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English 2500 / Bickmore

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Discourse Analysis – Metacommentary

The first revisions I made to my Discourse Analysis were in the opening paragraph, leading up to my thesis statement. I had inadvertently tense-shifted, moving from past tense to present tense. For example, the draft reads as *...dictated Douglass's rhetorical strategies: requiring of him language and syntactic structures that challenge...* and I corrected it in the final draft to be *...dictated Douglass's rhetorical strategies: it required of him language and syntactic structures that challenged...* This is a necessary grammatical revision, required for the continuity of the passage. I framed the paragraph in the past tense and needed to continue in that tense for the remainder of the section. The tense-shifting correction begins at *This kairotic situation* and ends at the end of the paragraph and the completed thesis statement.

The second revision made was splitting the second paragraph into three. It was laboriously long and the pace of the writing was such that natural breaks appeared at *Douglass's first demonstration of anamnesis* and again at *The most prolific example of anamnesis*. This division allowed me to more clearly unpack my ideas about what the rhetorical devices were doing for his speech, which prompted a major revision to the second paragraph. About half-way through, beginning just after the definition of anamnesis, I reworked the order of sentences to more clearly introduce and then develop my points. I changed the paragraph so that immediately after stating that Douglass quotes other authors and orators, I provide the name and definition of this rhetorical device, anamnesis. Particularly impactful was moving the sentence *invokes the*

*spirit of the quoted authors, blessing the discourse with their own authority.* I had placed this at the end, perhaps intending it to be a crowning summative point, but it's more effective as a part of the anamnesis definition. Reorganizing the paragraph like I did created space in the conversation to insert examples from the text to support my argument and expound upon the point.

Throughout the revision process, I constantly reworked adverbials and reconsidered word choice. I found instances of incomplete thoughts where I assumed I was being clear, but instead found that the intended meaning actually needed more development. I went through the essay multiple times looking for these kinds of revisions and I feel that the result is a tighter, cleaner and clearer essay with more fully developed ideas that support my thesis.