presentations and won a few mini-grants for my work), the Dean asked if I wanted to become a Technology Consultant for the college, helping to instruct and conduct workshops for PT, FT, and staff at the college on technology use and methods.

I, of course, immediately agreed. Though my motives were personal (this was a way for me to tap into the technology interests I had at my former institution), I was also excited to help create a community of faculty who might be able to see ways to reach their students and become more digitally literate.

This excitement soon turned to frustration and disappointment. It seemed that the general faculty were not too interested in or passionate about using digital technology in their classrooms. The attendance at non-mandatory training sessions was less that I expected. I would spend many hours developing sessions on all sorts of tools and resources and few faculty would attend. That is just the way I perceived how things were involving technology related professional development on campus. But I wanted to be sure. Working with the Professional Development Office and our Internal Research department, I went about designing a our college's first survey concerning faculty perceptions of technology and professional development.

Faculty Perceptions of Technology Related Professional Development on Campus: A Campus-Wide Survey

As I discussed earlier, one of my roles at the college is to help all staff and faculty learn about and find ways to connect to educational and professional technology. As a technology consultant, I attempt to locate ways all faculty, no matter what discipline they

teach, might use technology to help their students learn whatever course materials they need to learn. For this reason, my job requires that I stay informed as to the views and opinions of the faculty and staff. Two years ago, I helped design a very informal and ill-designed survey distributed via email to the faculty on campus. The results were inconclusive and somewhat puzzling. After this attempt, the Dean of Professional Development (my immediate supervisor), suggested I create another one, this time with the help of the IR Department at the college.

The survey was helpful in understanding what views the community college faculty have of the technology related professional development department, our offerings, and the way we conduct sessions. I wanted to be sure my perceptions about the lack of faculty and staff participation in technology related professional development weren't inaccurate . Based on the results of the survey, they weren't.

The survey itself was 22 questions long and divided into three distinct sections: Perceptions of Technology and Teaching, Perceptions of Technology and Professional Development, and Perceptions of Technology and Students.

The first set of questions, *Perceptions of Teaching* had 8 multiple-choice questions which were concerned with what connections faculty saw between technology and teaching. The first question in this section asked faculty to identify themselves as either "quick to adopt new technology," "willing to adopt technology as needed," "aware but hesitant to use," "mostly unaware and somewhat reluctant to use", or "unaware and fine without using technology." These options, along with the possible names attached to them, would be my main rationale for deciding with English Faculty to interview (I discuss this more below).

The other questions in part one of the survey included questions on what kinds of technology teachers used, how often they used them, how best they learn and discover new technology, and the level of importance they believe technology to be to their field of study.

The second section, *Perceptions of Technology and Professional Development* included 5 multiple-choice and 2 short-answer questions. These questions primarily served to help me understand how often teachers involved themselves in institutionally-led technology professional development experiences, the perceived level of benefit of these experiences, methods of delivery, obstacles in attending PD opportunities, and if they felt that PD at the college was mostly driven by faculty, by administration or a combination of the two.

The third and final section, *Perceptions of Technology and Students*, was by far the shortest with only two multiple-choice questions. Since the focus of this study was on teacher perceptions and not a detailed account of how students might use technology, the two questions included in the survey were: "How strong a sense do you have about how your students use technology in their academic lives?" and "How strong a sense do you have about how your students use technology in their personal/social lives?"

Other questions were added, mostly concerning teaching demographics.

Two weeks before the survey was distributed, I was given the opportunity to informally plug my survey at the very end of a faculty meeting, speaking as both a college faculty member and as a graduate student. I simply asked people to keep a lookout for an email from me with a link to the survey.

Though I primarily focus on writing teachers, I made the decision to cast a wider net to understand how teachers across campus view technology, technology professional development, especially how it happens at the site of my research, a mid-sized community college. This would allow me to get a big picture at first, and then narrow by drilling down into just the Writing faculty in the interview stage.

Two weeks before the end of the Fall term, the survey was sent out via my college email. The survey was open for three weeks and distributed to all of the faculty on campus.   At the close of the survey, a total of 112 faculty responded during that time (out of 550)

After I collected the data and, with the help of my colleges IR department, created graphs of the data, I was able to see several revealing patterns.

First, I was surprised to see that so many faculty considered technology. Over 44 percent of the faculty indicate that they use technology "very frequently/daily" and over 37 percent use it "frequently/weekly." There was only a small percentage that indicated they never use technology in their teaching, with 2.65 percent indicating that they are aware of the technology but never use it.

In addition, also surprising was the fact that around 79 percent of the faculty indicated that technology is either "very important" or "important" in their field of study. Only 4 faculty responded that it is either "unimportant" or "very unimportant."

However, despite this positive consensus, most of the faculty understood using technology to mean using technology only as a tool. When asked how they use technology in their classroom, most faculty indicated that they use it to project documents, create digital handouts, and host documents on our LMS. When offered the

opportunity to elaborate, faculty mentioned they use it for such things as "google search" and "powerpoint."

As far as how the general faculty learn about technology, the majority (65.49 percent) indicated that they learn best when they play around on their own. Roughly tied for second was "through talking with friends or colleagues," "through institutional professional development," and "by taking a course or workshop."

Similarly, the faculty were asked "What training methods do you find most useful" and over 73 percent said "Small group workshops" followed by "Exploring on my own (57.52 percent) and "One-on-one meetings with others" (47.79).

When asked about faculty motivation for attending technology related professional development opportunities on campus, many indicated that they felt the need to "keep current in their field" and to "keep current to relate to young students ("2013 Faculty CTL Survey," January 2, 2013)."

As far as what keeps faculty from attending, overwhelmingly "time" was a concern. Most faculty felt that they didn't have the time to invest in either attending or learning how to use and incorporate technology into their teaching. This concern was also echoed, later, in my interviews.

What I learned from the faculty survey was that the majority of faculty have a desire to learn about and see the importance of technology in their teaching. But exactly what that technology means is limited to learning about tools. Granted, the survey design could have been more specific about this point, but it seems that the majority of faculty are too focused on learning the tools and not theory, reasons for using, implications for

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using, or how to evaluate using these tools. More of this is elaborated on in the following chapters.

Even more personally disappointing was that faculty in my own department (English) were often hesitant to attended technology PD sessions and agree with me on the importance of digital technology. I can remember some heated meetings about the need (or lack of need) to rethink how we teach certain subjects and concepts. On occasion there was consensus. We added some language about digital literacy to our course objectives, for instance. But on other issues, how our students should use digital technology, how often we should discuss it, what ways student can use digital tools in their learning – we disagreed.

To be honest, the faculty in my department are amazing teachers. We are doing wonderful things with developmental students and cross discipline collaboration. We have faculty working with various campus organization, community organization, connecting with K-12 classrooms and groups. But when it comes to understanding digital literacy and the impact it has on our roles, our students' learning, and what it means for our classroom practice – I believe all of us have room to grow. Yes, even me.

The Institutional Story: How Professional Development Happens at the College

Like most schools, just how professional development works changes over the years. It is worth discussing the changes at my own institution in order to better understand the direction in which it is moving. Professional Development at my institution has undergone greats shifts and revisions over the last 25 years. To better understand these shifts, I spoke with two administrators, one a former English professor

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current Dean, Dave, and the other, the current Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Annie.

In the Fall of 1993, Professional Development for faculty, let alone PD support for the recently emerging and invented digital technology, were just slowly emerging. While I was spending hours in chat rooms at my undergraduate institution, the college was still struggling to understand what technology hardware they should invest in and paid little attention to technology as it applies to teachers, students, and the classroom. It was in this environment that Dave hired into. What technology literacy Dave had and used during his first few years of teaching, what methods he used and lessons he taught in his classroom, he brought with him. He didn't learn them at the college. In fact, when he was first hired, faculty offices had no technology nor computers. Save two computers in a small lab on the second floor, they also had little access to them on campus.

The way Dave describes the climate of technology at the college during this time is that "for the bulk of his time, technology was a two-headed beast" (personal interview, August 22, 2013). The majority of resources were placed in the college's Management Systems (the IT/IS department). This included Accounting and Registration and Records, payroll, transcripts, etc. - the business operations. Technology was only used for the day-in day-out operations of the college – not for teaching. The other head was Educational Systems.

Educational Systems, at the time, was a small department dedicated to providing AV requests to classrooms and teachers. Those teachers who wanted a projector, or TV with VCR in their classrooms had to request those devices a day ahead of time. Ed Systems also has a small space on the second floor of the main building that had some of

the latest technology (a scanner, CD burner, Mac computer, etc) and was open to all faculty who wanted to play around with some of the technology.

This started to shift when the college hired a new, temporary Vice-President of Academic Affairs. The new VP, a former librarian, and former dean of Ed Systems had the foresight to begin putting more effort, energy, and infrastructure into technology as it relates to faculty, students, and the classroom.

The college began investing in creating and maintaining faculty email accounts, and eventually creating a more interactive Faculty Resource Center – a place faculty could go to see some of the newer tools and programs, as they related to faculty work. The Faculty Resource Center had a Mac, a PC, a scanner, some of the newer programs, etc. for faculty. Dave called it "an incubator for teacher training" (personal interview, August 22, 2013). Minimal effort was put forth to encourage faculty to come to the center. As the Dr. Annie put it, "It was wonderful for faculty who were already invested in learning new technology. Those faculty who were resistant or hesitant didn't use it very much" (personal interview, August 23, 2013). They Center put out "feelers" to invite faculty to come try out some of the new tools and programs but few came.

Because of his interest in learning technology and his constant presence in the FRC, Dave was asked to give several workshops to the English Faculty by the head of Ed Systems. He fondly remembers the first workshop he gave on using the World Wide Web for research. He later gave other workshops on accessing the college's search tools, listerves for various professional organizations, educational research. At the time, Faculty attended these workshops out of curiosity but were not obliged to. Dave called these

early workshops "unorganized, spontaneously announced, and sparsely attended" (personal interview, August 22, 2013).

In October, 2008, the college hired a new VP of Academic Affairs, Dr. Annie, a former communications teacher and administrator. One of her first challenges as an administrator, as she recalls, was what to do with these two divided systems (IT, and Ed Systems). Just prior to her arrival, an advisory committee was formed composed of faculty, staff, and administrators with the charge to looking at ways to improve and evolve various aspects of the college, including professional development and the IT and Ed Systems divide. It was decided to collapse the two systems under one CIO that would report directly to the VP and it was also decided to create a more central and organized Center for Professional Development, complete with a new Executive Dean position to reside over the center. A new home was found on the newly remodeled third floor of the college's library.

Several initiatives were immediately put in place. First, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) would become a one-stop shop for professional development on multiple fronts – new faculty orientation. One of the first initiatives was to hire a faculty member from the IT department to handle the technology related professional development at the college. The faculty member had regularly scheduled office hours, sent out weekly tech related emails, and conducted several workshops on various technology topics.

Though Dr. Annie indicated that hiring a faculty member to serve as technology consultant was a move in the right direction, she also mentioned that hiring an IT faculty member for this role didn't work out as planed. "Faculty were afraid to come to an IT

person to ask for help. We didn't get the turn out to [office hours] that we expected"

(personal interview, August 23, 2013). A decision was made in collaboration with the

Dean of PD to hire two non-IT faculty members in other disciplines to be consultants.

They were looking for more approachable, non-IT faculty members whose primary role

was not technology. These faculty should be aware of, use, and be faculty leaders when

it came to using digital tools in their professional roles, but they shouldn't be strictly IT

faculty.

This new model worked, to some degree. This is where I, and one of my colleges

in History, came in. Since our arrival, we have slightly increased the amount of faculty

visiting during office hours and attendance at workshops, although still oftentimes sparse;

we have a relatively diverse set of both full-time and part-time faculty and staff at these

events. Dr. Annie was onto something, but I still had questions. I wanted to learn more

about our institution's writing instructors—how they conceptualized digital literacy, and

what they thought about technology professional development. I thus dug into the

literature and then engaged in a series of interviews, designed to reveal understand how

we, as a college, could improve the model we set for technology professional

development. This study is that attempt.

Chapter Summaries

In Chapter 2, "Review of the Literature: Digital Literacy, Technology Related

Professional Development and Dialogue" I discuss what has already been written on the

topic of digital and technology literacy. Drawing primarily from C. Selfe (1999) and

Selber (2004), I conclude that digital literacy is culturally situated and slowly becoming

the stuff of writing. I discuss what the field says makes for effective technology related professional development and locate key concepts and traits that are common among effective professional development programs dedicated to digital literacy. Lastly, I attempt to both define and connect the notion of dialogue, as defined by various Critical Pedagogy advocates to technology related professional development design.

In Chapter 3, I discuss the results of my interviews with six full-time community college English Faculty. I introduce my six interviewees, and discuss the reasons for using labels "Early Adopter," "Willing Adopter," and "Hesitant Adopter" in order to categorize their responses.

I continue with a discussion of three main themes I pulled from my interview data. The first, *Developmental Faculty Perceptions of Developmental Students' Digital Literacy* pulls from my interviews the three threads relating to how Developmental English Faculty perceive the digital literacy skills of their students. I first draw attention to how these faculty observe and deal with the low-level technology skills of their students. Next, I discuss how most of the faculty agree that digital literacy is culturally situated and how they deal with this fact. Lastly, I discuss how most of the Developmental English Faculty perceives the need for a computer lab space for developmental writers.

The second theme, *Faculty Perceptions of Digital Literacy and the Teaching of Writing: Connections*, widens the discussion to include non-Developmental English Faculty and reveals what connection (if any) they see between their core responsibilities as writing teachers and the need to teach digital literacy skills. I discuss how some

teachers see a connection while others perceive technology as an obstacle and work to avoid discussing and using technology in their classrooms.

The third theme, *Writing Teachers' Ways of Learning Technology: Potential Seekers Vs. Proof Seekers* introduces two new terms: "Potential Seekers" and "Proof Seekers." I distinguish between those faculty who, before attending or attempting to incorporate technology into their classroom practice, need to see proof that this technology is effective and important. I compare the way they talk about and how they learn technology to those who actively seek out ways to use this technology on their own.

The last section, Chapter 4, "Writing Teachers, Digital Literacy, and Professional Development: Conclusions, Connections, and Suggestions" reviews the conclusions I draw in previous chapters, and reviews and answers my initial research questions. In addition, using the information I gathered in Chapter 2 and 3, I offer suggestions for designing more effective technology related professional development opportunities for college writing teachers at my home institution. I discuss the notion of dialogue, sustainable collaborative communities, and the need to rethink the way we talk about digital literacy on my community college campus. Lastly, I offer suggestions for further research, indicating the broader implications and limitations of my study.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature: Digital Literacy, Technology Related

Professional Development, and Dialogue

The purpose of my literature review is threefold. First, to understand exactly what it means to be digitally literate. I wanted to start here because it seems that the community college faculty, both in English and in other disciplines, have vastly different ideas of what this term means. For some, being digitally literate means using a computer to type their formal essays. For others, it's about using the internet to just to research. Some view digital literacy as someone else's job and not something that they need to incorporate into their classrooms. Most see digital as just a tool and not something deeply connected to their work in the academy. In other words, there are many interpretations on campus, even among the English Faculty. If I am going to create a study on how writing faculty understand digital literacy and technology related professional development, I first needed to understand how the field defines it.

The first move I make in this chapter, then, is to pull from C. Selfe's (1999) work, two definitions that are quite useful when starting into this study on technology-related professional development and for this reason, are worth describing in a bit of detail. First, is her broader, culturally-infused definition of what it means to be technological literate – the definitions she uses are important because these are the definitions I will adopt for the remainder of this study. The second definition I draw from is her understanding of Critical Technology Literacy. I feel this has far -reaching implications on how we view technology-related professional development, especially for English and writing teachers.

The second purpose of my literature review was to understand how the field defines and discusses technology related professional development for writing teachers. If it is true that writing and technology are becoming more and more connected, then exactly how to train or encourage writing faculty to use these digital tools and become more digitally literature is an important and logical next step. I want to find out how a technology related professional development program might operate on campus, specifically for writing teachers at a community college. At the time of this dissertation, the creation, design, and implementation of technology professional development falls to a few individuals on campus – one of them is me. I am curious what others say about this. Do workshops work best? Is training faculty with specific tools better? The second purpose is to uncover what the field says about this.

To this end, I discuss what has been written about technology related professional development in the field of Rhetoric and Writing. I rely heavily on the work of DeVoss, Edman-Aadahl, and Hicks (2010) for this section. As I will discuss later, though a wealth of research and literature exists on how to construct professional development programs for general faculty, little is said about *technology* related professional development and even less on tech PD aimed at writing instructors at the college level. In this section, I also bring in the work coming out of the National Writing Project (NWP) and their moves to organize, inform, and educator writing instructors. Even though most of the NWP work is aimed at K-12 educators, much can be applied to college writing instruction.

My third purpose is see what happens to digital literacy and technology related professional development when viewed through the lens and application of Critical

Pedagogy and specifically the idea of dialogue, as described by Critical Pedagogy scholars and advocates. I make assumptions going into this third topic, mainly that discussing what critical dialogue is and does will help me better understand how we, as writing teachers, can become more digitally literate. That how we present technology related technology professional development can benefit from incorporating Dialogue.

Therefore, using Selber's (2004) research on multiliteracies, specifically his in-depth explanation of Critical Literacy as it relates to the digital world, I introduce the concept of dialogue as described by Critical Pedagogy guru, Paulo Freire and others into the conversation. The importance of dialogue as a way into critical literacy education seems to be missing from C. Selfe (1999) and Selber (2004), and I will make a claim that dialogue is an important tool that needs more attention, especially when it comes to technology-related professional development on college campuses.

Taken together, digital literacy and critical literacy, and critical dialogue, I hope to better understand how we can be more successful at developing opportunities for technology related professional development for writing faculty at the college level.

Technology and Digital Literacy

The year I faced my own students for the very first time as a teaching assistant (brand new, technologically minimal, and quite nervous) at my graduate school is the same year that Cythia Selfe (1999) made abundantly clear to the field of rhetoric and writing, how inseparable writing and digital literacy are. In fact, the first line of her book, *Technology and Literacy in the Twenty-First Century*, states, "Literacy alone is no longer our business. Literacy and technology are. Or so they must become" (p.3).

C. Selfe (199) begins by describing two different but overlapping definitions of technology literacy. The first, drawing upon the 1996 federal publication, "Getting America's Students Ready for the Twenty-First Century," she affirms that one of the ways to define technology literacy is "computer skills and the ability to use computers and technology to improve leading, productivity, and performance" (p.10). This is the understanding I encounter most in my own work at a community college. Most of my colleagues outside (and often in) rhetoric and composition believe that all students need to understand are basic competency skills (pushing buttons, printing, navigating websites, etc.). And while I agree that those skills are essential, they are only part of what it means to be literate in technology.

It is not that these skills are necessary. In fact, the situation is quite the opposite. According to Selber (2004), "functional literacy" is a solid first piece in the goal of becoming more critical and rhetorical in our understanding of computer literacy. It is the overwhelming misconceptions that basic or functional computer literacy skills are all that students (or teachers) need to be successful in school and work and life. As discussed in both C. Selfe (1999) and Selber's (2004) work, the more we push functional or basic competency, absent of anything more critical, it actually perpetuates some of the academic and social inequalities humanist educators strive to push up against.

These basic skills, of course, have changed a great deal from 1999 and 2004. They have and they will. It's not just computer keyboards and printers. Basic skills now include navigating tablets, using and downloading apps, the various features on cell phones, using video and audio capture programs, video conferencing programs and skills, etc. The tools are different but the notion of moving beyond functional or basic

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competencies has remained an essential part of how our field talks about literacy and technology.

C. Self, and later Selber, provide a second definition, one that widens the traditionally narrower view of technology in schools, giving us a richer, more in-depth, and complicated understanding of how literacy and technology connect. C. Selfe (1999) writes that this national movement to push technology literacy in our schools (as described by the 1996 federal report) alludes to and grows from a much broader "cultural link between technology and literacy" (p. 11).

She elaborates that "technology literacy (also) refers to a complex set of socially and culturally situated values, practices, and skills involved in operating linguistically within the context of electronic environments, including reading, writing, and communicating" (p. 11). Six years later, R. Selfe (2004) reaffirmed this definition, though he uses the term "digital literacy" in place of "technology literacy" – a move I made as well.

He writes:

the term technology literacy…was meant to link computing technologies and literacy at fundamental levels of both conception and social practices…digital literacy referred to sociocultural context for discourse and communication as well as the social and linguistic products and practices of communication, and the ways in which electronic communication environments had become essential parts of our cultural understanding of what it meant to be literate (p. 6).

What is important to note is that the Selfes (and many others) view technology and literacy as culturally infused and socially situated. They might not have been the first

to make such a claim, but they were my introduction to the connection and thus, my starting point for my research. If we believe this definition of technology/digital literacy to be true, then it is important to drill down a bit into two important concepts implicit in this wider definition.

First, is that technological literacy is culturally situated. That is, we all bring our own values, understanding, biases, and preferences to technology literacy efforts (especially inside the academic institution). While educators and staff might believe technology skills involving library research, academic word processing, data driven spreadsheet creation, etc. to be quite useful, others might see chat rooms, dating services, researching forbidden or taboo topics, illegally downloading music, etc. to be important. When we think about digital literacy from an academic perspective, we need to keep in mind that there are multiple ways in which someone can be digitally literate and those ways aren't always valued by the academy.   This happens with text messaging, chat rooms, and other social media mediums.

The second, and more important concept we can take from this larger definition of digital literacy is the strong correlation between the levels of how digital literate students are in connection to that person's race, class, and geographical location. "…the people described as illiterate in connection with technology are those with the least power to affect a change in the system. They come from families who attend the poorest schools in this country, and they attend schools with the highest black and Hispanic populations" (C. Selfe, 1999, p. 139). Students remaining technologically illiterate, C. Selfe argues, results in these students landing jobs which pay lower, are least desirable and, of course,

demand the least amount of technological skills. "Teachers need to understand as much as possible about the broad cultural link between technology and literacy" (p. 21).

Technology Related Professional Development

My research revealed very few texts that specifically address technology related professional development for college writing teachers. The texts that did address this topic were either a bit outdated (in digital years) or included only brief discussions of technology related professional development. I did, however, encounter many texts and sources that addressed the need for a better understanding of and more use of technology and digital literacy in the writing classes. These texts, overwhelmingly, fell into one of three categories: Texts aimed at 1) teachers in general 2) specifically, K-12 writing teachers, or 3) college writing teachers. I want to briefly cover what is addressed in each of the categories in order to map what is discussed and hinted at, in terms of technology related professional development, and therefore to better understand how this topic is and is not discussed in the field.   As I will describe below, the most helpful and applicable literature on tech PD for college writing teachers comes out of the National Writing Projects efforts to train K-12 writing teachers in digital literacy and theory.

Technology Related Professional Development for All Teachers

Quite a few texts, both academic and popular, exist on the need for educational institutions (and thus teachers) to use more digital tools and teach more digital literacy (Rushkoff (2010), McKeachie & Svinicki (2006), etc). At my own institution, our faculty reading room (located in the Center for Teaching and Learning) is filled with

how-to and motivational texts on teaching, often with a section or two in each mentioning the need for using technology and digital tools in our classrooms. These texts are meant for all teachers in all subjects at all levels and not just teachers of writing. Jose Bowen's (2012) *Teaching Naked: How Moving Technology Out of Your College Classroom Will Improve Student Learning,* for example, encourages all teachers at the university level to find ways to "flip" their classroom – to become more digital and engaging for students. Bowen has a plethora of suggestions: make learning more like video games, hold virtual office hours, use podcasts, videos, lecture capture, social media, etc. to engage students.

His book is filled with research on student technology use and the benefit of becoming more digital in the classroom, and though he dedicates a chapter to talking about the need for institutional change, little is said in terms of how this translates into training teachers (and others) for such a transformation. Discussions of technology related professional development is absent. At my own college, the administration heavily promoted this book using what Schrum (1999) calls a "spray and pray" model of professional development (p. 84), and I, along with several other faculty members, attempted to translate this into some sort of professional development opportunity - to take his work and find ways to help train the entire campus. We held various workshops and meetings, book discussions, and even invited Bowen for a campus visit. And, we were somewhat successful at getting faculty interested. But again, we used our own judgment and not something specifically suggested in the text on how to deliver these ideas.

McKeachie & Svinicki's (2006) *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers,* another popular book at my college, dedicates an

entire chapter on "Technology and Teaching." The chapter focuses on how technology use enhances student learning, what considerations go into teaching with technology, and the effects of using technology in the classroom but avoids discussing how to train, teach, or talk with others (teachers, students, administrators) about these ideas (pp.229-251).

Technology Related Professional Development for College Writing Teachers

Surprisingly, literature specifically aimed at college writing faculty concerning technology related professional development is somewhat outdated and sparse. There were some articles in the field with suggestions on how to best approach tech PD, and I will discuss those below but most of the literature discussing this topic appeared in Education and Technology journals. Though not directly related to my field of study, they are worth briefly mentioning.

A review of College Composition and Communication Conference programs over the last five years revealed many sessions on very specific technology topics, but they mostly concerned digital tools and not technology professional development. For instance, from 2009-2013, there were 67 sessions about Blogs, 96 sessions on Twitter, Facebook, or other social networking tools, 53 sessions on incorporating video games into teaching, 40 on Wikis, and 14 sessions on phones, smartphones, and text messages. Though only a certain amount of information can be gleaned from reading conference session descriptions, it seems most, if not all of these sessions, were about the tool and not about training others to use or how to approach learning about this digital tool or resource.

A review of the journal *Computers and Composition* revealed only a handful of articles specifically addressing technology professional development for writing teachers. There, of course, was quite a bit published on the need for different ways to include digital writing in English classrooms, but just how this translates into training and encouraging others to use it is seemingly absent.

Over 25 years ago, in a 1989 *Computers and Composition* piece, Bradley Hughes argued that "The literature on computers and composition instruction is filled with advice about ways to use computers in teaching writing, but the literature has included little about training teachers" (p. 66). Despite the amount of time that has passed since his observation, his statement is still rather accurate. For the most part, the field, it seems, hasn't taken up the challenge of discussing best approaches to train writing teachers in technology, or what he called then "computer-aided instruction."

Hughes (1989) did offer some advice, however. Though a bit outdated, he argued that "good training in computer-aided composition instruction should, first of all, provide teachers with information – about possible uses of computers in writing instructions and about different types of computer programs" (p. 66). He suggested giving teachers time to practice using the programs as well as the opportunity to question why they are using them and what affect they have on writing instruction. In other words, offer opportunities to both see the program, use the program, and question the program. Though most of his specific suggestions involve outdated and widely accepted digital tools (word processing programs, pre-writing programs, and email), his point remains. Tools are only one aspect of professional development programs for teaching writing faculty technology. In other words, show teachers why they might want to use

technology rather than just rely on uncritically advocating the use of digital tools in the classroom.

A 2007 article by Debra Journet described her experiences as a "senior faculty" attempting to learn more about digital media in her writing classroom and the challenge of "reconsidering [her] core responsibilities as a teacher" to include more digital literacy instruction and use (p. 108). She addresses two main obstacles in her efforts to become more digitally literate. The first, and easiest for her to overcome was to learn the technologies being used in classrooms – the tools. She admits "this has all been fun. I love fiddling around with gadgets, and once I get started, I have a hard time putting something down until I have 'solved' its puzzles" (p.110). The second and more difficult challenge for her was to understand how technology connects to the primary goals of her writing classes.

A 2003 article indicated that this disconnect wasn't just a concern specific to senior faculty, but also new TAs in writing classrooms. Duffelmeyer describes the challenge of encouraging new writing course TAs to use more technology in their teaching. She notes that most of them felt that the digital element got in the way of their "core responsibilities" as a writing teacher (p. 299). They didn't see a connection between computers and what they were supposed to teach.

Instead of offering a "quick fix" training session built into new TA orientation, Duffelmeyer found that encouraging TAs to become involved in larger "learning communities of practice" (p. 299) was more effective. Though she suggests several ways to go about designing these communities, what is relevant here is that she found that

these teachers who wrestled with digital learning as it relates to writing did well working in communities dedicated to discussing pedagogy, learning, and digital literacy.

In her article, Journet (2007) credits attending C. Selfe's graduate seminar and her own involvement in The Ohio State University's Digital Media and Composition Institute (DMAC) as helping her become a "digital advocate." Journet offers four strategies, based on her experiences that might help involve senior faculty in technology related professional development opportunities.

First, she advocates finding opportunities to involve more senior faculty in intellectual discussions about digital media, digital theory, and digital literacy. She says doing so will help create connections between what non-users ("Hesitant Adopters") do in the writing classroom and what heavy users ("Early Adopters") do (p. 150). Bridge the divide with dialogue, in other words – something I will advocate for in Chapter 4.

Second, offer these senior faculty the opportunity to both create and critique their own digital compositions. This will allow them to understand the use and need for more digitally engaging activities and lessons

The Third and Fourth suggestion relate to giving senior faculty opportunities to be creative and explore the various forms of digital expression in the writing classroom and allow them the time and support they need to do so (Journet, 2007, p. 115).

Several other pieces on technology related professional development exist, but mostly from outside the field of Rhetoric and Writing. In the 2000 *Journal of Social Work Education*, Padgett, and Conceico-Runleee argue that technology related professional development should find ways to connect "expert" and "inexperienced"

faculty in training sessions. They see a need to have technology PD, at least for college Social Work faculty, run by both heavy and light users of technology (p. 330).

In her 1999 article, "Technology Professional Development for Teachers" published in *Educational Technology Research and Development*, Schrum argued that traditional workshops are the wrong way to approach technology professional development.   "Brief exposure," she writes, "does not provide sufficient training or practice to incorporate technology into the classroom" (p. 85). She states that technology workshops do little to help teachers learn technology because

> All teachers are expected to attend, regardless of their readiness. Teachers who are not ready to use technology, or who remain fearful, are likely to learn little from it. Learning-style differences are not taken into consideration and planning. Furthermore, workshops are often help in labs…further distancing the teachers from their comfort zone. More specifically, technology training tends to be 'just in case' learning instead of 'just in time' learning. (p. 85)

To summarize, running through each of these sources, then, both in and out of the field of Rhetoric and Writing, are some common conclusions and suggestions that can be applied to college level technology related professional development for writing teachers.

1. Workshops, as they have been used for non-digital topics, don't work with and when learning technology.

2. There needs to be opportunities to understand how digital and the "core responsibilities" of the faculty are connected and not just how to use the digital tool or about the digital tool itself. For writing teachers, this means seeing a connection between digital and writing.

3. Effective PD should involve multiple perspectives, voices, and skill levels, often in the form of sustained and collaborative learning communities. It shouldn't just be heavy users or early adopters talking at light users and hesitant adopters. Real dialogue needs to take place in these sessions.

4. These communities should involve opportunities to dialogue, criticize, play around with, create, and reflect on digital literacy and digital tools for teaching.

Technology Related Professional Development For K-12 Writing Teachers

My research also revealed many sources discussing technology and teaching writing dedicated specifically to K-12 writing teachers. A wealth of articles and books detailing the need for high school, junior high, and elementary writing teachers to use more digital technology are coming out of the National Writing Project. Digital IS, for example, is an impressive online reservoir of research, teaching ideas, and theory on digital literacy and teaching writing with technology. One can find teacher narratives, collaborative research projects, videos, links, and resources all dedicated to showcasing the use of digital writing tools and theory. However, most everything on the site is aimed at K-12 writing teachers. Searching for "Higher Education" and "College" or "University," revealed only a handful of pieces that briefly mention college writing teaching or teachers.

Though not specifically directed at college writing faculty, many of the observations, research, and suggestions coming out of the NWP publications can be applied to college level technology related professional development. One of the most helpful sources comes out of the NWP publication*, Because Digital Writing Matters*, by

DeVoss, Eidman-Aadalh, and Hicks (2010). Though the text is written for all writing teachers from K-college, the discussion and conclusions found in this text can be directly applied to my research questions and study.

One of the first pieces that helps frame my study is the authors' concept of "digital ecology" – a connection of elements including digital hardware, software, infrastructure, physical layout, as well as cultural elements, echoing C. Selfe's (1999) definition of digital literacy, that includes ethical, legal, and policy environments. "Understanding, improving, and shaping a healthy digital ecology is a part of teaching digital writing" (p. 64). They write,

> Digital writing is not simply a matter of learning about and integrating new digital
> tools into an unchanged repertoire of writing processes, practices, skills, and
> habits of mind. Digital writing is about the dramatic changes in the ecology of
> writing and communication and indeed what it means to write – to create and
> compose and share (p. 4).

Understanding and then fostering a healthy digital ecology, according to the authors, means that faculty need to rethink the rhetorical situation, purposes, audiences they ask their students to write for as well as the types of products they create. DeVoss, Eidman-Aadalh, and Hicks (2010) argue that "this rethinking will not be easy" (p. 14).

Indeed. As I have discovered at my own institution (and something I argue in Chapter 4), rethinking how digital affects our teaching and our student's writing is challenging because it involves wrestling "with the complex problems and opportunities of curriculum design that situates digital writing within the larger set of learning goals for

students. And all of this needs to be undertaken in relationship to a field marked by rapid change" (p. 115).

A common theme running through this text is that effective technology related professional development is about privileging people over tools- that good PD is about pedagogical practices and should be learning focused, rather than the technologies themselves (p. 118). Sustained professional development centered around technology involves learning communities and shared experiences of both experiences and inexperience faculty working, playing, and dialoguing with each other.

The authors advocate three elements of high-qualities of professional development programs for digital writing. These first two elements, offer opportunities to develop and reflect on classroom practice and offer opportunities to work on developing a healthy digital ecology echo the suggestions of Hughes (1989), Journet (2007), Padgett & Conceico-Runleee (2007), and many others. DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks (2010), however, offer a new concept. Included - opportunities to consider the standards and assessment of digital writing (p. 122).

This is something that is completely absent from my own institution, especially in digital technology aimed at writing teachers. We discuss the tools and sometimes the reasons why we use them. We give our faculty some time to play with the technology. But we rarely, if ever, discuss how to evaluate and assess the digital writing that comes out of the use of these tools and programs.

Added to the list in the previous section, then, is the need to bring assessment into the conversation. To not just dialogue about, play with, create, reflect, and criticize these

digital tools and theories, but to find ways to assess how effective they are with our students.

Critical Technology Literacy

The third purpose of my literature review is to connect the notion of Critical Pedagogy and Dialogue to the discussion of digital literacy and, especially, technology related professional development for writing teachers. One way to start this connection is to, once again pull from C. Selfe (1999) and her notion of Critical Technological Literacy. Adding to the idea that technological literacy is socially and culturally situated, the term Critical Technological Literacy "…suggests a reflective awareness of these social and cultural phenomena. Building on the work of literacy scholars like Street, Gee, and Graff, the use of critical technological literacy suggests a political agenda" (p.148). She argues that to be truly literate, we should have the skills to analyze not only how technology and literacy are political, but also how digital literacy education is itself a political movement – one that writing teachers and educators need to pay attention to. She argues that both future and current teachers need to understand and reflect on the social, political, and personal implications of our work in digital literacy education (p. 149).

She argues that English teachers, at all levels of experience, should avoid simply creating technology consumers in our classrooms. Rather, we need to couple every assignment that involves computers with an "opportunity to explore the complex social and cultural issues that surround technology" (p. 152). The consequence for ignoring such an opportunity or calling will create citizens who are at least competent in the

technology but have little or no understanding of how humans and machines and society interact with and rely on each other.

Selber (2004) complicates C. Selfe's (1999) definition of Critical Digital Literacy in two ways. First, he frames Critical Literacy in the middle of two other concepts of digital literacy – Functional and Rhetorical Literacy. And second, he offers a more in-depth and framed explanation of Critical Digital Literacy.

Though I don't want to spend too much time discussing these other forms of literacy, I do agree with Selber in that all three are important aims when teaching digital literacy. In his view, teachers need to draw upon all three types of literacy (hence, "Multilieracies") when teaching students to become more digitally literature. Though I am primarily drawing on his definition of "Critical Literacy," it's important to understand the distinction (and connection) between these three concepts.

Selber argues that it wrong to simply move straight to a Critical Literacy approach to teaching students without first allowing them the opportunity to understand the basic functions of computers - how they behave as tools, in other words.

It is also important for teachers, he explains, to move beyond the questioning stage of Critical Literacy practices and allow students the opportunities to produce technology, to become creators and reflect on these creations. In his "Rhetorical Literacy" stage, students become "authors of twenty-first century texts" (p. 139). A move, he warns, that often pushes against traditional ideas of what constitutes texts, papers, projects, and other demonstrations of student knowledge.

DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks (2010) also discuss these three forms of digital literacy in their work, commenting that this shift in thinking about writing (to

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include Functional, Critical, and Rhetorical) is not easy but, nevertheless, is a challenge all writing teachers will need to address.

The second way Selber helps me in my research is elaborating on what it means to be critically digital literate and how one might teach others to become so. Drawing from a constructivism framework, he argues that Critical Literacy is about getting students to recognize and question the politics of computers and their uses. A critical approach to understanding digital literacy, then, both "recognizes and then challenges the values of the status quo" as well as "expose biases and provide an assemblage of cultural practices that, in a democratic spirit, might lead to the production of positive social change" (p. 81). Building on the notion of computers as metaphorical influences or "cultural artifacts," students are able to move beyond functional literacy notions and are asked to reexamine how technology is used in personal and professional contexts, and how they can understand the forces that have led to their own computer literacy.

Critical Digital Literacy and Dialogue

Strongly implied, but seldom mentioned in the work of C. Selfe's (1999), Selber (2004), DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks (2010) is the understanding that Critical Digital Literacy is informed by the work of Paulo Freire and other, early pioneers of Critical Pedagogy. The aims and goals of both Critical Pedagogy and Critical Digital Literacy (or rethinking digital literacy as well) are quite similar in the sense that they both call attention to the politics of language and literacy and the notion that a major goal for literacy educators is to encourage students to become more active members of their world and words and not simply passive consumers of both. Indeed, that seems the entire goal

of C. Selfe's call to action, Selber's heuristics, and DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hick's description of effective technology related professional development for writing teachers.

What seems to be hinted at but mostly missing from both these discussions, however, is any specific discussion dialogue in the process of helping students become critical digitally literate – be the learner a student or teacher. While some authors give brief credit to Freire, lightly tracing the line from Freire's (1968) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and their own work, the absence of the importance of dialogue as a way into critical digital literacy and technology professional development is worth noting. The need for more connection between Critical Digital Literacy, Dialogue, and Technology Related Professional Development is something I argue for in Chapter 4.

Granted, there are quite a few variations of Critical Pedagogy and it is not my purpose to privilege one over another or to offer criticisms and benefits of employing them in the academy (there is enough of that already). However, no matter which definition one holds to, the importance of employing dialogue remains constant among them. Each incarnation emphasizes dialogue as a foundation for political and social discussion. As Burbules (2000) argues, no matter which incarnation of Critical Pedagogy one employs, "they all privilege dialogue as the basis for arriving at valid intersubjective and understanding of knowledge. And they all, in the educational domain, recommend dialogue as the mode of pedagogical engagement best able to promote learning, autonomy, and understanding of one's self in relation to others" (p. 13).

It is widely understood in Critical Pedagogy that those who adopt dialogue as pedagogical practice often do so from the understanding that knowledge is created through social interactions with other and different people, perspectives, and ideologies.

This is something Duffelmeyer noted in 2003 when helping new TAs learn ways to integrate and learn about technology in their writing courses. She realized the importance of dialogue inside learning communities (p. 230). Various voices, various approaches, various beliefs all coming together in one community. Through dialogue, we learn about the world and come to understand our own identity as a member of the community, be that inside or outside of the classroom.

Though there are many views about what Critical Pedagogy is, what can be imported into the classroom how it changes once it enters the classroom, etc., there are several quite useful foundational elements that are useful when approaching a study concerning technology professional development. For this section, I draw upon the work of Freire (1964) Freire (1994), Freire &Macedo (1995), and Shore (1993) Shore (1996).

I first feel the need to mention that a move I will make in later chapters is to argue that, though Freire and others use the term "student" when discussing dialogue, one could easily make the argument that he simply means "learner." That teachers, especially in situations of professional development, can indeed be learners or "students."

According to Freire (1994), the fundamental aim of dialogue is "to create a process of learning and knowing that invariably involves theorizing about the experiences shared in the dialogue process" (p. 381). Dialogue, he writes, is inextricably linked to the process of learning and knowing. For Freire, dialogue is how we learn about each other, how we construct meaning.

Dialogue, at least to Freireins, serves many purposes. Foremost, it serves to desocialize participants from passivity in the learning environment. It challenges silence and submission so prevalent in traditional methods of learning. It also desocisalizes

"teachers" from the comfortable, dull and domineering teacher-talk (traditional workshops, for example) which teachers are socialized into performing (Shore, 1993).

Dialogue also awakens and strengthens participants' "epistemological curiosity." According to Freire & Macedo (1995), "without an increased level of epistemological curiosity and the necessary apprenticeship in a new body of knowledge, [people] cannot truly engage in a dialogue" (p. 384). Participants need to have the opportunity to transform their lived experiences and knowledge to learn new knowledge. They both begin to see knowledge as something they construct in a democratic setting. "Curiosity is what makes me question, know, act, ask again, recognize" (Freire, 1994, p. 81). Knowledge isn't set in stone (or in a digital tool). Rather, it is more organic and relies on the participant's own experiences and insights. DeVoss, Eidman-Aadalh, and Hicks (2010) affirm this when discussing how "people transcend tools; people should be primary" (p. 118).

Howard (2001) notes that learning needs to involve more collaborative opportunities where those teaching "are no longer dispensing knowledge in [workshops] but are guiding [participants] in collaborative process of discovering and constructing knowledge, [participants] are empowered" (p. 57).

When involved in dialogic practices, we should never assume complete passivity and allow the dialogue to move without some direction. At the same time, we should never assume complete dominance either. Howard's distinction between dialogic and hierarchical collaboration is helpful when attempting to gauge how involved we should be in the dialogic model. Many collaborative projects involved both methods. Dialogic collaboration offers participants more opportunities to discover knowledge by working

together. Hierarchical collaboration (where the participants divide tasks into component parts and assign specific parts to specific students) offers the benefit of efficiency. These two methods can be combined in true dialogic settings. The teacher doesn't necessarily set the agenda or assign roles to the students. Decisions are made democratically and collaboratively (Howard, 2001).

To summarize then, dialogue is rooted in the social, historical, and political situations. Much like Critical Digital Literacy, it is understood that dialogue embodies history and culture, and reveals conflict. To understand dialogue, one needs to understand the cultural, historical, and political situation of those involved in dialogic interaction.

Burbules (2000) would agree: "Dialogue constitutes a point of opportunity at which these three interests – political, pedagogical, and philosophical – come together. It is widely assumed that the aim of teaching with and through dialogue serves democracy, promotes communication across differences, and enables the active construction of new knowledge and understanding" (p. 15).

Burbules states that:

Dialogue represents, to one view or another, a way of reconciling differences; a means of promoting empathy and understanding for others; a mode of collaborative inquiry; a method of critically comparing and testing alternative hypotheses; a form of constructivist teaching and learning; a forum for deliberation and negotiation about public policy differences; a therapeutic engagement of self and other exploration; and a basis for shaping uncoerced social and political consensus (p.15)

Summary of Chapter 2

Pulling from research in the field (and from research in related fields), and delving into some K-12 research (mostly from the National Writing Project), I was able to see that there is some consensus on what it means to be "digitally literate" in terms of writing and teaching writing.

Digital literature writers are able to navigate the tools and programs involved in digital writing. They are able to see connections that digital tools, programs, and technologies have to writing instruction and learning as well as connections that exist between digital literacy and ethical, political, social, and cultural issues both in and out of the classroom. Digital literate writers are also creators of digital content and can reflect, critique, and assess these products. They understand the need to rethink both the creation process and products involved in writing.

There is also consensus in the field of Rhetoric and Writing that technology related professional development is and should be designed differently than traditional, non-digital workshop models. Overwhelmingly, researchers agree that sustainable, collaboration communities are the stuff of effective technology professional development. Essential elements include opportunities to dialogue about theory, pedagogy, methods, and tools. Writing faculty need time to play with, create, critique, and evaluate their (and others') writing.

Effective technology related professional development is more than about the tools – it is about the ability to see connections between the work we do as writing teachers and the digital tools and theories that surround our work.

Chapter 3: Interview Data on Community College Writing Faculty Perceptions of Digital Literacy and the Teaching of Writing: Three Themes

As John W. Creswell (2007) explains, all qualitative researchers bring their own biases and beliefs with them to the research project and that "good research" requires that these researchers make obvious these assumptions explicit in their writing (p. l5). As described in Chapter 2, I understand that Digital Literacy (and thus technology-related professional development for literacy educators) is inseparably linked to issues of race, class, age, gender and power and privilege (C. Selfe (1999), R, Selfe (2005), etc.).

On a larger scale, my own belief in education is shaped by my understanding of Critical Pedagogy, specifically the work of Freire, Freire & Macedo, Shore, Giroux, and others. I view all education to be a political act and that it is essential that educators understand how power and privilege plays out in the classroom and educational institutions, such as community colleges and universities. I also understand that Critical Pedagogy is not without criticisms and contradictions. One of the major issues I have wrestled with during my graduate work is accepting that the literature on Critical Pedagogy since Freire's 1964 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is very complicated and splintered. I have too often fallen into the trap of "uncritically advancing the Freiren line," using statements such as "teachers must" or "teachers should" in writing and arguing that Freireans' understanding of power, truth, and concepts like dialogue are immune to criticism.

Instead of relying solely on critical pedagogues and their research, as discussed in Chapter 2, I use my understanding as a springboard, a foundation on which to stand and

move around. It serves as a personal worldview that helps inform my interpretation of what the participants say in my interview. This chapter then, serves several purposes.

First, I describe the college in which I both work and have chosen to locate my study Next, I describe my six interviewees and discuss why I placed in them in the group Early Adopter, Willing Adopter, or Hesitant Adopter. I then briefly describe the interview questions and process. Last, I discuss the results of the interviews. I divided this last section into three major themes and further divide some into small threads. After each theme, I describe the what the data demonstrated in that particular section.

The first theme I noticed was how Developmental English Faculty viewed their often underprivileged and poverty stricken students. I was interested in how they discussed these students and how they perceived their students' digital deficits.

The second theme, how digital literacy is culturally situated and often tied to race, class, socio-economic, and political issues, is another demonstration of how I brought my bias to the research. I fully understand that doing so might have resulted in me paying less attention to other factors. I might be limited in what I was able to see because I was focused so intently on noticing places where power appears. However, since one of the major focuses of my research is finding ways Critical Pedagogy connects to Digital Literacy and technology related professional development, I see this as an important move – one that my research validates and supports.

The third and final theme discusses how these teachers talk about learning technology related professional development. Though I leaned upon the labels Early, Willing, and Hesistant Adopters as the start of this study, I introduce two new terms that I

argue better encompasses the reasons faculty avoid or embrace technology related professional development – Potential Seekers and Proof Seekers.

Though I am very much embedded in this research (I am a faculty member, Chair of the Department, and part of the professional development staff), I heavily rely on the data gathered in the interviews to arrive at my conclusions. Though my own voice is present in several chapters, you will find me absent in most of my data chapter. I want the participants of my study to have their own voice and views. And I rely on these perspectives to inform my final chapter.

Study Location:

This study primarily relies on data from interviews with 6 full-time English/Writing faculty. All interviews were located at the college where I am employed a mid-sized community college in the Midwest nestled in the middle of one of the largest cities in the state. Since its founding in the early 20s, the college has been through several name changes, expansion projects, and demographic shifts, often aligned with the growth and decline of the city it is housed in.

As a junior college, classes were originally housed inside a newly created high school. It was a humble beginning but proved to be quite popular. Students in the area interested in starting college (and finishing high school) didn't have to travel very far to start their college education. In 1931, the campus was moved out of the high school and to a rather large, beautiful former mental health intuition.

In 1946, a local philanthropist, along with several other prominent businessmen, became quite involved in developing the cultural/educational aspects of the city and

helped establish what would later become, in 1970, a full fledged community college

servicing the wider county, and not just the city.

As of 2013, the college serves approximately 10, 300 students (down from 12,000

in 2009/2010). Of those, the majority (63%) are part-time students and the rest (37%) are

full-time. A majority of the students are female (59%) and between the ages of 20-29

(approximately 5500 students). The college has students as young as 18 and as old as 70.

The college offers five associate degrees, and well as several alternative training and

certification awards.

Students identifying as "White" make up 60.18% of the student population,

followed by "Black/African American" at 19.65% and "Hispanic" at 3.61%.

The students at the college have a wide range of ages: The majority (5,509) of

students are 20-29 years old, followed by 30-39 (1,644), 18-19 (1,236), and 40-49

(1,119). We also have over 500 students who are aged 50-59, and over a hundred aged

60-69.

As of November 2011, the college had 135 Full-Time Faculty, 419 Part-Time

Faculty as well as 55 Full-Time Executive/Administrative/Managerial professionals.

Introduction to Interviewees: Early, Willing, and Hesitant Adopters

I chose to conduct a survey delivered to all faculty on campus because I wanted to

be able to see if there were any specific similarities and differences between how writing

(English) faculty perceive digital tools and technology and the general faculty. Because I

asked the same questions to all faculty, I was able to compare the results between

disciplines across various subjects. This allowed me to see that most disciplines think

alike, in terms of how they view their own use of technology, how their students use technology, and how technology related professional development happens on their campus.

One major limitation of this method was that in order to conduct this study on campus and get approval from my college's Internal Research Department, answers needed to be anonymous. After working with the IR staff, I was able to add a question that allowed participants to volunteer their names (thus allowing me to specifically trace answers back to individual instructors). However, my data on English Faculty was not as robust as I wished it would have been. Only 8 of the 15 full-time English Faculty provided their names or took the survey (I am not sure which).

Another factor that very well might have limited the accuracy of participants' answers was that I did not clarify what I meant when using the term "technology" on the survey and I avoided the term "digital literacy" altogether. I imagine results to some of the questions (discussed below) might have been different had I clarified what I meant by "technology" as well as introduced and defined the concept of "digital literacy."

The survey mentioned in Chapter 1, was given to all faculty on campus and helped me understand how teachers in various disciplines view their own level of digital literacy and how they best learn technology as it applies to their teaching. For the purpose of this dissertation, however, I wanted to interview just full-time English Faculty at my institution and primarily focus on how professional development and digital literacy is understood by college writing teachers. Since responders to the survey were given the option to identify themselves by name after the survey was complete, I was able to determine that eight of the 15 other full-time English Faculty chose to do so. As

described on the last page of the survey, leaving their names indicated a willingness to participate in a personal interview. I now had a specific group of potential writing teachers to work with.

I soon realized that eight was a few too many for my purposes in this study. In order to keep the interview set relatively manageable, I filtered these subjects again, down to six total. Looking at the responses for Question 6 on the survey which asked, "Which of the following statements best describes your own professional use of technology," four faculty indicated they were "willing to learn and try new technology as it comes to me"; two indicated "I am quick to adopt new technology in my classroom"; and two indicated that they were "aware but hesitant to use new technology." Using these three sets of answers, I created the following three general categories:

1. Early Adopters of Technology

2. Willing Adopters of Technology

3. Hesitant Adopters of Technology

Since there were four in the "Willing Adopters" category and I wanted just two (to bring the total to 6), I used the next survey question: "How often do you use digital technology tools in your classroom?" and picked the two from these four who indicated they used it "frequently weekly" – again an average amount based on the rest of the faculty responses for that question.

Each of the six were contacted, given my interview consent form, and asked if they would allow me to interview them. All of them agreed.

Since these faculty indicated they would be willing to participate in the study, I emailed each of them a copy of my interview consent form from my college email and

asked them to look over the document for a better understanding of what I would be looking at, their rights, and the purposes of my study and to reply to me if they were still interested. All of them did.

I discuss the participants in more detail below.

My original set of interviews from my first attempt used the three-tiered, in-depth interview strategy explained by Irving Seidman (2006) in *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*. Seidman's model was quite useful when interviewing only three faculty members, but for this new study, I felt that delving too deeply into the participants' lives wasn't as valuable. I was no longer interviewing them about their entire perceptions of the entire college – but rather about their views on technology and technology-related professional development. My study was now more focused and I felt my interviews should be as well. And though I won't be using his model of interviews, Seidman's advice to use interviews as a main method of collecting data still resonates. He affirms that "if the researcher's goal…is to understand the meaning people involved in education make of their own experiences, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry" (p. 11).

Though I will go into greater detail later in this chapter, I wanted to briefly introduce the interviewees and explain why I labeled them either Early, Willing, or Hesitant.

Early Adopters:

Troy primarily teaches Composition 1 and 2 and Technical (business) Writing. During the last 12 years at the school, he has taught a variety of courses but recently

focuses on Composition 1 and 2, Technical Writing, and is also Writing Center Director for the college. Prior to coming to this college, Troy worked in corporate as a copy editor for an internet company. His survey answers indicated that he uses technology "very frequently" in his teaching and feels that digital technology is "very important" to his field (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

Lucas has been at the college for 13 years and has taught both traditional and online courses. His primarily teaching responsibilities include English 101 and 102 (mostly online) and several literature courses. Though he says that he has less time recently to invest in learning new technology, he has always been an Early Adopter. "Technology doesn't scare me," he says. He earned his MA and PhD in English and Writing. Lucas feels technology is "very important" to his field and indicates that he as an "excellent understanding" of how technology is used in education (personal interview, October 3, 2013).

Willing Adopters:

Richard, the most senior faculty in the group, has been teaching at the school for over 16 years. He began his college teaching career as primarily teaching English 101 and 102 at the school but quickly moved to teaching only Developmental English and a "smattering of literature and online courses." He has taught online courses and well as having been involved in several different initiatives devoted to developmental writing students. Though on his survey, Richard indicated that he is a Willing Adopter, later in the interviews he indicated that also considered himself an Early Adopter in relation to the rest of the college (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

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Madilyn has been teaching at the college for 10 years. She is currently the Developmental English coordinator for the college. Though she indicated that she is feels that digital technology is both "very important" to her field and her classroom teaching, she chose Willing to Adopt as her label because she doesn't actively seek out new technology for her classroom. She does, however, teach with technology on a daily basis (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Hesitant Adopters:

Kerry, hired in the same year as Madilyn, considers herself a Hesitant Adopter but indicated in her interview she is willing if she sees it is needed. She is unsure of how important technology is to her field but indicated that it is "important" to her teaching. Though she doesn't use much technology in her classroom, she does use technology as a discussion point. She primarily teaches English 101, 102, and several literature courses (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

Jenny has been working at the college for 9 years and considers herself a Hesitant Adopter. She doesn't use very much technology at all in her teaching and indicated that she has a "distrust" of technology. She primarily teaches Developmental Writing at the college. Her survey answers indicated that she is "aware but hesitant to use technology" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Interview Questions:

Though Seidman's in-depth model wasn't directly useful to me anymore, I relied quite heavily on his advice for constructing a consent form as well as his suggestions on what to do with the interview data once collected.

I created a list of 11 questions:

1. Tell me about your professional experiences at this school. How long at this institution? Courses taught? Etc.
2. Tell me about your history with digital tools and technology. What are your experiences (or lack of experiences) with using digital technology in your teaching?
3. Which of the following terms best applies to you in terms of educational technology and teaching : "early adopter," "willing to adopt as needed," "reluctant adopter." Explain.
4. How would you describe your attitude towards learning new digital educational technology?
5. What are some of the ways (means, methods) in which you do learn about new technology?
6. Describe a recent situation in which you learned a new program or digital tool. Who/what/when/where/why taught you?
7. How would you describe the efforts of this school or the Center for Teaching and Learning in terms of encouraging teachers to adopt technology? Are they successful in encouraging you? What brings you to that conclusion?
8. What are the elements that would drive you to readily attend technology workshops/events on campus?
9. What are the motivating reasons you imagine this school has for encouraging faculty to attend technology-related professional development events through the CTL?
10. What are the ways this school or the Center for Teaching and Learning could better serve you or the faculty at large in terms of digital educational technology offerings?
11. Do you think that the ways we can best serve you are linked inseparably to your discipline? How does your discipline/academic area affect how you perceive, receive, and prefer tech development?

I had preconceived ideas, of course, of how faculty would respond to my questions. After all, I have trained and collaborated with many of the same faculty I interviewed. I also share their teaching load and committee responsibilities, and was responsible for many of the technology-related professional development many of them were required or chose to attend. I wanted to approach the interviews with an open mind and let the

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participants tell their own stories. Most of the questions allowed participants to make sense of their own experiences rather than directing them to point out how students are oppressed or how teachers need more PD experiences. I wanted to understand how each writing teacher, on an individual and personal level, responded to PD at the college as well to become more aware of what, if any, connection they saw with the work they do at the college and digital technology.

Questions 1 and 2 asked participants to tell the story of their own digital history – their experiences with technology on a personal and then professional level. Question 3 gave participants the chance to reaffirm their own choice to label themselves in terms of how willing they are to learn new technology. As I discuss later, most of the participants repeated the answers they gave on the survey (it asked a similar question). Question 4 encouraged participants to elaborate on their attitudes to learning technology.

Questions 5-8 involved discovering the ways in which faculty learn technology best. I used the information from these chapters and compared it to both what the field says is effective in terms of PD and how my own college structures the PD experience for teachers.

Questions 9 and 10 asked participants to describe WHY they thought the college was pushing technology on them and how they felt it might do a better job.

Question 11, the last question in the interview, was perhaps the most revealing. One of the major personal revelations during my research and analysis was the idea that digital literacy and teaching writing are inextricably linked. I was surprised at the variety of answers to this question. Participants either saw little or no connection or they found it completely connected. This turned out to be a major discussion point in this chapter.

Interview Data: Three Themes

Though I have created several surveys and conducted several minor interviews in my past, I had never created a study of this magnitude. Siedman's (2006) advice on both managing, analyzing, and interpreting the interview data was quite helpful. As he suggests, I avoided any in-depth analysis until all my interviews were complete. This did hold up some of my progress but proved to be valuable. I transcribed each interview and attempted to come to the transcripts without bias in order to locate important themes or ideas.

Following Siedman's suggestion that I should "organize transcripts into themes and then search for connecting threads and patterns among the excerpts within those categories that might be called themes" (p. 125), I spent quite a bit of time reading and rereading the transcripts for common patterns.

As I was looking over the interview transcripts (collecting, highlighting, dividing, and retyping) three very specific themes became obvious from the start. The first, *Developmental Writing Faculty's Perceptions of Developmental Students' Digital Literacy*, discusses three small threads that emerged from the interviews I conducted with Developmental English Faculty, in particular. Though I wasn't planning on separating Developmental English faculty from the Non-Developmental English faculty, it seems they do have different view of what it means to be digitally literate and work with students and technology. These three specific threads are 1) the lack of basic computer skills among developmental students, 2) faculty understanding of how digital literacy is

culturally situated, and 3) the lack of computer lab space dedicated specifically for developmental writing students.

The second specific theme, *Digital Literacy and the Teaching of Writing: Perceptions of the Ways in Which Technology and Writing are Connected*, discusses the point that some writing faculty are resistant to the idea that their core responsibilities as writing teachers and technology are closely related or even becoming one in the same. Whereas Chapter 2 makes the case that these two elements are increasingly becoming inseparable from one another, only two faculty slightly agreed with this. For the rest, it was either an "obstacle" or a "tool: - something to help get students learning about writing, rather than connected to writing in and of itself.

The third and final theme, *Writing Faculty's Ways of Learning Technology:*

Potential Seekers Vs. Proof Seekers, became apparent when comparing the transcripts of faculty in each of the three categories: "Early to Adopt," "Willing to Adopt," and "Hesitant to Adopt." Though I was personally expecting to find that age was a major element in the differences between these groups, instead, it had more to do with the terms they use when describing their experiences with technology as well as their willingness to seek out potential in technology rather than specific proven methods already well established when thinking about using technology in their professional lives.

Theme One: Developmental Writing Faculty Perceptions of Developmental Students' Digital Literacy

Thread One: Developmental Writing Students Lack Basic Computer Skills

This concern became evident early on in my interviews. Faculty perceptions of the digital literacy skills of developmental English students were forefront in the majority of the answers I received. Though all of the teachers have taught developmental at some point in their career, the three in particular teaching developmental almost exclusively had the most to say on this issue. This is an especially interesting theme because my initial questions had little to do with asking about developmental students in particular. Nevertheless, I felt this an important thread to point out. My school is, after all, a campus with a high proportion of incoming students either testing or placing into developmental classes.

The three Developmental English Faculty all had similar observations and perceptions of the digital literacy levels of their developmental students. Where they differ, however, is that each had different perspectives on how to deal with these low skills. They differed on what the digital literacy level of their students meant to them, their roles, and their responsibilities as writing teaching. These similarities and differences are important to address because they provide insight into how teachers react to the low digital literacy levels of their students.

Though none of the faculty interviewed used the term "Functional Literacy" directly, it seems their definitions of "basic computer skills" is one in the same. That is, what Selber (2004) labels "Functional" in the traditional sense - how to push buttons and click around – seems to be how these faculty understand low level digital literacy skills. Selber argued, "Teachers of writing and communication are not used to thinking about functional literacy in positive ways. Functional literacy has been reduced to a simple

nuts-and-bolts matter, to basic skills based on master of technique" (p. 32). This corresponds to the views of most of the developmental faculty I interviewed.

Each of the three developmental faculty agreed that most of their developmental students have very basic digital literacy skills. "I think developmental students are more likely to lack basic computing skills, like how to log into computers, where is Microsoft Word, where to click, how to use a mouse," Madilyn observed (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Jenny agrees. She mentioned early on as well that most of her students "don't know how to use a computer" (personal interview, October 16, 2013). Students would often visit her during office hours, confused about what program to use to type their papers. "They would come in really confused. I had to tell them to double click on the big blue W. That's where they were at" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Richard mentioned that during his first few years teaching developmental students, he would often have to spend quite a large amount of time reassuring his students that they "could not break a computer simply by turning it on. I would tell them to come see me and I would do a quick tutorial with them. How to open Word, how to set margins, etc." (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Even logging on to computers seems to be problematic for developmental students. Madilyn observes that when she does hold class in a computer lab, she spends most of her time helping those with rather low digital literacy levels understand the basic functions of logging in or opening programs. "Even if it's just getting logged into the computer … either they don't know their user name and password, which I can look up but which takes time in each instance, or they have changed their password and can't

remember. Or they have lots of trouble with saving their work, even though I have taught them how to do it" (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Though they first bring up basic digital skills in terms of using word processing programs and basic turning on and logging on skills, these faculty all also agree that access is another large issue for their developmental students. "… I think they are more likely not able to have Internet access from home, or to not have a computer or printer at home" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). She mentions that developmental students, more than any other group she teaches, are tied to the college campus in order to complete their work – using campus computers and printers. She does acknowledge that things have slowly improved during her tenure at the college, that she notices more and more developmental students walking around with laptops (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Richard agrees. "Things are changing. They all can't afford computers but I think that group is getting smaller" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Though the three Developmental English Faculty mentioned that their students lack digital skills, they had much different perspectives on how to deal with this fact.

For Jenny, the low digital skill level is all the more reason to avoid using any technology in the classroom.

I'm reluctant to give my students assignments that need to be completed using technology because I know what's going to happen. I'm going to give the assignments on Monday and go to class on Wednesday and half of them will say, "Oh, I couldn't get [the LMS] to load" or "I don't have a computer" or "Oh, my mom didn't pay my phone bill so my phone got cut off and I couldn't look it up

on my phone." You see what I'm saying? So, like…The point of my class isn't

to…I try…I don't want my students to not learn the class concepts because they

are so confounded by the use of technology that they spend more time trying to

wrap their heads around that than they are trying to actually learn about writing

(personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Richard has a much different perspective than Jenny. For him, students who have

difficulty with technology have no reason to avoid using it. In fact, he encourages his

students to use technology, in part, because it is important for them to learn how to

overcome these obstacles. " I think if you don't make demands on students they won't

rise to the occasion. If you set the bar here and in order for them to get over that mark,

make time to come to the lab and log on, and do a certain activity, or to learn a new skill,

they will rise to the occasion" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Richard remembers when he first started teaching at the college in 1998, the

English Faculty were still debating whether they should or could require students to type

their college essays. "It was ridiculous," he recalls. He argues that technology is just

"what a college student does" (personal interview, October 9, 2013). When pressed

about how he explains this to those struggling students --the ones they say they don't

know how to use technology, he tells them that technology and learning are

interconnected and "they can use that excuse for about two weeks and I'm going to be

showing them how to use the computer to do certain tasks and they should learn that task.

Then I show them the next task" (personal interview, October 9, 2013). He explains to

his students and they just have to carry on.

If they keep saying they are not good at it, he asserts, they will never get good at it. "We have got to change the conversation in our heads to 'I can do it.' College kids have plenty of resources for accomplishing that. I tell students to decide if they're going to make use of those resources" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Whereas Jenny reacts to the low-level digital literacy skills of her students with resistance, Richard seems to view it as yet just another challenge college students need to overcome. Madilyn simply put it, "If it is not my job [helping students learn the low-level digital literacy skills], then whose job is it?" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). Even though she doesn't view it as her primary responsibility, she says that she tries her best to help her students along, give them resources, and walk them through the technology and their issues with it.

Thread Two: Digital Literacy as Culturally Situated

One of the major concepts I addressed in Chapter 2 was the idea that digital literacy and poverty, power, and culture are closely linked. That the lower the digital literacy level of a person, the less likely they will find themselves in high-paying, personally meaningful jobs. According to C. Selfe (1999), "The people described as illiterate in connection with technology are those with the least amount of power…As students, they have less access to sophisticated technology. As a result, they are hired into less desirable, lower-paid positions that demand fewer official technological literacy skills, and pay lower wages" (p. 139). The students my three developmental teachers are describing seem to be the same type as C. Selfe described years ago, those with little access and few skills.

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Again, even though none of my questions had directly asked participants to describe the ways culture, poverty, and power are related to digital literacy or developmental students, each of the three developmental faculty alluded to the fact that there was a connection.

"And as I'm sure you can imagine," Jenny mentioned. "I'm very much shaped by the fact that I have taught so much Developmental Writing" (personal interview, October 16, 2013). She explained that when she teaches primarily developmental English students, most of them will need their hand held when using technology. They are going to need to explicitly be shown how to use a computer. She indicates that this is because "they're so much more likely to not have the tools at their disposal because they are much more likely to come from the poverty class" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).   Though she didn't elaborate on what or who belonged to the "poverty class," later on in the interview she did allude to the fact that it had primarily to do with race.

> A lot of my attitude has been shaped by the fact that a lot of my students are African Americans. They grew up in poverty and there is a pretty well established digital divide. Poor people and minorities are much less likely to grow up with computers in the home or to have computers in the home at any time. So, as a result, they are less comfortable using computers when they come to college. And there's already a really well established achievement gap between white and Asian and minorities (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Richard understands this connect between digital literacy and culture a bit differently. He mentioned he often tells his students who push back against learning new technology that he knows of very few jobs or higher-paying jobs in which they do not

have to use a computer. The connection between wages and digital literacy is clear to him.

> I think we are doing students a disservice if we don't [teach digital literacy]. I don't think technology is going away, and if we're graduating students who are illiterate in technology, I don't think we are doing anyone a service. It would be as if we were graduating students who can't read, or can't write, or can't do math. It's just something students have to know in order to be successful in life. (personal interview, October 9, 2013)

Despite the fact they both acknowledge that digital literacy is culturally situated and linked to issues like job wages and race, they have differing opinions on how (or whether or not) to help these students.

For Richard, he sees this connection as a motivation to use technology more often, to help his struggling students make sense of the materials. He pushes his students to struggle and work through the challenges they might encounter. He mentioned that he holds class as often as he can in a computer lab.   Even if he isn't teaching them a specific set of digital skills, he wanted to get students in front of a computer to work on and work out the issues that might arise. His philosophy is that the more we connect literacy education and technology, the better they will become at both (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

For Jenny, it is the opposite. She says that relying on too much technology in her classroom will only further the issues of poverty and racial inequality. For her, digital literacy and writing are separate, complex elements. Technology is something that "gets in the way" of a student's literacy and writing. It sets up "road blocks." Since her

students struggle to learn the technology, she reasons that spending time on mastering the technology interferes in her ability to teach them literacy and to become successful writers. In other words, she acknowledges the link between digital literacy and poverty exists but for her, the solution to helping her students out of poverty and becoming successful writers is to avoid digital literacy altogether (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Thread Three: The Need for Lab Spaces for Developmental Students

The last major thread gathered from the interviews and running through this chapter is the idea brought up by two of the three developmental instructors concerning the need for a specifically designated lab space for developmental writing students. These answers came when discussing the 10th question in the survey which asked the faculty to describe the ways in which the college might help faculty with learning and using technology. Again, though lab space wasn't implicit in the question, it was worth noting that the three developmental teachers were the ones who brought up computer lab space.

The institution itself has several computer labs on campus open to all students. In addition, there are several more computer labs housed in various departments that with advanced notice, most faculty in that department can reserve for classroom use. We do not have a computer lab dedicated in which we can hold daily classroom meetings. However, the campus Writing Center has about 15 computers that are designated for writing students.

Despite the fact that there are two computer labs on campus, English Faculty have access to (both are located in the Library), all three faculty separately brought up the

desire to see a lab dedicated specifically to Developmental Students. "It would be nice if the college could provide more lab space" suggested Richard. "It would be nice if there were more labs so there was more classroom experience in labs, especially in the developmental classes where if there was more lab time, it would greatly help some of those students, both with their writing and with their technology literacy (personal interview, October 9, 2013). He argues that it is one thing for him to explain a device, program, or set of exercises in front of the class using the podium computer, but he believes that it would be much more meaningful if students were able immediately practice these skills while sitting in front of a computer.

He gives the example of conducting online research through the library databases. He spends several classes going over, pointing out, and showing his students in a lecture-type environment. Several classes later, his students are expected to start conducting this research on their own – using what they learn in the previous lessons. Richard explains that this is problematic. When students try it out on their own, they often have questions or become stuck. They are by themselves with no one to give them immediate help "Sometimes that hands-on experience needs to be guided, not something you can send them to the lab on their own to do. I can do that, but some situations need guided practice" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Madilyn suggests taking it a step further: "It would be more of a benefit to them to do their work here if there were real IT people available so when a person cannot remember a password or things like that, there would be someone right there they can turn to for help" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). She argues that lab space alone is not enough. If most of the issues students have in her class are basic computer issues,

then have a computer lab with supplemental instruction: One person doing the teaching and one doing computer help. "Give me a lab space with supplemental instruction, with someone coming in to be a help with backup for technical stuff that gets in the way of my teaching. I spend half the class period to help someone log in" (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

This model would also work for Jenny. "If I could have someone help students when they had trouble with technical issues, opening programs, typing issues – so that I could concentrate on teaching them writing, I could go for that" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Theme One: Summary and Implications

What can be taken from the threads in this section is that there is a consensus among developmental writing faculty that developmental writing students, more than any other group, lack the basic computer skills needed to accomplish basic functional tasks (how to open, save, log on, etc.). Often students are enrolled in developmental classes very early on in their student career and they are often non-traditional students – those who are older or have been out of school for quite some time. They come to the developmental classes having little or no computer classes or training. They have very limited digital literacy experiences.

This leads to the second point that can be taken from this theme: developmental writing faculty are obviously frustrated. They feel either reluctant to teach these basic skills (they will, but only because they feel they have to) or are resistant about teach them altogether. They look at digital literacy as something that gets in the way of what they

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really are supposed to do – teach writing. They are either unaware or unable to see beyond what Selber (2004) refers to the as "Functional Literacy" stage. As discussed in Chapter 2, Selber attempts to expand the notion of Functional Literacy to mean more than just pushing buttons and turning hardware on. For him, it involves looking at the social conventions, specialized discourse, online management, and the ability to resolve technological difficulties. From there, Selber argues, one can begin venturing into the Critical Literacy and Rhetorical Literacy stages of digital literacy. With this limited view of digital literacy, these faculty, as well as their students, will be less likely to move beyond the functional stage.

In Developmental Writing classes, this limited view of digital literacy and functional literacy also keeps faculty and students from exploring how technology and literacy are one in the same. They are stuck in a singular, functional literacy trap.

The fourth point I can make from this thread is that even though they disagree on what this means, all of the faculty agreed that there is a wider connection between digital literacy and the world outside of the school (higher wage jobs, racism, poverty, etc.). These faculty realize what is at stake if students remain digitally illiterate. But just what that means for their classrooms and college remains foggy.

Theme Two: Digital Literacy and the Teaching of Writing: Perceptions of the Ways in Which Technology and Writing are Connected

In the last theme, I focused on developmental English Faculty's perspectives on digital literacy and learning. The results of the interviews shed some light on how faculty working with some of the most disadvantaged students in the college view technology

and writing. Most argued that students who place into developmental courses lack even

the most basic computer skills. This results in both students and some teachers to only

focus on what Selber (2004) refers to as the "Functional Literacy" stage. Some of these

faculty view technology as something that gets in the way of their teaching and not

something linked directly to their work in writing.

This theme widens that conversation to included not only the Developmental

English faculty mentioned earlier, but also the faculty who aren't primarily working with

developmental English students. One of the faculty I introduce is Troy who considers

himself an "Early Adopter" and has transferred the majority of his course content online

using his own website. He teaches regular composition, Tech Writing (not to be confused

with digital writing), and is currently the director of the college's writing center (personal

interview, September 9, 2013).

Another faculty not mentioned before is Lucas. Over the last 13 years at the

college, he has worn many hats and served many different roles. Though he considers

himself a mix between "Early Adopter" and Willing to Adopt" technology, his views on

digital literacy and writing are, in relation to those of this colleagues, a bit radical. For

him, digital and writing are indeed one in the same and he is unsure "why anyone would

think different?" (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Kerry, someone who considers herself in the "Willing to Adopt " category,

doesn't disagree that there is a connection, but also acknowledges that to make that

connection in her class would take a lot of time – of which she has very little. Though

she has dabbled in digital literacy in her classrooms and centers several of her

assignments on discussions of technology, for her own classroom practice, she tends to avoid it (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

Since the majority of my research questions attempted to gain insight into what perceptions faculty have of both technology related professional development and how they viewed technology in relation to their professional lives, this theme works to answer these questions.

The theme is divided into two threads: "Technology as Inseparable from Writing" and "Technology as an Obstacle to Writing." In the first thread, I demonstrate that those who are more apt to use technology do so because they are approaching it from a philosophical as well as practical standpoint. For "Early Adopters" and "Willing to Adopt" faculty, since digital literacy is connected to writing, they feel compelled to use and understand digital literacy in their classrooms.

In the second thread, I discuss those faculty in the "Hesitant to Adopt" category who view technology and writing as two distinct areas that could be melded together, but are not one in the same. When issues arise with either the technology or the students' skills level, the answer for these faculty is to wedge them apart and take a more traditionalist approach to composition instruction. They abandon or limit the use of technology when obstacles are present. They lack what Selber (2004) calls the "Technological Impasses" Parameter of Functional Literacy. That is, the ability to resolve impasses confidently and strategically" (p. 45).

I elaborate on these two thread below.

Thread One: Technology as Inseparable from Writing

It shouldn't be a surprise that the two faculty who labeled themselves "Early Adopters" are the ones who are most willing to connect digital literacy and their work as writing teachers. For both Troy and Lucas, the connection is obvious. "Everything is technology now," Troy observed. "The whole world is going online. If teachers aren't really embracing the fact that education is too, well… not helping students as much as they really could." For Troy, all one has to do is look at their daily lives to see how much technology has changed various fields and subject areas. He observes that most places - doctor's offices, dentists, oil change establishments, even fast food restaurants make use of technology in ways that make sense for that specific business. College is no different. Writing is not different (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

"For me," Troy says, "Technology is embedded in my work. He recalls his own college experience. "The more the computers became developed, the more we saw we were able to do (in school) with them. I could see lots of the things other students and some teachers were doing with computers, the internet, design…It made learning more exciting. I want that experience for my students" (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

After undergrad, Troy took up a job as a tech writer for an independent computer company. He admits that much of what he does in his classroom comes from what he learned from his experiences in his former line of work. When he first began teaching a few years later, he was able to meld his digital experiences from one job with his new job as an English Faculty member. It wasn't something he felt he had to do. Rather, he reflects: "Introducing technology and computers and web design into my teaching was

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natural. It is how it works out there. It is how it should work in here" (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

For Lucas, also an "Early Adopter" of technology, digital literacy creates an entire new way of thinking about and teaching writing. It is not only connected, it has fused itself into writing. Changed it from inside and out.

The five-paragraph theme died a long time ago and we're still dragging this dead horse across the line and I don't know why. [People are] doing things in composition, digital media and other similar studies where student have these alternative ways of doing narrative or comparison/contrast and other modes (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Lucas not only understands that writing has changed, but also our roles as teachers and evaluators of that writing have changed as well. Lucas notes that this change in writing stems from the inclusion and invention of technologies "requires training and alternative grading, an some alternative ways of looking at the product; literary comp teachers would have to be retrained with a whole different perspective" (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

For Lucas, once the digital elements came into technology, it should have forced English educators to rethink the entire idea of what effective writing is and what changes it consists of. He asks, "Does a well-developed paragraph even matter? If it's a new way of composing, why are we holding up the old way? (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Those faculty holding up "the old way" are often in the same colleges and departments as faculty who see a deep connection between digital literacy and writing. He calls his a "schizophrenic curriculum" (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

When writing faculty don't agree on this point (that digital and writing are connected) then, according to Lucas, students get confused. They take a non-digital writing class one semester and then are immersed in a highly digital comp class the next semester – confusion ensues. He remarks, "You don't see that confusion nearly as much when you have students that happen to take two highly digital courses in a row. Students who follow me from 101 to 102 don't have many problems at all learning and using this technology." He argues that students who come from a 101 course where their professors talked at them, allowed hand-written essays, or didn't require any technology besides making their students type their essays – those are the students who wonder why they have to learn the technology. "They don't see a connection because others didn't help them to see it in their first college-level writing classes" (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

When I asked him if he thought traditional or "the old way" of teaching comp was going away, he replied,

> I hope so (laughs). I don't know why it hasn't already. I mean where is the graduate program that's encouraging people to keep doing the five-paragraph theme and to keep thinking in terms of several examples per paragraph and all that stuff that's still around. I don't get it. Our schizophrenic curriculum doesn't do the students any favors (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Richard, introduced in the last chapter, agrees with Lucas. "I might not know everything about technology. But I think it is part of my job to learn how I can include more technology in my students' assignments and work. I don't think I would be a very successful teacher if I didn't do those things" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Madilyn, though identified herself as a Willing Adopter, isn't so sure. Though she agrees that "there is a lively belief that using these tools will helps students and that we need to work harder to get a student's attention," she is "not , convinced that my students want to be plugged in all the time" (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Technology, for Madilyn, is a tool and not one that is necessarily intertwined with technology:

> I think technology is a route to take to get to the destination. I think it is an increasingly necessary route. I don't think that my approach to teaching writing is inextricably intertwined with technology but that technology is a tool that helps me get students to the end of the course (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

And though she might not have full buy in to the idea that her job as a writing teacher is connected to her role as a digital literacy teacher, she admits, "There is no avoiding [technology]. If it's not my responsibility, then who is going to do it?" (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Thread Two: Technology as an Obstacle

There were two faculty who labeled themselves "Hesitant to Adopt" technology. These were the only two faculty who also hinted at the notion that technology can be an obstacle for teaching or learning writing. For Kerry, a 10th year English faculty member

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at the college who labeled herself a mix between "Willing to Adopt" and "Hesitant to Adopt," there is a connection between technology and writing.   "I think technology has changed writing tremendously because we are teaching writers. Many of out students are coming to us already writing a lot because many of our students have Facebook and they use twitter and they text…all of these are a form of writing" (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

She sees this connection in the ways her students use technology outside of class. She relates that the technology her students are using in their personal lives can be brought into the classroom for discussion. This is where she draws the line though. The connection is great fodder for discussion, but she doesn't attempt to have her students create any digital artifacts or complete any projects that involve technology. She uses it as discussions points and catalysts for assignment topics. Though she does see a connection between digital literacy and writing, this doesn't equate changing the way she teaches because of this connection.

When pressed why she doesn't have her students produce the same types of digital writing she uses for discussion in class, she replied, "I try. But I have so much stuff on my plate and I can teach just the same without it. I mean, I try to bring technology related assignments in my classroom, but sometimes, it is a giant hurdle and obstacle to learn something new – especially when I have so many other things and obligations (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

Jenny takes it a step further by stating, "all the technology in the world is not going to help someone understand how a paragraph is put together or how a sentence is formed. Maybe technology could facilitate the learning in some way but you really don't

need it." For Jenny, who tends to teach quite a few developmental courses and deals with student with very low levels of writing ability, her view is that technology is often both unnecessary and unhelpful. For her, technology is something that gets in the way. Writing, in her daily life, is more about sentence-level issues and basic sentence and paragraph structure concerns. In this view of writing, what Lucas calls "the old way," technology is not very helpful to her. "I don't want to use technology for the sake of using it" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

She argues that learning how to write is about having "a relationship with the instructor". Students "have to buy into you as a teacher before they can even learn about sentences or paragraphs. And they are going to do that because of you, not because of the technology you do or do not use" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Though the only one out of the six interviewed to label herself "Hesitant to Adopt" technology, Jenny is not alone in relation to the general campus faculty population. Just over 17% of the regular faculty also described themselves as "Hesitant to Adopt." ("2013 Faculty CTL Survey," January 2, 2014). Though not all writing instructors, this seems to represent a sizable group of faculty who think the same way about technology and their own areas of study – whatever they may be.   Slightly more faculty (18%) admitted that they use technology either "Occasionally", "Rarely" or "Never." When asked how important technology is to their field of study, almost a fifth indicated it was either "Neutral" or "Unimportant" ("2013 Faculty CTL Survey," January 2, 2014).

Madilyn notices this in some of the faculty she has worked with over the years. " I can see how some teachers want to avoid technology. They see it as an obstacle. They

say things like, 'You mean, I have to learn this new thing? Why? -- I just learned it a few years ago'. They don't see it as something that constantly needs to keep up with. It's an obstacle, for them" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). The idea of constantly having to update or upgrade can be overwhelming, she says.

Richard notices similar things. " Some teachers reach technology burnout quicker than others. They finally learn how to put italics in their documents and then they say 'You want to teach me ANOTHER skill?' (Laughs)" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Troy agrees. "Often those teachers who don't do much with technology…I mean, they do a little, but not a whole lot…those teachers probably look at some of the technology and digital stuff as hurdles or obstacles that get in the way of their teaching. As opposed to have it be an essential part of it (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

Theme Two: Summary and Implications

What can be gathered from this theme is the idea that before writing faculty can be convinced to use technology in their classroom in any meaningful way, they must first see writing as intertwined with technology. For English faculty, this means understanding the connection between digital literacy and writing. Those faculty who think that technology is not just a tool to help them teach and students learn are more likely to engage in using it. They are able to understand that technology has changed, is changing, and will continue to change the way writing is taught and learned.

Troy, Lucas and to a large degree Richard and Madilyn all view technology as an inseparable. Though they differ on what effect this understanding has on their own use of

technology, they are already convinced of the strong relationship between the two. Kerry and Jenny are different. The only two in the "Hesitant to Adopt" category, they see learning technology as a choice and not something that comes with the job. If they encounter obstacles, this presents them the opportunity to avoid learning or working to overcome those obstacles.

Of course many other issues get in the way of learning technology. I am not suggesting that Jenny or Kerry are always unwilling to learn technology or that the others are always willing. It's more complicated than that.

Theme Three: Writing Teachers' Ways of Learning Technology: Potential Seekers Vs. Proof Seekers

As discussed in theme one, developmental faculty overwhelmingly perceive developmental students not only lacking basic literacy skills but also lacking digital literacy skills. They also understand that there is a strong link between digital literacy and issues such as race, poverty, and wages. Despite these same opinions, developmental writing faculty have differing views about what personal role they play in this link and what professional responsibility (if any) they have for helping their students to become more digitally literate in college writing courses.

Theme two expanded the conversation to include Non-Developmental instructors and demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between a writing facultys' willingness to learn about using technology in their classroom based how intertwined they feel writing is to digital literacy. That is, those who identified themselves as Early Adopters

and Willing Adopters see a stronger connection than those faculties who labeled themselves as Hesitant Adopters.

Theme three examines the language these faculty use when describing learning about technology and attending technology professional development efforts at the college. I introduce two general categories:

Potential Seeker: those faculty who readily seek out potential in any new technology. They use terms like "fun", "play", and "excited" when discussing technology.

Proof Seekers: those faculty who need the potential and use of a specific technology already well established and proven to them before they will learn about technology. They use words like "stumble" and "obstacle" and tend to bring up the concern of not having enough time to learn technology.

This chapter looks at how these faculty say they learn about technology and what methods seem to work for them in terms of technology-related professional development on campus.

Potential Seekers: How They Talk About Technology

One of the first things that came to my attention when looking at the ways in which the six writing faculty discussed technology were the terms they used to describe it. Those who described themselves as Early Adopters or Willing to Adopt had a very different vocabulary than those who saw themselves as Hesitant Adopters of technology. It is worth spending some time discussing this difference.

Both Lucas and Troy chose to identify themselves as "Early Adopters." Troy indicated that "for the most part, I am an Early Adopter". He remembers back to his first few semesters teaching at the college and growing upset at having to use a required printed textbook for his classes. "I didn't feel comfortable having my students purchase something we didn't use very much of," he recalls. That is when he started shifting his content online and using more digital tools. "I developed my own website. It was fun. All of my assignments, course materials, and essay prompts are online. Today, very little gets printed. My students read, discuss, write, turn in essays, and get feedback online" (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

As director, Troy has also been able to introduce technology to the work he does in the Writing Center and with the student clients. Students are checked in using new software, he secured over 15 computers for student use in the center, and he has dabbled in distance tutoring with cameras and phones (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

Lucas mentioned that though he was much more of an Early Adopter before taking on other, non-teaching responsibilities at the college, he is still very much a mix between Early Adopter and Willing Adopter. He remembers being a graduate student at the time the Internet became largely public and popular. "I remember sitting down with one of my fellow graduate students and we were just super geeked about what use the computer could have on teaching and school. We would talk and he would go on and on. That was a bit infectious as far as what the internet could offer". When he was hired in at the college, he met Richard who encouraged him to move some of his courses online. Soon after, he started training and developing courses for online teaching. He would

often present technology related tools to the rest of the "very reluctant to listen" English faculty (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Richard indicated that he is somewhere in between Early Adopter and Willing Adopter. He mentioned that when it comes to using computers, "I came in late to technology. I was 40 before I even touched a computer". But as soon as he did start learning about them, he stated that he started seeing all sorts of potential and possibilities for using this technology in his classroom. "Just in terms of the amount of information I could put in front of students related to things students were studying. Things I could find on the Internet, things I couldn't find before (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

For these three faculty, terms like "fun" and "play with" or "play around" were often used when discussing the attitudes about learning technology. Richard observes:

> My first level of interest is that I like to play. Some of the stuff is just fun. I'll be honest, at first I learn just for me -- and once I have gotten into it and played with it, I start seeing potential in how I could connect it to something [my students] are learning in class. (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

He indicated that his curiosity and desire to see potential in a technology drives him to "play around" with it. Once he sees a purpose for it, once he understands how this technology could work in his classroom, that is when he "dives in and doesn't look back". For Richard, he actively looks for potential and possibilities. That is what motivates him to learn about technology. "I see something, a new program or tool, and a light bulb goes off and I say, 'I could use this to do this'" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Unlike Richard, Troy always remembers having some sort of computer in his schooling, work, and teaching life. As an undergrad student, he remembers seeing computers slowly become more prevalent on campus. He would visit the computer lab and play around with some of the new software that was emerging. When the English department at his undergraduate institution began constructing a new Computer Writing Classroom, Troy immediately volunteered as a Computer Writing Consultant.

I guess you could say I was in the right place at the right time. I had these devices and programs to play around with. We did it because we liked to. The more we played, the more we learned about it. That is what got me started (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

Lucas also often used the terms "play around" and "explore" when referring to learning about technology. "I remember when Netscape came out, the one with Composer. It gave me the ability to play around with web design". He began using his own website in his classroom as a teaching assistant. "It was fun. I would create all these new badges, pages, and insert images and links. I just explored this stuff on my own and found ways to bring them into my classroom" (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Troy agrees. When learning about technology, he says that he has to both like it and have fun with it. "It's easier to adopt something when you find it enjoyable" (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

Potential Seekers: How They Learn About Technology

For the Early Adopters and most of the Willing Adopters, the most common method for learning about technology is to learn about it on their own. These faculty tend

not to go to many technology-related professional development workshops. And they have different reasons for that. For Richard, it is because the workshop will often be too advanced:

> My fear of going to a workshop right off the bat is sometimes people who are really good at technology have a vocabulary that is too technical for me. I need to play with something and then learn the words. So once I have some familiarity with it, then I can go to a workshop and I feel I can pick up more, as opposed to a workshops where I am totally unfamiliar with the program and than have to turn around and go to the same workshops again after I learn more. So I like to play around with stuff first. (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Though Lucas sometimes presents workshops on technology-related topics for the college, he admits that he rarely goes to any himself. He says, "I primarily teach myself. And if I cannot figure it out, I go off in search of web tutorials and whatnot". Lucas reads blogs, listserves, and reads various online magazines connected to the technology he uses. Only if he is really stumped will he attend a workshop, he says (personal interview, October 23, 2013).

Troy is the same way. When he sees a need for some sort of technology in his class, a better way of coding his website or distributing essays to students, he takes it upon himself to learn the technology. He visits blogs, Youtube videos, or websites that have tutorials or step-by-step descriptions. He learns at his own pace and in his own way. He admits to rarely attending technology related professional development workshops or events. "If I don't know how to do something, I just find out how on my own" (personal interview, September 9, 2013).

In his 16 years at the college, Richard has observed that

there seems to be two kinds of teachers at this college. One type is one who likes

to play with technology. They may not see the classroom application but as they

advance in their knowledge, they see the possibilities, they realize technology can

do certain things, and they keep playing with it until they get results. Another

type of teacher gets frustrated with not getting immediate results and they shut

down. It's just a different personality (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Proof Seekers: How They Talk About Technology

As Richard observed, on the other side of the aisle are those faculty who are either

Hesitant Adopters or very cautious Willing Adopters. Instead of the terms "play" and

"fun," these faculty used words like "stumble", "struggle", "and obstacle" and "not

enough time." Though the two faculty who chose the label Hesitant Adopter are in this

category, so is Madilyn, who chose the label Willing Adopter.

Madilyn stated, "I don't feel like a pioneer. It's not as if I sit down and look

around for how I can use technology." For Madilyn, there first has to be a need or

problem with her current way of teaching:

It's not like I am on the cutting edge, reading blogs about the things I could do.

I'm not driven to become a geek about it. I need to see a situation in which

technology would help. If I notice a problem and then if I hear about some

technology solution that would help solve that problem, then I adopt the

technology. (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Though she indicates that she isn't "driven to become a geek about it," she does admit that she uses quite a lot of technology in her everyday teaching. "If I accidentally left my laptop at home on a teaching day," she confided. "I wouldn't know what to do." (personal interview, October 24, 2013). What she does use already in her classroom, day in and day out, she learned because the technology was already proven to be useful to her and whatever concerns she might have in her classroom.

Another term that kept appearing in my interview with Madilyn was the word "time." She views technology as something that one needs to dedicate quite a bit of time into learning. She says, "the sticking point for me is time and timing" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). When asked to elaborate, she discussed the semester she was granted sabbatical to rework the placement testing procedure for Developmental English. Not only did she use the time off for her teaching obligations to rework the testing procedures, she also had time to move the entire developmental committee materials and resources to an online format, going as far as designing her own website in the process. When I asked her why she decided to do this, she said, "It was a problem having all of these printed forms for all of our faculty to use. If one needed to be updated, the entire packet had to be. It was becoming and issue. And since I had the time, I decided to change it" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). She taught herself.

For Kerry, a Hesitant Adopter, learning technology is often a challenge. When she first started teaching at the college she didn't use any technology at all. She says this is because she "had no classes in my own schooling where I had any emphasis on technology. No one used technology except for research. I didn't involve technology in my teaching" (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

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Because of this lack of access and experience, she says she didn't think too much about learning how to apply technology to the classroom. For Kerry, not only is learning technology an "obstacle," but it is also something she feels takes a lot of time to learn.

It was a huge obstacle for me to try learning something while I was teaching full-time. Where was I supposed to get the time to learn it? If time wasn't a factor, I would be attracted to a technology workshop about how to incorporate technology in the classroom to make teaching more attractive and engaging for students (personal interview, October 26, 2013).

A few years ago, Kerry found herself needing to learn how to create a campus newsletter. She recalls how she was asked to update the format to something that could be distributed online. "We needed a better way to do it, more convenient and more accessible". She had little experience in digital design. But, with the help Lucas, her officemate at the time, she was able to learn the program and create quite a few digital products. Though she was reluctant, she was successful in learning some new technology because she felt she had to and because Lucas had previous experience with the technology. It had already been proven to work. This, however, didn't translate to using more technology in the classroom. She admits, "I've been pretty stagnant in my technology use in the last couple years" (personal interview, October 26, 2013).

For both Madilyn and Kerry, learning technology is something of a challenge. Though both are willing to learn the technology (and be quite successful at it), they still need to have a reason for learning it. She needs there to be a proven potential or results from using this technology.

For Madilyn, she learns it on her own. When she needs help or wants to know about a new technology that some of her colleagues are using, then she will attend workshops. But the proof that it works, already needs to be present. For Kerry, her lack of experiences, she feels, puts her at a deficit. She is hesitant to learn new technology, but if she has to, she will.

Jenny is different. A proud Hesitant Adopter, Jenny admits, "I am not very computer savvy myself." What's more, she related that she has "a deep and abiding distrust of technology so I haven't been real inclined to learn how to incorporate technology into my teaching" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

In fact, she claims that she "pretty much has to be dragged kicking and screaming" when learning new technology. "I've only made one PowerPoint slide in my whole life," she admits. "And that was for my own amusement."

Her resistance and contempt for educational technology, she admits, comes from her belief that, when it comes to technology, "it's not going to work when you need it to" (personal interview, October 16, 2013). For Jenny, technology stands in the way of what she has to do in the classroom.

Similar to Kerry, Jenny has very limited experiences when it comes to learning and using digital technology in the classroom. "Technology wasn't required in class except to type essays. So, in other words, I didn't use it much. My school was very rural and plenty of our students didn't have Internet access in their home, including me, for a while" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

When she first began teaching writing at the college level, she had little or no access to smart rooms or classroom technology. She wasn't even given a computer in her

office. "At no time did I have classrooms wired for technology like ours here," she states. She remembers how during her first few years teaching at another institution, she was asked to use their course management system: "They used a [course management system] and I took one look at it and thought I'm never going to figure this shit out. How was I going to teach it to my students? So I didn't use it. Ever" (personal interview, October 16, 2013).

Proof Seekers: How They Learn About Technology

Though both Madilyn and Kerry attend technology-related professional development workshops every once in a while, it all boils down to needing both the time and having the potential for whatever technology is presented already in place. The reason, use and results must already be demonstrated in order for these faculty to want to learn about it. So when there is a reason they feel the need to learn something new, they differ on the type of learning the suits them best

For Madilyn, "I learn by mostly stumbling around and trying things myself" (personal interview, October 24, 2013). She does attend workshops when she has the time, but she first wants to look into it on her own. Once she understands the basic features, it is at that time she is more willing to participate in workshops and technology related professional development offerings.

What also works for Madilyn is when technology is embedded into required meetings:

> During meetings that I already have to attend, at any faculty meeting time, if
>
> technology is presented, it gets my attention. I have to be there. So that's a good

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learning contact for me. Or English meetings. Anything that was pitched to me as really imperative…Something that was really frank in terms of helping students would grab my attention. (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Learning isn't always a smooth process for Madilyn either. "Certainly, I have had my share of frustrations, but I had a lot of time to focus on it. When I get involved in something and have the time to do it, I get really geeked about it" (personal interview, October 24, 2013).

Kerry found that one-on-one help suits her best. When she was required to update the campus newsletter, she admits that sharing an office with Lucas helped quite a bit. She relates how he helped her in her decision to purchase a new computer. He showed her some of the new programs it came with. He helped her learn how to operate her laptop and what programs to use with that. "I learn technology from people who know about technology," she says. If it's not her office mate, then it is someone from her personal life (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

As far as going to college-sponsored technology related workshops, she doesn't mind them, but needs to work with people "at my same level because it drives me nuts when there are people who never use technology and have a ton of questions. Folks like that take up so much workshop time and it's frustrating. I also like more discussion rather than lecture --where people are actively doing stuff" (personal interview, September 26, 2013).

Jenny isn't completely opposed to the idea of learning technology for use in her classroom. Towards the end of the interview, she admitted that "if I had and idea of some technology that really worked with my students or if someone said in a meeting

they used "x" to teach Developmental writers and it's working out great, I might say I'd like to talk to you about that". She also added mandatory meetings would work best for her. She would be more apt to attend "if I were penalized in some way for not going" (personal interview, September 16, 2013).

Theme Three: Summary and Implications

Early Adopters and Willing Adopters view learning technology as fun and as something they play around with. And, although faculty wish they had more time in their schedules to learn and practice, it isn't something that stops them from investing in learning new technology. Early Adopters, especially, approach a new technology, often on their own, and actively seek out what potential use it could have for their own teaching. They explore technology on their own, teaching themselves, and learning from online resources if they get stuck. They view obstacles as just an important part of the process of learning.

These faculty often avoid workshops because they find them either too advanced, to basic, or they feel that they learn better on their own, guided by their own needs and pace. In other words, they feel the professional development opportunities on campus do not align with how they best learn technology.

Though age doesn't seem to be a factor, prior experiences with and exposure to technology does. Those faculty who had experiences using technology early on in their schooling or teaching are more likely to be in the Early Adopter or Willing Adopter category.

Those faculty who are Willing (but cautious) Adopters or Hesitant Adopters first and foremost need proof that the technology will work in very specific ways before they will demonstrate a desire to learn about it. They don't think of learning technology as "fun" but rather something of an "obstacle." They need to see immediate application and if issues arise with the technology, it is all the most reason to avoid using it.

Though they can learn about technology and are often very successful at implementing or using it once they do, Hesitant Adopter will only invest in learning technology when there is a very specific reason to. Technology, for these faculty, is there to solve a problem.

Hesitant Adopters seems to have little prior exposure to technology in their writing or learning or teaching. They view it as something writers do, rather than something writing is. They are hesitant to attend professional development meetings because they feel that they do not have enough time to attend or dedicate to learning the technology. They do not HAVE to, therefore they tend to avoid it.

Most of these faculty hinted that mandatory meetings might be the best place to learn technology. If they feel they have to be there, they will be more apt to attentively listen.

Chapter 4: Writing Teachers, Digital Literacy, and Professional Development:

Conclusions, Connections, and Suggestions

As both an English faculty and English Coordinator, coupled with my role as a Technology Consultant in charge of planning, designing, and implementing technology-related professional development opportunities for the entire campus faculty, I often get frustrated with the lack of attention, attendance, and understanding my colleagues (especially writing faculty) have about the connection between what we do as teachers and do with digital tools and theory. Since I first had access to a computer in my classroom, I have been striving to find ways to use this technology to teach and engage students. I have taken it upon myself to learn whatever technology was available at the institutions in which I taught and to involve myself in whatever technology related professional development opportunities were offered. To me, the need to be digital is just part of my job as a literacy educator. In other words, I have already drunk the digital literacy Kool-Aid.

After conducting my study, I can look back and understand how my own history with digital technology and literacy evolved. I was one of the Potential Seekers and Early Adopters all along. Though I learned quite a bit on my own, I had one-on-one help in the form of neighbors, family, and colleagues. In graduate school, I had formal training, and though I didn't recognize it at the time, created my own community of collaborative digital advocates who I learned from and helped teach. I had access and the tools, but also was seeing how technology changed writing. I lived it. I grew up during a great movement in readily available technology – personal computers, chat rooms, cell phones, email, web design and websites, Google, smart rooms, etc. I didn't realize it at

the time, but all of the elements of good professional development (discussed below) were present in my personal and academic life. I was lucky.

Perhaps because of my unique experiences, I am still bothered by the lack of attention some of my writing colleagues give to this connection. I want them to drink the Kool-Aid, too.

My current role as technology consultant at my institution is challenging. Though I immensely enjoy my work, I am often frustrated by the lack of interest my fellow English faculty seem to have when it comes tolerating digital tools and theory as well as the rest of the faculty, no matter what area they are in. There are a few of us, of course, having conversations, sharing ideas, and pushing the digital envelope on campus. But it is a small and relatively closed group of faculty.

The reason I began this study was to understand why some faculty are willing to learn about digital tools and theory in professional development settings and others are not. This study was my attempt to help me better understand why this divide exists. I spend hours and hours preparing sessions on ways to use technology in our teaching. I was a digital advocate both before and after I was given the role as technology consultant. But when few writing faculty (and also faculty from other areas) attend sessions, and even fewer actually implement these technologies into their classrooms, I can't help thinking of how many students we are leaving behind. I am worried about not only the academic, but also the cultural, economic and social implications of not marinating our students in digital literacy in our writing classrooms.

As I reflect back on the results of my study, I am in a better position to understand why some writing faculty embrace and others reject digital literacy and technology

related professional development. I thought it might just be about age. That some of the more veteran writing faculty were less likely to use or understand digital literacy tools and theory. It wasn't that simple.

As I describe below, it is more about changing how writing faculty think about digital literacy. It is less about the tools they should or should not use, the times they are offered, for how long, in what location - and more about redefining what it means to be literate in this day and age. As I will argue below, we can no longer afford to think of digital literacy as something that we teach every once in a while throughout the semester or not at all. We can no longer ignore the influence digital tools and theory has on writing.

As far as my frustrations, they are still present. I didn't find a magic pill. I realize I cannot make everyone think the way I do by simply conducting a 2-hour long workshop. What I did find, however, was a way to reimagine technology related professional development that might align better with how writing teachers as my institution (and perhaps others) learn digital technology and literacy. I have a better understanding of not only what it means to be digitally literate but also how to talk with others about it. How, through dialogue, I can help others see that there is a connection, a need, and responsibility to help students become more digitally literature in our writing courses.

What the Literature Revealed

Chapter 2, I discussed the work of C. Selfe (1999), R. Selfe (2005), and Selber (2004) and attempted to redefine the traditional notions of the relationship between

technology/digital and writing. No longer can writing teachers afford to think about what we do as just teaching a unit here and there that involves some surface use of technology (typing papers, projecting documents, bringing students into a lab to conduct research) on top of our responsibility to teach writing. Rather, we need to widen the idea of teaching writing to include digital literacy – and to understand digital literacy as socially, politically, and culturally situated. I argued that becoming digitally literate writers has become an essential element in what it means to be literate writers.

In Chapter 2, I also attempted to get a better sense of what effective technology related professional development for writing teachers means to our field. As I discuss below, there was consensus among most scholars, despite the time in which they were written. Considering how quickly digital tools and technology changes, the general approach to effective technology professional development does not.

In Chapter 2, I also discuss what the field has to say about technology related professional development. Though somewhat dated and mostly concerning K-12 Writing teachers, I argue four specific points:

1) Workshops, as they have been used for non-digital topics, don't work with and when learning technology.

2) There needs to be opportunities to understand how digital and the "core responsibilities" of the faculty are connected and not just how to use the digital tool or about the digital tool itself. For writing teachers, this means seeing a connection between digital and writing.

3) Effective PD should involve multiple perspectives, voices, and skill levels, often in the form of sustained and collaborative learning communities. It shouldn't just

be heavy users or early adopters talking at light users and hesitant adopters. Real

dialogue needs to take place in these sessions.

4) These communities should involve opportunities to dialogue, criticize, play

around with, create, and reflect, and an understanding of how to assess on digital

literacy and digital tools for teaching.

Lastly, in Chapter 2, I attempted to reframe the idea of what it means to be

digitally literate by bringing in Selber's (2004) concepts of Function, Critical, and

Rhetorical Digital Literacy. Many teachers only think about technology in limited terms,

in a very rigid Functional way. Selber argues not only is Functional more broad and

complex than just pushing buttons, but it also involves such things as how students

manage their digital lives, deal with obstacles in learning technology, social conventions,

and learning specialized discourse. Researchers have long since argued the importance

of getting students (and I would argue, teachers) to recognize and question the politics of

computers and their uses.

From this understanding, I made a connection between C. Selfe's (1999) and

Selber's (2004) Critical Digital Literacy to various Critical Pedagogues' notion of

Dialogue. I argued that Dialogue is rooted in social, historical, and political situations.

That dialogue embodies history and culture, and reveals conflict. I argued that to

understand dialogue, one needs to understand the cultural, historical, and political

situation of those involved in dialogic interaction. There is need for multiple voices in

the dialogic process and the importance of allowing all voices to be expressed. Dialogue

is about sharing the lived experiences of participants, grounded in specific historical,

social, political, and cultural issues. I make the point that digital literacy educators can learn much from using dialogue as a method for developing and implementing technology related professional development on campus. I made the point that this understanding of dialogue can directly apply to help students (and teachers) become more Critical Digitally Literate.

What the Interviews Revealed

In Chapter 3, I discuss three themes. The first describes the consensus among Developmental Writing Faculty that those students who are most apt to lack basic digital literacy skills are students in developmental English at the institution. This fact affects the way and how often Developmental English Faculty use, discuss, or have students create with technology in their classrooms. For Developmental English Faculty, it is a struggle. For others, it is a reason to avoid using technology altogether. Though all of them understand the social, economic, and political consequences of being digitally illiterate, Developmental faculty are unsure of what role they should play in the digital literacy education of these students. They often see technology as something they can add on to literacy and not something that is intertwined. They see digital literacy and teaching writing as disconnected.

In the second theme discussed in Chapter 3, I revealed that before Writing faculty can be convinced to use technology in their classroom in any meaningful way, they must first see writing as intertwined with technology. For English faculty, this means understanding the connection between digital literacy and writing. Those faculty who think that technology is not just a tool to help them teach and students learn are more

likely to engage in using it. They are able to understand that technology has changed, is changing, and will continue to change the way writing is taught and learned.

The third theme in Chapter 3, I introduced the categories "Early Adopters," "Willing Adopters," and "Hesitant Adopters" to help frame my discussion about how various writing faculty perceive learning about technology in professional development situations. I also introduced the terms "Potential Seekers" and "Proof Seekers" to help make sense of the connections between what engages each of the Adopter categories.

Early Adopters view learning technology as fun and as something they play around with. They learn best on their own and avoid workshops because they do not find the pace of instruction helpful. They are Potential Seekers

Willing Adopters also learn technology best on their own, but only when they see a direct need or potential in a specific technology. These faculty first and foremost need proof that the technology will work in very specific ways before they will demonstrate a desire to learn about it. They are often Proof Seekers.

Hesitant Adopters will only invest in learning technology when there is a very specific reason to do so. They seem to have little prior exposure to technology in their writing, learning or teaching. They view it as something writers do, rather than something writing is and therefore are hesitant to attend any technology related professional development opportunities as the college. They are entirely "Proof Seekers."

Attending to the Questions:

The specific research questions I attempted to answer were:

1) How do community college writing faculty perceive the connection between their roles as writing teachers and digital literacy and learning?

2) What perceptions to community college writing faculty have of technology related professional development at their own institutions?

3) What are the reasons community college writing faculty have for adopting or being hesitant to adopt digital tools in their classroom teaching?

I will attempt to address these answers, incorporating my literature review and results from my study below:

The teachers in my study all agreed that technology literacy is culturally situated, but they were clearly divided in what this means as far as their roles and obligations as literacy educators at the college. In other words, they see a cultural connection but fail to address it in their classroom and teaching.

As indicated by my interviews, most of the community college writing teachers in my study see the connection between poverty, race, employment and digital literacy. They indicated they understand that students who lack digital literacy are more likely to come from less privileged backgrounds. As Jenny noted, the students who struggle the most with technology "are much more likely to come from the poverty class" (personal interview, October 16, 2013). All of the Developmental English faculty I interviewed agreed. Students are more likely to lack basic computer skills (and thus critical and rhetorical skills), because they come from less privileged backgrounds.

The teachers in my study also hinted at an understanding that students who leave college with low digital literacy skills, students who cannot critically question or understand how to communicate using digital tools, are more likely to end up in lower

paying jobs. As Richard noted, "I don't know of any jobs where you aren't going to be using a computer" (personal interview, October 9, 2013).

Despite this understanding, none of the teachers I interview seemed to perceive that part of their jobs as literacy educators involved making this connecting explicit in their teaching or to their students. As C. Selfe (1999) observed in her study, I also observed that the teachers in my study maintained only "skin deep" treatment of teaching digital tools and theory and failed to address "how race, gender, power, and privileged play into digital literacy education" (p. 70).

Most of the faculty in my study view digital literacy and technology as something they can dabble in (or use as a tool) every once in a while, when they have time or know-how. It is an option - something they can add into what they already do – a peppering of specific programs and tools to be employed every once in a while in their teaching.

Based on the results of the survey, a majority of faculty view digital literacy and technology as something that is important to both their own teaching and discipline as well as in their students own academic lives. When asked how often they use technology in their classrooms, a surprising majority of faculty said they use it "very often" and "often" – almost every day or week. When asked to be specific about how they use technology, these same faculty indicated that using technology means distributing PDFs to students, putting texts or handouts on the overhead projector, or having students type papers and assignments ("2013 Faculty CTL Survey," January 2, 2013).

The information gleaned from my interviews would corroborate this feeling. They all view digital literacy as important. But exactly what they view as constituting

digital literacy is quite limited. Most of the faculty I interviewed (including all of the developmental faculty) view digital literacy in very restrictive ways. This understanding echoes Selber's (2004) discussion of "functional literacy" level in that they have a limited view of what it means to be digitally literate. The teachers in my interviews understand digital literacy in terms of the basic mechanics, they are more apt to ignore the social, political, and economic aspects. They, in Selber's words, "overlook the cultural contexts" (p. 32). Though they avail themselves of technology every now and then, they don't look at digital literacy as a day-in and day-out event.

Troubling is that both teacher perception of digital literacy as well as what technology related professional development opportunities are offered on campus seems to feed into this limited understanding.

When asked about the digital literacy skills of their students, most teachers replied that students carry various devices with them. Rarely discussed was what students do with them, how they use them, for what reasons and purpose. Though the developmental faculty indicated that students lack basic academic related computer skills, they all admitted to seeing more and more devices, especially smart phones ("2013 Faculty CTL Survey," January 2, 2013).

Another point worth making, one from my own experiences designing technology related professional development workshops and activities is that rarely do we discuss how digital tools, technology, or (in the case of writing teachers) literacy is more than just a program or tool to be adopted when needed. In other words, the choices for learning technology, I have realized, are also very limited and restrictive. We showcase

specific tools, programs, and websites and, naturally, we have to either update or reinvent these workshops because the technology changes so quickly.

There are few opportunities to have discussions, dialogue, or gatherings where faculty are encouraged to reimagine and broaden their understanding of what it means to be digitally literature. Selber's (2004) discussion of functional literacy is relevant here. Even though Selber has students in mind, faculty could also benefit from his thoughts. He expands and complicates this notion of what it means to be functionally literate to include educating others on:

1) Using technology to achieve educational goals

2) Understanding the social conventions that help determine computer use

3) Understanding and using the specialized discourse of computer use

4) Effectively managing one's online identify

5) Resolving technological impasses confidently and strategically

If the faculty I interviewed understood digital literacy in this more complex and complicated way, they would be less hesitant to view digital literacy as something that is deeply embedded in their courses rather than something they can do every once and a while.

Another difference in how writing faculty view digital literacy is how they talk about it. They either perceive digital technology as fun or as an obstacle. Those faculty who explore technology as if it were a game – a fun way to enhance the learning and teaching experience – are more likely to be motivated to learn about technology and see its value in the academy. Those who are easily frustrated with technology, who view any

hiccups in the learning or implementation phase as reasons to abandon it altogether, are, of course, less likely to value technology or its application in the classroom.

Writing teachers in my study perceive technology-related professional development at their institutions as positive and valuable (often for others) on campus, but that doesn't translate into these faculty attending sessions themselves. They view it as taking too much time and either too advanced or too basic.

The results of the faculty survey as well as writing faculty I interviewed overwhelmingly agree that the technology relegated professional development program at the college is a positive addition to it as a positive experience for "others" and indicate that they might go if they had more time, most don't attend these sessions or events. They don't see value in the way that the technology professional development offerings are currently designed – two-hour long workshops with various types of skill levels discussing one specific topic decided in advance without much input from the entire faculty.

There seem to be many reasons for this. One is that, according to the data taken from my interview, there are, of course, different learning styles based on how comfortable or familiar writing faculty are with technology and digital tools. Early Adopters, for example learn best on their own. They will work alone and only ask questions (or attend events) when they are really stuck or cannot find the information elsewhere. As DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks (2010) note, "Individual educators can and do pursue their own learning – and should be encouraged and supported to do so. However, planning for coherent and thoughtful set of professional learning opportunities

is a larger professional responsibility" (p. 117). They observe that though these teachers can gain experience on their own, this style of learning does little to promote reflection and connection to other faculty, courses, or communities. Even though Early Adopters use technology more than others, they lack the ability to develop the skills that would otherwise be provided in group settings.

Unlike Early Adopters, Willing Adopters learn when they are stuck and see specific proven results that the technology will immediately improve students learning, and Hesitant Adopters see no need because it is not part of their job – it is something they can add on if they want to.

One way to combat this isolation and resistance is, according to Shelbie Witt "'being emerged in the technology and being surrounded by like minded people who care about writing gives participants the confidence to take a step beyond their comfort zone. There are people who are very comfortable doing that; they use technologies all the time. But I think that there is a big population of people who have never written online or used a wiki or blog and for the first time they are experiencing that.'" (DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks, 2010, pp. 120-121).

These Willing and Hesitant Adopters would benefit from understanding the connection between the technology our students use in their personal life and the technology we can use in the academy. "There is school technology and then there is life technology and at times we really see them as different things. A powerful attitude shifts when teachers start to think how digital writing tools such as… tools that students are likely to be using as part of their everyday literacies – can be employed to enhance

learning and collaboration in all facets of life" (DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks, 2010, p. 138).

The reasons why some writing teachers in my study embrace and others reject these technological professional development opportunities is because most do not see digital literacy as part of their work as literacy educators, they have little time learning digital tools, and they feel they can either learn it on their own or that they have little need to learn it at all.

Those faculty on campus who are Early Adopters are often personally motivated to learn about digital tools independently. Though they talk about digital literacy in functional terms (what tools, programs, coding, or apps are useful), they overwhelmingly find it easier and more productive to learn independently. They might not know or do everything when it comes to applying digital literacy to their classrooms, but they know where to go for help if they need it and often it isn't technology related professional development workshops on campus. They research on their own, often in the form of digital videos, to learn whatever specific skills they feel the need to learn. They subscribed to feeds, listerves, or journals dedicated to technology and teaching. Sessions or activities designed from a workshops model – pre-determined topics delivered in a specific format and pace – are not the way these Early Adopters learn.

In addition, all of the Early Adopters are, what I call, "Potential Seekers." They are personally and professionally drawn to the digital technology and then work to find ways to incorporate that into their teaching. All of the Early Adopters echoed this point

during the interviews. They discuss playing around with technology and actively looking for ways to apply it to their teaching.

I see this in my own learning. When I first started teaching, I would use the tools I was already familiar with, personally, and seek ways to include it in my teaching. Like the Early Adopters I interviewed, I didn't do this because it was the newest or shiniest tool or technology. Rather, I became familiar with a piece of technology (iMovie, say) and thought about how it could be used in my class to teach research or revision or rhetorical analysis. I didn't need someone to tell me how they use it in order for me to learn the technology.

This differs from those who labeled themselves Willing or Hesitant Adopters in my study. These faculty thought of the digital technology and tools as just yet another skill that may or may not work in their class. Much like the others, they only indicated specific programs, devices, or websites when discussing technology related professional development.

These faculty were "Potential Seekers" – in the sense that they rarely attended technology related professional development workshops. In order for them to attend, they needed to see a proven, directly applicable reason to do so. For these faculty, it must be well established that the digital tool be successful, with few issues and concerns.

They viewed the efforts of the technology professional development program at the college as important, but not one that concerned them. When asked how many workshops or events they attended, both Hesitant Adopters said "none."

The Willing Adopters, though less pessimistic about technology related professional development, only attended the few sessions they did because there was a

buzz surrounding the topic. They already had discussions with others about how they might be able to incorporate the digital tool into their teaching. They attended the sessions, then, to put that potential to practice.

Rethinking Technology Related Professional Development: Suggestions and Models

What I can glean from my study are three suggestions that have the potential to be applied to the way technology related professional development happens at my college, specifically for writing teachers.

My first suggestion is to move away from the traditional workshop model of offering technology professional development and, instead, create discipline specific, collaborative communities that focus primarily on faculty having time and space to dialogue about, play with, create, share, assess, and most importantly, reflect on digital technology tools and digital literacy theory.

The model of using collaborative communities in teaching and learning about digital writing and literacy is not a new one but one that has been yet applied to internally driven PD programs at the community college level – especially at my own. The National Writing Project model, for instance, has been going on for quite some time. Since its conception at the University of California, Berkeley in 1974, the NWP has grown to include a plethora of different sites. The NWP also now offers sessions on specialized focuses, including digital technology and literacy. Project Write and WIDE PATHS (Writing in Digital Environments: Pedagogies and Theories) for instance, are two local sessions out of the Red Cedar Writing Project that bring various faculty and teachers together to dialogue about digital literacy and technology. I argue that my own college

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could benefit from adopting this model, perhaps even finding ways to connect with the NWP or one of its local chapters.

My second suggestion is to have dialogue, as defined by Freire (1964), Freire & Macedo (1995), Shore (1996), Burbules (2000), Howard (2001), and others, be the center of these collaborative community and technology related professional development opportunities. We need to cast away the model of pretending to know what the faculty need or should know about technology before dialoguing with them about it. Of course, I believe (and I feel that the data indicates) that technology is increasingly more intertwined with literacy but just what that means for classroom teaching shouldn't be determined in advance and by only a few select Early Adopters. Rather, through dialogue, faculty at all levels (Early, Willing, and Hesitant) should find ways to talk about how our students (and ourselves) are affected by technology and digital tools.

Though collaborative communities might not fit the mold of every college or university technology related professional development program, dialogue is more universal – has better legs, in other words. At my own college, the general faculty have a tendency to rely on the technology consultants when seeking help or getting ideas. Perhaps if dialogue were one of the ways we helped faculty learn about technology, we would discover the various resources we have across campus in other faculty and staff.

Before this study, I didn't know much about what other people know or believe about technology and digital literacy on campus. Being aware of perceptions wasn't part of the job. The way things were set up at my college, there were few opportunities for ongoing opportunities to dialogue about digital technology and literacy, within our own discipline or with other faculty across campus. As Burbules (2000) reminds us, dialogue

acts "as the mode of pedagogical engagement best able to promote learning, autonomy, and understanding of one's self in relation to others" (p. 15). There is a need for multiple voices, for allowing all voices to be expressed. The lived experiences of others should be intimately involved in the dialogic relationship.

My third and last suggestion is to encourage all English faculty, especially those in roles as professional development coordinators and facilitators, to rethink the way we talk about digital literacy and technology. That is, we need to shift the way we converse about technology on campus, especially about writing with technology, if we wish to encourage writing faculty that technology is becoming an essential element in writing and a part of our "core responsibilities."

One of the first ways to go about this is to change the words we use when talking about "digital writing" or "digital literacy" or "digital humanities." Instead of placing the term "digital" in front of these terms, why not just the singular term, "writing"? As absurd as it would be to say "Pen Writing" or "Ink Writing" – we might want to ditch the term "digital writing" and instead, focus on how writing has become digital, how writing is influenced by technology, and what affects this understanding has the larger academic and personal communities.

Echoed by one faculty member in my study, talking about digital separate from writing creates a "schizophrenic curriculum" within our own discipline. When one set of faculty incorporate, to one degree or another, digital literacy in their classrooms and other faculty avoid it altogether, confusion and frustration occurs in the department and in our students. As the faculty noted, this doesn't do our students any good.

Directions for Future Research

This study is not without its limitations, of course. Because I focused on just a small group of community college writing teachers, I cannot claim with any certainty that all writing faculty, at my own college or others, have the same perceptions. The six faculty I chose to interview were diverse in seniority and familiarity with technology but they might very well have vastly different opinions of technology and digital literacy. Further, I cannot be certain that non-writing faculty have the same perceptions of digital literacy and technology related professional development.

This leads to my second limitation. Throughout the interviews, I used the term "technology" without providing to my interviewees a definition of exactly what I meant. Their answers to my questions varied, of course, depending on how they view technology (as a tool, a program, a movement in education). In fact, because I conducted my interviews at the same time as I began my literature review, I myself was stuck on a particular definition of technology that I have since revised. Looking back, I see that I avoided the word "Digital Literacy" altogether in my interview questions. I am curious how answers would have shifted had I been more specific from the start.

This, of course, also means that faculty in other disciplines would also have quite varied definitions of technology and digital literacy. Technology to an auto design faculty member would be quite different than technology to a math or Spanish faculty member. I would be interested in seeing how other disciplines view digital literacy and technology related professional development.

Despite these limitations – limitations I hope to address in further research - and though my study was quite local in scope, I believe there are several broader implications that other colleges and universities could benefit from understanding. Soon into my research, it became clear that the ways technology related professional development happens on my campus favors the technology or tool over the faculty or staff. That is, the technology transcended people. We expected people to attend our sessions based on advertising the technology. We expected faculty to want to become more digitally active by pushing the programs. What we needed to do was to understand that people transcend technology.

Though this lesson is directly applicable to my local situation, other colleges and university technology professional development efforts can benefit from this realization. Designing opportunities for becoming more digitally literate should begin by dialoguing with the faculty you intend to teach.

One way to accomplish this is to conduct annual interviews with faculty on campus as part of the ongoing professional development process or bring together faculty with varying levels of digital comfort and skills to dialogue about how they perceive, understand, and use technology and digital tools.

The second implication of this study is that technology related professional development programs should avoid or limit the traditional workshop model of delivery. These traditional workshops used on many college campuses don't work to create collaborative communities of digital learners. In addition, it risks furthering the misunderstanding of technology and digital literacy as simply a tool that can be used once or twice in the classroom. As discussed above, creating sustainable collaborative

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communities and putting dialogue at the center of these meetings can help foster the notion that digital is something that isn't just a shiny new tool or fad. Rather, through dialogue we complicate the notion of what it means to be digitally literature, both for ourselves and that of our students.

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