

Voice(s) in Writing: Pedagogical Implications of Exploring Multiple Definitions

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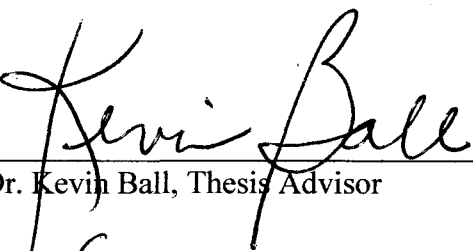
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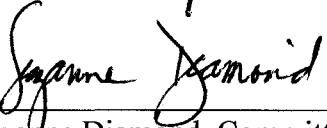
Voice(s) in Writing: Pedagogical Implications of Exploring Multiple Definitions

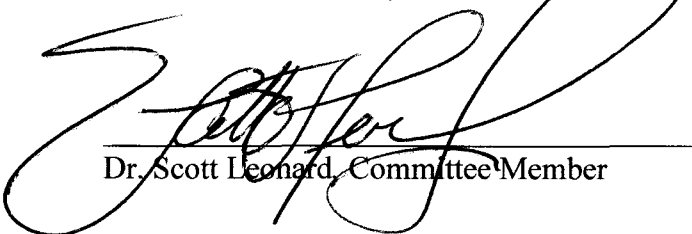
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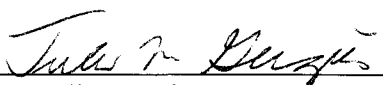
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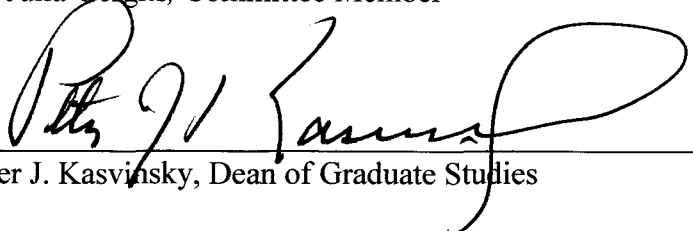
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## Abstract

The idea of voice in writing is difficult to use in a classroom because of the many different definitions of voice evident in composition theory history. This thesis asserts that written voice is better used in composition pedagogy as a heuristic device to discuss philosophies of how written communication works, than as a useful tool to facilitate student writing. To begin the analysis, the thesis charts the discussion of voice. After organizing the discussion of voice into categories based on five of the first articles on written voice by Walker Gibson, Taylor Stoehr, Robert Zoellner, Donald Murray, and John Hawkes and then analyzing Peter Elbow's, Kathleen Blake Yancey's and Darsie Bowden's three modern attempts to chart the history of discussion on written voice, it is concluded each compositionist's understanding of voice is framed according to a personal philosophy of how communication functions. Voice calls into question the importance of individual and social influences on the reader's sense of a person behind the text: a person expressing craftsmanship and/or individuality and/or orality and/or political force. As written voices become as much about other influences on writing as they are about the author, this thesis examines Elbow's and Yancey's two compilations of essays on voice to show the possibility and implications of the idea of editorial voice. Finally, pedagogical implications of the body of theory on written voice are explored and found lacking due to their inconsistency. The thesis, then, introduces and explains a new pedagogy of voice(s). This new pedagogy takes the form of a senior level undergraduate course design using voice as a heuristic tool to uncover and critically examine personal philosophies of how written communication works.

## Acknowledgements

This paper would not exist if were not for the inspiration of one instructor who went out of his way to develop and facilitate his student's voices—thanks Dr. Ball! I would also like to thank all my committee members for their patience and support as I “wrote my way into lucidity” (to quote Dr. Diamond). I am especially grateful for not only the encouragement I received, but for the rigorous editorial comments from my committee that helped this paper be more lucid and cogent.

I would also like to thank my parents, Maxim and Maria, and brother, Timothy, for living with me and my mess of hundreds of books and papers all over the house as I struggled to create this document. I would also like to thank my grandparents, Olha and Basil Nakonechny, who constantly made sure that I had enough food and rest while writing this paper. And I would like to thank my friends Emily Weidenhamer, Marie Milburn, Cathy Ceremuga, George Appleyard, and Taras Szmegala for reading and providing comments on this thesis and therefore helping make the final form of this paper more readable. And I think I must also thank my high school English teacher John Walsh who taught me to edit thoroughly (so thoroughly, that I never feel done with the editing process).

Finally, I must thank all of the countless friends whom I haven't the space to name, for all their encouragement and patience during the genesis of the thesis.

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## Introduction

You're right that there seems to be something personal about me and voice. Indeed, that goes right to the heart of the matter. My view is that there is always a personal dimension to any text.

--Peter Elbow, *Everyone Can Write* (146)

Voice in writing is, to me, a fascinating concept that proved more than a little bit difficult to understand. As a vocal musician and educator enticed into the field of composition and rhetoric by an interest in words, I have been particularly fascinated by the idea of a voice in writing. At first, I was certain that I could find sufficient common themes between discussions of singing voices and writing voices to provide useful comparisons, as Elbow did in his "The Shifting Relationships Between Speech and Writing," which compared writing to speaking. I was hoping to add Aristotelian metaphoric "sweetness and clarity" (Aristotle 20) to the metaphor of voice with yet another metaphorical extension. I thought this would be a simple project, one I could complete within a semester. As it stands, I have been reading, writing, and thinking about rhetorical voice for about a year, and I still feel I have only scratched the surface of the topic's subtle complexities. As my understanding of voice in writing shifted, so has what I wanted to say. Rather than wishing to mix metaphors and make musical connections, I instead became more interested in the pedagogical implications of the various existing theoretical discussions of voice.

Finding a pedagogy that I felt would effectively use the body of research on voice proved difficult. Reading one article on the relationships between speech and writing led me to read more articles on voice by Peter Elbow. Those articles led me to a chain reaction of further research that ended with piles of books and articles strewn about my house.

After living with my studies for a while, I came to notice the patterns of speaking about voice that I describe in Chapter One: voice as crafted persona, voice as self (or selves), voice as the audible portion of text, and voice as political force. Other articles, which at first did not seem to fit, turned out to be a complex definition—a blend of at least two of the four types of voice described above. As I looked back through the history of voice, I realized that each of these five ways of discussing voice originated in the first ten years of composition studies—from about 1962 through 1970—and these five ways continue to be the ways we discuss voice today.

The most compelling and interesting of the books and articles I read on voice in writing tended to discuss voice as a complex entity. They were also the most frustrating, because voice seemed to become a catch-all term that could mean whatever an academic or teacher wanted it to mean. By meaning almost anything, voice came very close to not meaning anything. I found Darsie Bowden's comment compelling when she said, "voice has served an important function in the movement away from current-traditional rhetoric, but that, as a metaphor, it has outlived its usefulness" (*The Mythology of Voice* viii). The focus on voice in writing led composition studies away from a stylistic, sentence-level exercise approach that had deterred many students from writing. The new emphasis led to a more holistic, human approach that encouraged personal empowerment. However, now that we are no longer tempted by current-traditional rhetoric, and now that we have moved to a more social understanding of language communication, voice in writing is no longer as compelling a term.

I reached a point in my reading where I tended to agree with Bowden because I felt that voice seemed too vague and shifting a term to be of much pedagogical use



anymore; however, as I read more I revised my opinion. My second or third readings of Kathleen Blake Yancey's *Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry* and Peter Elbow's *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing*, combined with my reading of Darsie Bowden's *The Mythology of Voice*, changed my mind.

In Chapter Two, I examine each of Elbow's, Yancey's and Bowden's approaches to summarizing the discussion on voice. My analysis of their texts showed me that their interpretation of voice and framing of the discussions on voice were shaped by their personal philosophy of how communication works. For Elbow, voice has been and will continue to be important because he believes in the orality present in writing, as well as in the power of individual human agency. For Yancey, voice has been and will continue to be important because she believes it provides a venue to discuss the diversity of selves within self and the interaction of individual and social forces to create new voices/selves. For Bowden, voice was important because it brought a human dimension to a writing instruction that had become detached from its human source, but it can no longer be useful because the idea of individual human agency is dubious at best. For all three theorists, voice is central to the idea of individuality, to how the individual personality functions, and to the dynamics between self and others.

Looking at the two edited compilations also simulated other insights that are explained in Chapter Two of this thesis. It occurred to me that Yancey and Elbow as editors asserted their voices through their selections and sequencings of their contributors just as much as they asserted their voices through their introduction: Yancey's vision focuses a bit more on the multi-vocal definition of self and Elbow's vision focuses a bit more on the audible dimension of text. But what was fascinating to see was that their

distinctive understandings of voice permeated their selections. While the selections within each collection of essays had the capability to stand alone, their publication in either Elbow or Yancey's compilation colored at least my interpretation of their article. I noticed two things that I couldn't analyze in this thesis (for lack of space and time): a tension in the edited texts between individual author and other authors—each voice asserting itself in subtly different ways (different habits of expression, different ideas, different ways of treating structure, etc.); and a tension between individual contributors' voices and the editorial voice. But what I try to show is that the editors brought these different voices into their texts and created a community. This vision of editorial voice as the shaping force of a book/community led to the conclusion that voice in writing is a term that should not be abandoned, for in its human factor, voice inspires, and can continue to inspire, further understanding of how writing works. The term "voice" makes especially apparent the individual human forces that shape writing the most—in this case not only the author, but the editor.

Yet, the pedagogical use of a term that is redefined by each teacher and theorist who uses it still was unclear. Then, it occurred to me that voice in writing could continue to be used in the classroom if it was used to examine and develop the various philosophies of writing among the students of a classroom. In focusing "attention on authorship, on identity, on narrative, and on power" (Bowden viii), voice in writing has kept the human factor in the forefront of composition studies, and could continue to do so if voice is used as a springboard for discussion, critical thinking, and experimentation—rather than as a vague criterion for the quality of writing.

Ultimately, the concept of voice can be used to empower teachers and students in a way that James Berlin encourages in his “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class” by making writing teachers (and writers) aware of the philosophy(ies) they utilize. Looking at all four definitions and discussing them creates a rhetoric that reflects Berlin’s social epistemic philosophy of composition by getting students to question what is important in writing and individually deciding which philosophy (or meld of philosophies) facilitates the best writing for them.

In Chapter Three, I outline an undergraduate upper-division course that explores voice in five ways. I contend that this course can lead to interesting and productive discussions about how writing works (and, by extension, how reading works). This pedagogy uses voice as a heuristic tool to criticize and examine personal philosophies of how writing works, empowering students because this pedagogy challenges students of various cultures and backgrounds to be critical and to define what is important in writing.

The course I outline uses the ideas of personality and individuality from the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Personality theories to encourage students to critically analyze the idea of personality. Hopefully, the personality theories will help students define how the term voice in writing could (or will not) work for them. In my pedagogy, I emphasize a diversity of assignments and writing assignment options geared toward different personality types not only in the interests of suiting a variety of students, but to, later in the course, have students assess why certain assignments appealed to them (How much did it have to do with personality? How does this affect my idea of voice in writing?). This approach to the teaching of writing capitalizes on learning style research of educational theory and is designed to augment the student understanding of the

element of writing that emphasizes human individuality—the element so often termed “voice.”

By exploring the discussions and debates raised by the five ways of defining voice, and by exploring the philosophical ideas behind each discussion and debate, I believe that students can become more critical of how and why they write as they do. Discussions can be raised about why writing should or shouldn't be crafted, how writing can be crafted, how the self (and/or society) shapes writing, whether writing registers more auditorially or visually (or equally so), and about the dimensions of political action in writing. These discussions will lead students to begin to consciously discover what ideas (craft vs. authenticity, self vs. selves, aurality vs. textuality, self vs. others) best facilitate their writing, and what ideas will cripple their writing.

Voice, as a rhetorical term in its four definitions, seems to force us to remember several things: that writing has a source—some individual initiative; that writing can at least remind us of speech; that writing is enriched by remembering to examine the individual and social forces behind a piece of writing; and that writing, generally, if it wants to be read, needs to be crafted with a personality and style that readers will either relate to, or at least be willing to read. Walking into any classroom would reveal that however similar the social forces on different students, no two students have the exact same personality or the same gifts. It is precisely because rhetorical voice is a reminder of the individual human element of writing that it remains important.

While I admit that the generally introspective focus of voice can obscure “the assumption that language is first and foremost a social activity” (Bowden 65), I do not believe that voice, as the individual human element of writing, should obscure the social

element of writing. I do not believe, either, that the social element of writing should ever completely obscure the individual human element. What I hope is that voice in writing will help continue to reveal some of the interactions that exist between social and individual human elements of writing. I also hope that a continuing study of voice will facilitate discussion about the varying dimensions of interaction between the individual writer(s) and society at both the theoretical and classroom levels.

## Chapter 1: Development of Voice

Voice is not a concept (notion? thought? experience?) that can be innocently or immediately attached to such current lines of thought as social constructionism, social-epistemic rhetoric, cultural critique, Foucaultian analysis of power, Deleuzoguattarian diagrammatics of desire, semiotics, Derridean analyses of the closure of philosophy, or even process pedagogy, for that matter. Even Bakhtinian discussions of heteroglossia, polyphony, and the carnivalesque offer no safe home for voice.

--Mark Zamierowski, "The Virtual Voice of Network Culture" in *Voices on Voice* (286)

While many articles quickly summarize the development of the term "voice" over the past four decades, a close look at its development appears to defy quick summary, as Mark Zamierowski's quote indicates. He is saying that it is difficult to attach to voice a wide variety of "current lines of thought." This is because various discussions of voice inspire and are inspired by a variety of philosophies. In Zamierowski's research, a cohesive understanding of what has been and can be said about voice in writing proved difficult to summarize or categorize. Darsie Bowden, in *The Mythology of Voice* too admits that voice in writing is "difficult to define, difficult to know how to use in one's writing, and difficult to analyze and explain in the writing of others" (Bowden vii). Each academic article on the topic of voice in writing seems to be influenced by a different combination of philosophies and seems to use voice and define voice in a different way.

Looking back to the 1960s, however, reveals five ways of defining and discussing voice that pervade the entire history of voice in writing, each way influenced at different points by a combination of philosophical approaches. The first definitions of voice identify voice as either the crafted persona, the representation of the innate self of the author, the aural element of writing, or the political force in writing. The fifth definition

comprises different attempts to combine any of the four original definitions, making voice a complex identity. While attempts to provide interesting and complex analysis of the interaction of the first four definitions of voice can be insightful, these attempts can confuse the topic of voice in writing due to their inconsistency. To add to the seeming disorder, all of the five ways of defining voice are at different points influenced and redefined through the lenses of different philosophies—which, all told, lead to a body of academic writing on voice which can at first obscure, rather than reveal, any definition.

This chapter first traces the four original ways of talking about voice evident in the history of the topic, then provides an overview of the diverse attempts at complex definitions of voice. Each of these ways of talking about voice is treated as an alternate definition.

The discussions each definition inspires are outlined and explained. In short, Walker Gibson's idea of voice as created mask leads to discussions of craft vs. authenticity and a pedagogy that emphasizes the crafting of style and content for either a fictional or "authentic" presence in the writing. Taylor Stoer's idea of voice as self reflected in writing leads to discussions of self vs. selves and a pedagogy that emphasizes freewriting and psychologically-rooted approaches to writing. Robert Zoellner's idea of voice as the aural element of writing leads to discussions of aural vs. textuality and a pedagogy that emphasizes the aural and bodily elements of writing. Donald Murray's idea of voice as a political force leads to discussions of self vs. others in writing and a pedagogy that emphasizes political empowerment. Each definition reveals shifts in paradigms, representing not simply expressivist rhetoric, but at points representing cognitive rhetoric and social epistemic rhetoric as well. Furthermore, each definition has

a relatively separate lineage and use, but sometimes the lines blur. Yet, however blurred some theoretical articles become, it remains that each definition leads to a different pedagogy (like different trees producing different fruit).

### **Voice as Written Mask or Crafted Persona**

The first definition of voice to appear in an academic article on teaching non-fiction writing identifies voice as a crafted persona, where, generally, as in cognitive rhetoric, “the real is rational” (Berlin 685) and measurable. The emphasis in this definition is on the audience, in that a writer must always have in mind how to craft the paper so that it works for a particular audience (rather than being absorbed in self-exploration as later definitions of voice would propose).

The first appearance of voice as crafted persona appeared in Walker Gibson’s 1962 article, “The Voice of the Writer” in *Composition and Communication*. Here Gibson advises that the student “must choose a voice, a role, a kind of personality” (11) when writing. Further, he says that “We all recognize that we use different voices every moment of the day as we confront different social situations” (11). According to Gibson, voice is the role the writer as actor adopts on paper to present information favorably to an audience. It is a crafted tool that writers use to make writing more understandable to an audience. Here the writer was audience-oriented, shaping writing to create a persona that will present the content to the reader in a way that will create empathy.

Content and persona prove to be interconnected in the crafted voice. In *Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy: An Essay on Modern Prose Styles*, Gibson says, “Everything depends on the personality to whom we have just been introduced. His message can never be divorced from that personality, that speaking voice—or at least not without becoming



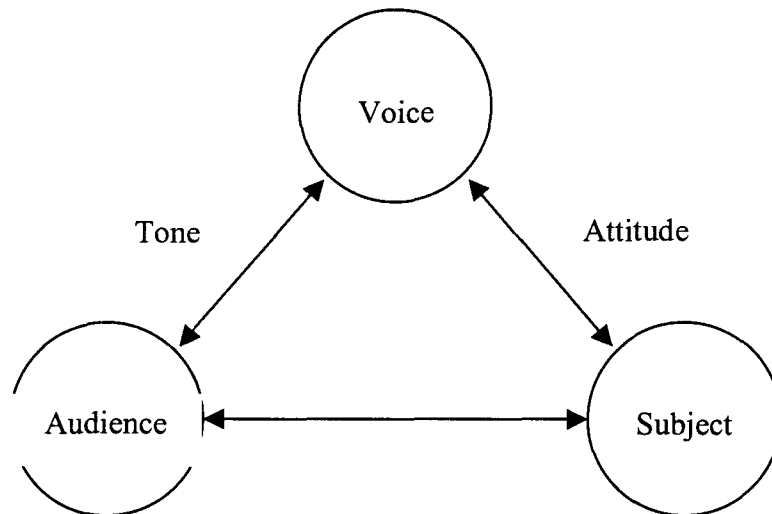
another message” (16). Gibson is talking about everything in writing depending on the constructed voice creating a personality on the page, one of those many possible personalities he had discussed in “The Voice of the Writer.” In this quote, Gibson is discussing the interaction between subject and personality presented—how each is affected and subtly changed by the other. The combination of subject and personality lead to different effects for the reader.

Gibson places, in his text, the voices between three extremes of effect: tough, sweet, or stuffy. He uses charts to show that the three extremes can be measured by percentages of grammatical elements and repetitions, as well as by both intuitive and emotional responses to writing. It is assumed that by understanding the elements of sentences and types of sentences that create tough, sweet, or stuffy writing, a writer can either take on or avoid any of these three voices. Gibson’s charts are supposed to show how the frequency of certain types of words creates a certain persona. Crafted voice is presented as a measurable science.

Crafted voice develops its own identity which may affect other definitions of voice, but cannot be confused with them. In a later book, Gibson uses the terms “persona,” “mask” and “voice” interchangeably in his introduction to *Persona: A Style Study for Readers and Writers* (1969) saying that the book “centers its attention on the authors’ created *persona*, his mask or voice, in passages of prose” (xi, italics his). This use of voice exemplifies how in crafted voice, the three terms can be synonymous (which will not be true of other definitions of voice explained in this chapter).

Gibson’s voice as craft is the definition of voice which is typically compared to Aristotle’s *ethos*. Gibson juxtaposes voice, audience and subject into a triangle, with tone

being the relation between audience and voice, and with attitude being the relation between subject and voice. The following diagram is an approximate copy from the book (Gibson 52):



Audience, subject, and voice are juxtaposed in an interactive triangle as were Aristotle's pathos, logos, and ethos. George A. Kennedy describes Aristotle's rhetorical triad in his introduction to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: pathos was persuasion derived from emotion awakened "by a speaker in an audience," logos was persuasion derived from "true or probable argument", and ethos was persuasion derived from the "character of a speaker" (Aristotle 14). Gibson's diagram relates voice to ethos, audience to pathos, and subject to logos. He explains, furthermore, that the interaction between audience and voice produces the effect of tone for the reader, and that the interaction between voice and subject produces the effect of attitude.

William Coles's 1968 *The Plural I: The Teaching of Writing* also used voice as something which largely influences the tone and attitude of writing. The book describes a course which in the second half of study begins to ask students to define the voice of

different passages of writing. Coles, though, never defines “voice,” but assumes the reader and students understand what he means. The student selections and discussions he publishes seem to imply that they do understand what he means, insofar as they comment on the tonal and textual qualities that make the writing they analyze seem distant, accessible, or even relatable. Students describes texts as having “drab voice” (121), “voice [...] of superiority” (124) and “voice [...] of overwhelming, but not overweening, confidence” (137). Voice is a descriptor of the personality trait evident in the writing. These students, with Cole’s guidance, continue to develop their ideas of various voices with ideas of how those voices are formed. It is suggested that voices are formed through manipulation of style and content for various audiences to produce various emotional responses. The definition of voice in writing becomes, as Gibson would have suggested, something crafted.

Use of activities and assignments that are tangible and measurable are key to voice as craft. Phyllis Brook’s 1973 article “Mimesis: Grammar and the Echoing Voice” encourages the imitation of different voices to develop writing techniques—an activity which can be relatively easily explained and measured. She ascertains that mimicking the form and style of certain well-written paragraphs will lead students to develop “precision and accuracy in syntax and word choice” (161). She exemplifies in her article students mimicking parenthetical expression, apposition and modification, parallelism plus reference, and statement and prediction of published writers. Ultimately she uses voice as Gibson understood voice/persona, something that can be crafted and manipulated—something that can be copied and learned.

In 1992, Linda Brodkey and Jim Henry, among others, reminded us again of Walker Gibson's emphasis on staging for an audience. In "Voice Lessons in a Post-Structural Key," they define voice as articulating "the social identities of the discursive subjects it represents in relation to a discourse" (147). Voice accesses the various social identities common to a discourse community that would discuss a certain subject. This definition implies that voices are either consciously or subconsciously crafted to suit the audience of a text, an implication supported by their conclusion that "an analysis of voices traces subtle shifts in social identities that writers make in their texts" (155). Therefore voice works as it does for Walker Gibson, because voice is something the author chooses to utilize in constructing a certain written work, thus establishing a certain social identity. There was no holistic sense of voice as self for Brodkey and Henry. Rather, voice was a crafted identity, something created to make writing more pleasing and accessible to a particular audience. Crafted voice, as discussed by Gibson through Brodkey and Henry, remains a tangible entity, easily given over to teaching in that it is identifiable (as Gibson identified voice through both affective response and stylistic techniques) and measurable through an analysis of the frequency of certain writing techniques and tendencies.

In 1994, Margaret K. Woodworth described a unit plan on voice that proved effective in her writing class in her "Teaching Voice." Woodworth continued the idea of voice as a crafted entity. In the article, she defines "voice":

[A]s I am using the term, is a composite of all the rhetorical and stylistic techniques a writer chooses, consciously or unconsciously, to use to

present his or her self to an audience. Related, but not identical terms might include, 'persona,' 'ethos,' 'tone,' 'attitude.' (146)

Woodworth reinforces Gibson's old definition of voice by associating voice with the terms persona, ethos, tone, and attitude, and by asserting that voice is a composite result of technique or craft. The unit utilizes activities and assignments centered on defining what voice is and how it is used. Woodworth says she declines offering an initial definition of voice to the students, preferring that they define the term after guided reading and analysis. However, her definition cannot help but influence how she teaches voice and, thus, how voice is defined by the students.

Keeping in mind the crafted approach to voice, Woodworth is able to create in her article a very measurable and tangible approach to voice for students. Utilizing the portfolio approach, Woodworth alternates classroom writing with rhetorical and grammatical instruction and with reading—the portfolio providing students with further awareness of how their writing skills demonstrate greater knowledge and dexterity with voice construction. She alternates writing exercises for unidentified audiences with writing exercises for specific audiences. She discusses the Aristotelian rhetorical triangle to explain the concept of ethos in writing—the crafted personality used to make writing more persuasive for a particular audience. She has students analyze a text's voice through a combined analysis of style, grammar, and vocabulary. According to Woodworth, student writing blossomed in complexity and subtlety through the course of her unit. One possible reason that her unit on voice proved effective is because she presented voice as something concrete and measurable in writing—something that is adjusted and crafted by a writer to suit an audience.

Gibson's voice as crafted persona in text is the definition which can be found today in technical writing texts in conjunction with style. For example, the use of voice in the 1999 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach* states that when readers "'hear' a voice [...] they draw conclusions about you and your attitudes" (248). Readers perceive a certain personality in text; therefore, a writer must be cautious of how that personality is presented and crafted. The text then proceeds to describe how to create an effective writing style and voice geared toward particular audiences.

Voice defined as crafted persona proposes a very pragmatic approach to writing: know the audience and adjust writing to suit the audience. Within this approach, one can try on different voices and audiences to discover the range of possible ways of voicing one topic. The theoretical discussion of voice as craft, generally, is minimal—most discussion of voice as crafted persona is pragmatic.

### **Voice(s) as Innate Self Represented in Writing**

The second way voice is discussed in academic articles is to use voice as the representation in writing of the innate self of the author. Here we have the most famous expressivist rhetoric usage, dominating much of the 1970s and fueling many of the debates about voice in writing of the following decades. In this definition a well-written text is made evident by an authentic presence.

The idea of voice as intrinsic to self was introduced in the 1960s. In his 1968 article, "Tone and Voice," Taylor Stoehr states that there are two elements of writing that recall orality that need to be defined and distinguished: tone and voice. He says, "tone is the pervasive reflection, in written or spoken language, of an author's attitude toward his

audience” while “voice is the pervasive reflection, in written and spoken language, of an author’s character, the marks by which we recognize an utterance as his” (150). For Stoehr, tone is attitude, or the audience-oriented element of writing. Voice, on the other hand, is the author’s reflection in the text—the mark of his or her unique fingerprint. Here we see the beginning of voice as intrinsic to a unified self. Stoehr made no reference to Walker Gibson’s definition, so it is relatively impossible to know if Gibson affected Stoehr. It is even possible that the two definitions of voice developed independently, for Stoehr’s definition is very different from Gibson’s, asserting that a non-unified voice will diminish the writer’s craft. Stoehr states, “a writer may be so divided against himself that he seems to have no voice of his own: his writing is all tone” (151). Therefore, Stoehr does not think it is wise in his article to constantly reshape oneself for an audience, as Gibson advised the writer to do. Stoehr asserts that the author’s character must be recognizable and indicative of the author’s (presumably steady) character. He uses voice as a tool to show what is steady and unchanging in the writing of a particular author, while Gibson had used voice as a tool to remind a writer of how we change for different audiences.

Stoehr criticizes an audience focus, which he claims leads to a neurotic sense of author for the reader. He labels writing that constantly is reshaped for an audience as full of characteristic tone, rather than voice. He says, “Whereas a characteristic voice is natural and bespeaks an integrated character, a characteristic tone is neurotic, a symptom of a continuing struggle between the writer-self and the audience-self” (151). This quote shows the bias for an “integrated character” by suggesting that a constantly shifting voice is indicative of mental instability. Later social constructivists like Darsie Bowden, using

Foucaultian analysis, will take issue with the idea of a unified and stable self that can be represented in writing—the idea Stoehr so strongly supports.

Stoehr's article, though, has a conclusion that seems to point to something social constructivists will later recommend—urging writers to try out different possible selves. He asks that a writer try “out different roles, and [imagine] oneself as someone else” (161). He does not believe that this trying on of roles contributes to the idea that the self is multidimensional, but rather that it will help the writer discover which role fits best and will develop innate speech. He urges the writer to try on different roles to find him/herself: “when the rhythms seem right and the words begin to flow easily, then that is the writer talking, and not a merely character of his invention” (161). Other roles and personas may obscure the true self; through experimentation, the true self can be found and utilized for further writing.

Other compositionists continued the search for true self, the quest for authentic voice. Donald Stewart, in his 1970 *The Authentic Voice: A Prewriting Approach to Student Writing*, urges students to discover their authentic selves, and therefore authentic voices, through freewriting techniques and reflections on their personal histories. A unified self is represented by what he calls an authentic voice which is an “authorial voice which sets you apart from every living human being despite the number of common or shared experiences you have with many others” (2-3). This focus on refining an authentic voice is a more introverted approach to writing, focused on looking within ourselves rather than outside. Clarity, consistency, conciseness—all are supposed to “develop naturally in your work as you come to terms with yourself and your abilities” (4). The premise is that “a lot of time” is saved by looking within rather than without,



“by not trying to be like someone other than the person you are” (4). In this book there is great faith in self-actualization and in authentic voice as means to produce better quality writing.

Exploration of inner voice leads to questions of how personality shapes voice. John K. DiTiberio and George H. Jenson, in the 1995 book *Writing and Personality: Finding Your Voice, Your Style, Your Way*, provide interesting correlations between Myers Briggs personality typing and preferred writing styles and voices. Here, voice is determined by personality which is decided by the unique blend of four basic personality preferences: basic preferences which are described later by Linda Houston in her article “Knowing Learning Styles Can Improve Self-Confidence of Developmental Writers.”

In *Writing and Personality*, DiTeberio and Jenson discuss and show how different personalities express themselves differently in writing and how they prefer to read different writing styles. Voice is defined by the inherent personality of the writer, but, according to this theory, knowing your natural voice is key to learning how to create artificial (crafted voices) for other audiences of different personalities. There is the interchange between voice as craft and voice as inherent to self that is reminiscent of complex definitions of voice. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is based on the theories of Karl Jung and was developed by Isabel Myers and Katherine Briggs to be an instrument that “reports preferences by celebrating instead of only evaluating varying approaches to tasks” (Houston 212). Different preferences of how to organize and approach life are organized in polar extremes. Each group of preferences creates a personality type, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. In 1997, Linda Houston published “Knowing Learning Styles Can Improve Self-Confidence of Developmental

Writers” in *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* with a table based on the work of DiTiberio. This chart summarizes the general MBTI preferences:

<b>Table 1. Summary of the MBTI Preferences</b>	
<b>Where Do I Get My Energy?</b>	
<i>Extraversion</i>	<i>Introversion</i>
Focus on the outer world	Focus on their inner world
Pay attention to people and events in external environments	Pay attention to their thoughts, feelings
Energized by the outer world	Energized by their inner experience
<b>How Do I Gather Information?</b>	
<i>Sensing</i>	<i>Intuition</i>
Become aware of what is real	Become aware of the meanings that go beyond the information given
Focus on practical matters, here and now	Focus on the big picture and grasp essential patterns and possibilities
<b>How Do I Make Decisions?</b>	
<i>Thinking</i>	<i>Feeling</i>
Decide things objectively based on analysis and logical consequences	Decide things by considering what is most important to themselves or others
Weigh evidence in a detached manner	Base decisions on subjective values
<b>How Do I Prefer to Order My World?</b>	
<i>Judging</i>	<i>Perceiving</i>
Want to structure and organize	Adapt to the outer world
Make decisions and move on	Keep options open to new experiences
Like things settled	Don't need closure quickly

*Source: Adapted from DiTiberio and Hammer (3)*

Each individual tends toward one of the preferences in each category, either introverted or extraverted, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, judging or perceiving. These preferences are not either/or categories, but are measured, rather, on a graduated scale leading to a variety of personalities within each type. Though there are an infinite variety of personalities possible (for example, some more introverted or extraverted than others,

etc.), all personalities tend to fall into sixteen general groups (like an Introverted Intuitive Feeling Perceiving or INFP personality, etc.).

Different personality preferences lead to writing preferences outlined in the next table, also from Houston's article, researched by DiTiberio:

**Table 2. Preferred Writing Approaches.**

<i>Extraversion-Active Writers</i>	<i>Introversion-Reflective Writers</i>
Write from experience	Write from ideas
Talk about ideas	Jot down ideas
Begin writing	Pause before writing
Take breaks	Concentrate in a quiet place
<i>Sensing-Realistic Writers</i>	<i>Intuition-Imaginative Writers</i>
Report factual information	Discuss concepts
Follow a format	Try new approaches
Attend to instructions	Attend to complexities
Say it directly	Say it with a flourish
<i>Thinking-Analytical Writers</i>	<i>Feeling-Personal Writers</i>
Are objective	Communicate personal viewpoint
Prefer logical organization	Use human examples
Analyze an argument	Anticipate reader's reaction
Guided by criteria for a "product"	Guided by sense of flow and feeling
<i>Judging-Decisive Writers</i>	<i>Perceiving-Inclusive Writers</i>
Narrow options, decide quickly	Keep topic options open
Follow a schedule	Let deadlines motivate
Work on one project at a time	Work on multiple projects
Work from present material	Search for facts or ideas

*Source: Adapted from DiTiberio and Hammer (8)*

Because different personalities prefer different sorts of writing approaches, these personalities prefer to express themselves in different ways, or have voices which have natural tendencies. For example, an INFP prefers writing which is imaginative, and tends to employ creativity and imagination to his/her writing. An ESTJ (Extraverted Sensing Thinking Judging), on the other hand, tends to prefer crisp, concise, and sharply analytical prose and tends to write accordingly. DiTiberio and Jenson assert that every

personality can learn how to write in other “voices” which come more naturally to other personality types—tying in the idea of crafting voice (shaping voice for an audience) to authentic voice (voice as inherent to self).

In the 1990’s, in response to other psychological and philosophical developing ideas of self, texts experimenting with the idea of multiple voices as inherent to self began to appear; these texts not only explored the idea of multiple selves/voices, but attempt to express multiple voices in their texts. One example of a text experimenting with multiple voices is Toby Fulwiler’s “Looking and Listening for my Voice” from 1990, where he explored the voices of his academic, private, public, and 18-year old selves. Other examples of multi-voiced texts persisted through the following decade. In 1992, Nancy Sommers’ “Between the Drafts” alternated between academic, personal, and feminist reflections on her writing process. In 1994, Gail Summerskill Cummins’ “Coming to Voice” alternated between formal academic and informal academic voices. And in 1997, Greg Tanaka’s essay “Pico College” set up an article in personal voice next to an article discussing the same or parallel issues in academic voice in rows next to each other. These four articles are only a sampling of multi-voiced writing which attempted to show that internal voices can be spilled on a page. The assumption was that the more voices are shown, the more an overall and complex vision of the topic is provided. All these articles, from Sommers through Tanaka, worked to show, rather than simply discuss, the multi-vocal nature of self reflected in writing.

The idea of an authentic voice was modified to include a more complex vision of self, where self carries within it many voices. Carl H. Klaus, in “The Chameleon ‘I’: On Voice and Personality in the Personal Essay” (1994), concludes that personal essays of E.

B. White illustrate a multi-vocal self. At the beginning of the article Klaus expresses uncertainty if any authentic voice was discernable in White's essays. In his introductory paragraphs, he states that in studying essays, "despite the strong inclination of some commentators to talk about 'authentic voice,' one cannot reliably define or describe the connection beyond asserting that it exists" (112). Though not sure that authentic voice exists, he goes on to study White's essays to see if an authentic voice is evident. While Klaus succeeds in showing a variety of styles and personas manifested in various examples of White's essays, Klaus asserts that even with the different voices of White, it would be nearly impossible to confuse White with another essayist. He concludes that if one is to think of an overall voice at all, then, that voice should be complex and encompassing "such a wide range of voices that perhaps it would be more accurate to talk about the voice(s), or multivoiced personality, of E. B. White" (127). E. B. White, then, has an authentic voice, according to Klaus, which is inhabited by many different voices. For him, even within the concept of voice as inherent to self, there are possibilities of many voices/selves existing within the larger idea of voice/self.

The idea that there are multiple possible selves was further developed by compositionists influenced by the psychologist Lev Vygotsky and the theorist Mikhail Bakhtin—two key thinkers from the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Communist Russia. According to Bakhtin, language constantly shifts in meaning depending on its context, and a standard language of any kind is a fictional order created in an attempt to tidy up the chaos of communication. When a word is said, it can have "a plentitude of meanings" (xx) depending on the social influences of the speaker and listener. This idea that words can have various meanings connects with Vygotsky's idea that a word,

however socially shaped, does not craft consciousness, but only reflects it:

“Consciousness is reflected in a word as the sun in a drop of water” (Vygotsky 256). As a drop of water cannot encompass the sun, so a word cannot encompass consciousness, especially a consciousness that is, as both Vygotsky and Bakhtin point out, constantly developing and shifting. Frank Farmer uses the theories of Bakhtin and Vygotsky to conclude in “Voice Reprised: Three Etudes for a Dialogic Understanding” (1995) that:

[S]elf is more a process than an entity; as an orchestration of many voices [both internal and external] that inhabit our consciousness, we cannot escape the conclusion that at any given moment we have incomplete access to who we are or who we claim to be. (313)

Thus authentic self is protean and shifting, as well as being multi-dimensional. Farmer concludes by describing a classroom unit in which students develop a portfolio that both tracks the appropriation of knowledge and presents different texts for different audiences. Students then analyze the different voices in writing that result from the appropriation of different audiences. The result is a student understanding of voice as constantly developing and shifting as a student learns more about different audiences.

T. J. Lensmire calls the development of voice “*becoming*” (285, italics his) in “Rewriting Student Voice” (1997). Lensmire asserts that he has added “*becoming* as an important aspect of [his] conception of student voice” (285), in that *becoming* implies the process of growth and appropriation implied by Bakhtin while growing and writing. The self is not static for Lensmire. While “students may be plagued by the living and the dead” (voices they have appropriated), they need all of these voices “if their voices are to

continue developing” (286). Here, again, Lensmire emphasizes that inner voices should be explored on the written page, even as the voice(s) of a writer grow and change.

This idea of the magic of writing lying within (either in self or selves) to be spilled out onto a page was often criticized, with the most notable critique by Darsie Bowden in her 1997 *The Mythology of Voice*. She states, citing post-structural techniques, that:

Many voice proponents tend to equate identifiably with identity and assume that the features we recognize in the speech exchange represent the authentic emanation of the human mind, wherein exists the core of that individual, her “truth.” The poststructuralist critique calls this supposition into question, making voice a kind of dinosaur. (60)

Bowden says that theorists who feel voice(s) represents something inherent to self are derailed by the poststructuralist perspective which she feels makes the idea of a core self (and therefore any idea of a voice inherent to self) outmoded. She uses Foucaultian philosophy to derail the idea that a stable inherent self is either possibly unique or identifiable. She says that the “idea of a consistent person is improbable, since it will always shift according to its task” (74). Like Foucault, she believes in a concept of self that is constantly shifting and changing. Rather than feeling, like Farmer, that voice is a reflection of a developing self, she feels the shifting and changing is so evident that it undermines the very idea of authorship and ownership in writing. If the concept of authorship is questionable, as she posits in her “Plagiarism: Stolen Voices and Authentic Voice” (1996), then the idea of authentic voice(s) is more than improbable. Perhaps in

part because of the concerns Bowden raises, discussion of authentic voice(s) have dropped off in the last five years.

When voice was defined as inherent to self in writing by compositionists like Stoehr and Stewart, there was an inherent freedom to throw aside rules and trust the voice that has been shaped within. The rise of social construction theory in the later 1980s, which challenged us to take a more social epistemic approach to personal voice, shifted the emphasis of voice as inherent to self to the idea of not one, but many, voices inherent to self. The theory that voice is not an individual creation—but one shaped, defined, and limited by social forces—did not immediately quash, however, the enthusiasm of the authentic voice movement. Rather than one voice, there were many voices of self to explore, as Klaus and Farmer suggested. Eventually, the idea that each individual is a conglomeration of voices recalled Gibson's claim that "we use different voices every moment of the day" ("The Voice of the Writer" 11). The definitions of voice(s) as inherent to self, as expressed by theorists from Stoehr to Lensmire, however, did not encourage the crafting of voices for particular audiences. Rather, their definitions encouraged the exploration of interior voices many times creating texts purposefully representing multiple voices.

### **Voice as the Audible Dimension of Writing**

The third way that voice has been discussed uses voice to recall the audible dimensions of writing—a definition used by both those who have been considered expressivists (to hear the text subjectively to see if it "sounds" right) and those who prefer a more rational, linguistically-based, cognitive rhetoric approach to writing (to identify the linguistic features that create the illusion of different tones of voice).



Robert Zoellner's 1969 article "Talk-Write: A Behavioral Pedagogy for Composition" discusses the connections between spoken and written voices and is one of the first articles to use voice to recall aural elements of writing. Zoellner writes:

A striking characteristic of many students' verbal behavior is that they "sound" one way when talking, and quite another way when writing. If they have a consistent "voice" at all, it is in the speech area. In contrast, their writing is simply congeries of words, entirely lacking any distinguishing "voice." One of the objectives of the Talk-Write pedagogy is to overcome this modal disjunction.

(301)

Zoellner implies that writing has a "sound" of sorts—if not auditory, it reminds one of auditory sound. He notices that students, when writing, sometimes forget to keep the rhythm and flow of words that make writing "sound" right, so that there is a consistent "voice." According to Zoellner, by talking out writing, this disjunction can be overcome. The methods Zoellner proposes, densely supported by behavioral psychology, attempt to transfer to writing some of the more seemingly natural consistency of speech. As Zoellner discusses voice as the overall impression of how a person sounds to the audience either in speech or in writing. According to Zoellner, because speech comes more naturally than writing, speech is closer to interior thought than writing.

The idea that speech is closer to our inner thought than writing was further encouraged in David Hoddeson's "The Reviser's Voices" (1981). He states that "as researchers from Vygotsky to Flower have at least in part suggested, inner and outer speech are our first real drafts" (92). Inner and outer speech are more natural than writing, according to Hoddeson. Sometimes students do not even see their writing, but

only see what they meant to transcribe from their inner speech. Hoddeson states that students when writing tend to “hear what [they mean]” (100), rather than see what has been written. He comments that even “a trained eye [can be] momentarily over-ridden by the more compelling flow of the reader’s inner voice; for if sound plays no role, why homonym confusion?” (100). He is saying that a reader’s inner vocalization of text may override the actual written text. Written voice, then, according to Hoddeson, is the reader’s vocalization (whether interior or spoken) of text.

Because written voice is more foreign to thought than spoken voice, according to Hoddeson’s article, students must be trained to read more carefully and to move away from sound and homonym confusion. Hoddeson encourages students to analyze the differences between effective speech and effective writing by analyzing transcripts of spoken interviews next to written articles. This allows students to move “from the familiar modes of speaking and listening to the more abstracted ones, reading and writing” (102). It is assumed by Hoddeson, as it was by Zoellner, that auditory symbols of language are more primary to thought than visual symbols of language are, and that it is easier to move from sound to written code. Hoddeson emphasizes, though, that there are differences between effective spoken and written language. Students, in listening to an interview and then reviewing its written transcript, learn that “if print strips voice of much of the signifying melody, then in compensation writing’s syntax had better be more regularized, its words made more exact, its ideas more explicit” (105). While effective writing may be influenced by outer and inner speech, Hoddeson maintains that writing is something very different than its presumably more aural counterparts. Writing voice is best heard internally when writing is more structured and explicit than speech.

The idea that writing is heard internally builds on the idea that there are internal voices—that we hear our thoughts. John Trimbur, in his *Rhetoric Review* article, “Beyond Cognition: The Voices of Inner Speech” (1987) complicates the discussion of inner voice to outer voice by using an analysis of Vygotsky’s and Bakhtin’s theories of identity to assert that we are actually negotiating with not simply an inner voice, but with inner voices that are constantly being influenced by outer voices. He asserts that the motion between inner and outer voices is more circular than linear, and this circular motion is part of what complicates the writing process. Trimbur states:

From Vygotsky’s and Bakhtin’s perspectives, the problem of composing is rooted in the cultural history of the writer and the polyphony of voices that resonate in the writer’s mind. [...] [If] we pay the right kind of attention, we can hear the voices in the composing processes of our students, the internalized voices, significant others all speaking at the same time. (217)

Trimbur focuses on the interaction between inner voices and outer influences (or voices). Every human being has a lifetime of voices stored in the memory which affect the writing process. Trimbur says that we can hear in the writing of students the different voices stored in the memory that compete for attention in the consciousness. This is reminiscent of how Frank Farmer discussed voice (as intrinsic to self) as constantly interacting with and being developed by outside voices, asserting that we are not one identity, but a conglomeration of many identities, with multiple voices at our disposal. Trimbur’s emphasis, however, is on voice as internally heard. He feels the many voices in the memory are identifiable through their alternate speech patterns (and personas). These

different voices, when unconsciously and simultaneously expressed on the written page, confuse how writing is read.

In the later 1980s, with the importance of Jacques Derrida's deconstructive philosophy in composition studies, any theory that suggested the primacy of speech over writing became suspect. Pam Gilbert's 1989 book *Writing, Schooling, and Deconstruction: From Voice to Text in the Classroom* looks closely at the development of the idea that a voice can be heard in a text, and criticizes the "speech centered rather than textually based" approach to writing (164). She further criticized the theoretical underpinnings of such an approach, saying that the "inadequacies of describing writing as 'the guise' of speech become noticeable in issues such as revision of writing, audiences for writing, and writing originally and creatively" (164). For Gilbert, these inadequacies are evident in the differences between effective text and effective speech; using speech to inform writing, to her, is more confusing than helpful.

The idea of a voice heard in writing becomes contingent on whether writing is aurally- or textually-based. Therefore, all discussion of aural and literacy became relevant to the discussion of voice: from Plato's critique of literacy, through subsequent rhetorical theory and philosophy, down to Walter Ong's *Orality and Literacy* and Jacques Derrida's critiques of oral primacy. Theoretical and philosophical debate about aural or textual primacy in writing, though, need not be central to any discussion of voice as an aural element of writing.

Rather than enter into the philosophical debate on the primacy of writing or speaking, some articles continued to discuss the aural of text—auditory voice—in writing by focusing solely on the phonological issues in writing. Rosemary Gates uses

linguistic research in phonology to analyze the predictable literal “sound-shape” of text read aloud. In her 1989 article, “Defining and Teaching Voice in Writing: The Phonological Dimension,” she analyzes the rhythm and stress emphasis of sentences from essays to find their voice, and shows how to have students do the same sorts of analysis. She says, “the exercises I have suggested help students understand the internal relations of words and the intimate connection of sound to meaning [...] and assist them in developing their textual voices” (15). Her exercises assist students in understanding the rhythmic patterns of words, and how those patterns create intonation and affect a reader’s interpretation of text. This analysis, she concludes, will help predict the revoicing of text (how the text will sound when a reader is reading the text aloud). Gates adds, “though my students are all native speakers of English, several ESL teachers have told me these exercises work to help teach non-native speakers how the English sound system works” (15). Presumably, as native speakers, an understanding of how our sound system works will improve our construction of a coherently heard voice in writing.

The reader’s use of audible voice to hear rhythmic inconsistencies, unnecessary repetition, etc. is an approach to voice approved by even Darsie Bowden, who tended to be critical of voice in other definitions. In her 1997 book *The Mythology of Voice*, while Bowden asserts that voice has “outlived its usefulness,” she states that although she believes the idea of voice as persona is no longer useful, “the voice I refer to in this chapter is the literal voice, and it may be valuable for the student to be aware and make use of” (98). She says that the literal voice allows students to access their:

*langue*, their internal knowledge of language, but this kind of knowledge is sensory, having to do with sounds. It is not, however, more ‘internal’ or

closer to consciousness than other senses; it is simply one of the tools of stylistic awareness. (98)

Revoicing, then, allows a writer the opportunity to hear in detail what exactly is written in text by forcing him/her to avoid skimming. This way the writer can access his/her sensory knowledge of language to see if the writing sounds as it should sound.

Voice, as the theorists in this section discuss it, can inspire a writer to identify if writing sounds true to self, if it has effective rhythms, or if it sounds as society expects it to sound. This definition tends to be reader-based, rather than writer-based, focusing on the benefits of saying a text aloud and analyzing what in the text does or does not sound natural and why. When this concept of voice is used to help writers, the writer must switch roles to become the reader.

### **Voice as the Political Force in Writing**

The fourth way voice is discussed is as a political force, be it a personal or social one. Thus, some speak of the feminist voice or the African American voice behind the text. Here, voice is a force of dissent, an exercise of the freedom to speak, and a social and political responsibility.

Donald Murray was one of the first to view voice as power in his article “Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent” (1968). He began by urges students and teachers to foster a writing environment that empowers students as writers by having students take more responsibility for their writing. He then urges teachers to work less on students’ individual papers and more on creating an environment that fosters writing and self-criticism. According to Murray, a student should be given “four freedoms—the freedom to find his own subject, to find his own evidence, to find

his audience, and to find his own form” (142). These four freedoms are obligations upon the student that provide them the opportunity to write something that would be meaningful both to themselves and to the chosen audience. Murray urges students to understand that “freedom is the greatest tyrant of all,” suggesting that freedom is responsibility—responsibility to find something meaningful to say to a particular audience, as well as to learn to meet particular audience needs and revise effectively (140). When students learn their own voice in this way, they are empowered to become independent of the teacher.

Nearly two decades later, the idea of voice as a vehicle of social power continued to gather momentum with the arrival of Freirian pedagogy. Henry A. Giroux, in his article “Radical Pedagogy and the Politics of Student Voice” (1986), seems to second Murray’s desire for a classroom which would “glory in diversity” (Murray 145) and for a freedom that begets responsibility. Giroux wants students to voice themselves both to make sense of their own political position in the world, and to effect change. He explicitly celebrates democracy and individual initiative, calling for “the development of schools as democratic counterpublic spheres” (67). Giroux uses voice in writing as a political tool to both challenge and perpetuate a democratic system; for, in his opinion, democracy grows through the challenge of dealing with counterpublic voices.

In the 1980s, political voice came to be used to identify both the power of an individual and the individual role in a minority social group; theorists and writers during this time attempted to understand and express the feminist voice, the African American voice, and other minority voices. This viewpoint is exemplified in the work of many theorists, of which Carol Gilligan and Keith Gilyard represent only a small sampling. A

feminist voice was first explored most thoroughly by Carol Gilligan. In 1982, Gilligan explored in her book, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, the evidence suggesting that women express themselves differently from men in speech and writing. How African Americans express themselves differently from mainstream American speakers was then examined by sociolinguist Keith Gilyard. In 1991, Gilyard wrote about the *Voices of Self*, exploring the sociolinguistic implications of the development of his African American and his traditional academic voices. Here, in Gilligan and Gilyard, the voice is discussed as a political force, but seems to intersect with the discussion of voice as inherent to self—our self as developed by a social or cultural identity.

bell hooks, though, asserts that the emphasis on any cultural voice should remain on empowerment and social change. In “‘When I was a Young Soldier for the Revolution’: Coming to Voice” from her book *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (1984), bell hooks asserts that:

When we dare to speak in a liberatory voice, we threaten even those who may initially claim to want our words [...] Feminist focus on women finding a voice, on the silence of black women, of women of color, has led to increased interest in our words. This is an important historical moment.

(58)

According to hooks, exploration and expression of the feminist voice empowers other women to be released from silence, and exploration and expression of the African American voice asserts its right to exist. But the idea that voice is empowering to individual or social groups has not gone without criticism.



In 1989, Elizabeth Ellsworth criticized the teaching of political voice by bringing up the limitations of critical pedagogy in her *Harvard Educational Review* article, “Why Doesn’t This Feel Empowering? Working Through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy.” She argues that:

key assumptions, goals, and pedagogical practices fundamental to the literature on critical pedagogy—namely, ‘empowerment,’ ‘student voice,’ ‘dialogue,’ and even the term ‘critical’—are repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination.” (299)

While a teacher may present him/herself as empowering a student, the traditional power relationship is maintained; further, while a teacher says s/he is trying to challenge the mainstream repressive culture, she says that by using the very language tools and symbols of the oppressive culture, the mainstream culture is perpetuated. Ellsworth contends that the presumption that students had no control of their lives outside of the expression of themselves in the dominant culture’s language is shortsighted and disempowers students, rather than empowering them.

Ellsworth maintains in her article that critical pedagogy remains vague in several aspects. She says that critical pedagogy does not address the issues of how to negotiate with a teacher that cannot help but be biased or how to negotiate with the partial realities of students within a class. Further, critical pedagogy does not address how to reconcile the use of a language and a logic created by the dominant culture to free subordinate, minority cultures that use a different language and logic. Critical pedagogy implies that:

by speaking in their ‘authentic voices,’ students are seen to make themselves visible and define themselves as authors of their own world.

Such self definition presumably gives students an identity and political position from which to act as agents of social change. (309)

According to critical pedagogy, students, by voicing themselves, are making their minority status visible and taking control of their lives. However, Ellsworth maintains that, besides being held back by speaking in an otherwise foreign dominant language, each individual only has a partial vision of the larger societal whole that s/he is representing. Students may or may not voice their minority status according to the “mythical norm” (323). She calls for a poststructural look at the politics of writing, saying that “while poststructuralism, like rationalism, is a tool that can be used to dominate, it also has facilitated a devastating critique of the violence of rationalism against its Others” (304). According to Ellsworth, in breaking down the mythical norm of mainstream culture through poststructural techniques, teachers can be encouraged to give students the ability to better appreciate and express their individuality along with their minority culture backgrounds.

In 1994, Randall R. Freisinger, as if to answer Ellsworth, returned to the idea of voice as political power in his “Voicing the Self: Toward a Pedagogy of Resistance in a Postmodern Age.” He chronicles the history of the authentic voice school, self, resistance, postmodernism, and he concludes:

We must negotiate the extremes of the traditional views of self and voice and the tenets of social construction. We must preserve a theory of human agency so that our students as well as ourselves can, like Archimedes, seek a place to stand, a place from which to resist against a world so badly in need of change. (210)

Freisinger upholds that the truth of self and voice lie somewhere between the older views of self as purported by Donald Stewart and the newer ideas of self which say that people are merely shaped by their society and that individuality is suspect. He states that however socially shaped we may all be, the idea of individuality must be maintained to the extent that we respect the “human agency”—the ability and right of an individual to voice him/herself in discord with the majority voices. The idea of voice, Freisinger maintains, perpetuates this important realization of “human agency” and the individual ability to inspire change.

An awareness of culture, however, sharply changes the importance of individual voice. While expressing one’s voice remains the freedom call for those who advocate a diverse and democratic society, Vai Ramanathan and Dwight Atkinson remind us that the same notion seems oppressive to someone from more communitarian societies than the USA and Western Europe. In “Individualism, Academic Writing, and ESL Learners” (1999) Ramanathan and Atkinson tell of Fan Shen, a Chinese immigrant to the U.S. They quote him telling “of his struggles with English composition on arriving in this country—struggles which eventually necessitated his ‘creating a new self,’ as he puts it” (55). In order to write as authentic voicists encouraged, Shen felt he had to recreate his identity in order to have what is considered by Americans to be a “voice.” He felt he “had to accept the way a Westerner accepts himself in relation to the universe and society” (56)—to accept the American culture and ideals—rather than to relate to the world as he was taught to in China (as a mere member of society and history, with little importance as an individual). Individuals, they assert, should be understood in context of their societal ideals rather than as isolated entities.

The definition of voice as expressed by Murray through Ramanathan and Atkinson, like the definition of voice as inherent to self as given by Stoehr, tends to be influenced by either expressivist or social epistemic rhetorics, but differs from Stoehr's definition in their focus. The concept of voice is not as concerned with introspection or the nature or self as it is with the expression of an individual or social self to the surrounding society. In this definition, if one is to reflect on the nature of self, it is only to see how self is different from and so affects others. Many times, voice, when used as a political force, is exercised precisely to be dissonant. This idea of political voice is both individually and socially founded. It is not simply a person (either as an individual or socially infused entity) on a page—but voice is something that simply exerts power by someone or some group choosing to write. It does not matter if voice is crafted, innate, or shaped by society, or even if it is an illusion—it simply is the result of someone breaking a silence and standing up for some value or belief, perhaps even for something as simple as the right to exist. Voice, when it is a political force as discussed in this section, is action, or as Randal Friesinger put it, voice is “human agency” (210)—the act of an individual or collective human will to change the larger social structure. In the concept of voice as political force, the theories of self, culture, and identity are again relevant—with an emphasis on the sociological and political philosophies. Pedagogical implications of this way of defining voice would use writing as a vehicle for social change, and writing is here both introspective (to fully discover what powerful forces society has shaped within) and audience-centered (to discover how to most effectively create changes on the larger society).

### Voice as a Multi-Dimensional Entity

Multi-dimensional or multi-level definitions are very interesting in their complexity, for they often propose sophisticated approaches to understanding the individual initiative in writing, but complex definitions are usually achieved by blending two or more of the four definitions outlined previously in the chapter. Thus, when treated as a whole entity, voice ultimately proves to elude a simple description. When comparing different articles, nearly all theorists define multi-dimensional definitions of voice differently.

Multi-level definitions appeared as early as the 1970 publication of “The Voice Project: An Idea for Innovation in the Teaching of Writing” in which John Hawkes defines voice in two ways (foreshadowing the later multiplicity of definitions):

It is first of all the instrument of speech; in writing it may be taken to mean the summation of style; but also in writing it may be taken to mean the whole presence of the [...] writer-as-man. (91)

Hawkes’ reference to voice as a “summation of style” is reminiscent of Gibson’s voice as craft. He does not let this definition stand alone, but says that voice can also be the whole presence of the writer, which is reminiscent of Stoehr’s voice as inherent to self definition.

Later on in the same article, Zoellner’s voice as the audible dimension of text comes into play as well. Hawkes states:

[U]ntil recently it had not occurred to me to attempt to work directly between the ‘visceral’ speaking voice of a person and his writing voice as

it emerges on the page. But now it seems to me essential to explore fully this many-sided relationship. (92)

As we encourage the use and study of the interrelationship between spoken and written voices, we are reminded of Zoellner's ideas.

Hawkes' article was vaguely reminiscent of Donald Murray's ideas of voice as political force as well. In the article, he combines the use of transcripts (reminiscent of Hoddeson) toward the realization of a cultural voice. Hawkes uses transcripts of student speech (largely African-American and minority) to assist students in the development of their written voices. By realizing their own natural cultural way of voicing themselves, according to Hawkes, students can affect change on each other and society at large.

Situated after the first four basic articles on voice, Hawkes' article, however, did not reference Walker Gibson, Taylor Stoehr, Robert Zoellner, or Donald Murray, just as they did not reference anyone in their articles. The convention of the time seemed to be that theorists simply put forth their theories as unique ideas. Nevertheless, there is the first attempt in Hawkes' article to tie together multiple theories of voice. It is in this article that the literary and philosophical theory of Walter Ong, S.J., is first referenced as an inspiration for the concept of voice. Hawkes quotes extensively from Ong's "Voice as a Summons for Belief" to further enlighten the project's perception of voice. Ong's ideas inspire an exploration of the dialectal aspect of a simple speech utterance is explored. Hawkes found in Ong's ideas that, "the human speaker can speak to the other precisely because he himself is not purely self, but is somehow also other. His own 'I' is haunted by the shadow of a 'thou' which it can never exorcise" (91). Hawkes echoes Ong's belief that voice in writing is always influenced by other voices—an idea that was later

developed and explored by Frank Farmer's exploration of voice(s) of self. Nevertheless, though later deconstructionists would probably disagree with his reference to a self, Hawkes' preference for writing over speaking would be reminiscent of deconstructionists, as he says that "writing is often more true to self than is speaking" (91). Hawkes maintains that writing can be closer to thought than speaking, though previously he had encouraged speaking to help enlighten the writing process. Hawkes' article, then, is the first complex theoretical and practical assessment of voice as a complex entity in writing.

As the 1970s progressed, the combination of voice definitions became more complex and idiosyncratic. In "The Story Workshop Method: Writing from Start to Finish," (1977), John Schultz describes voice as a core aspect of the story workshop method. Here he describes voice in very broad strokes:

Speech is a way to voice, speech is a part of voice, but voice is more than speech. Voice is gesture, voice is culture (including the personal background of the teller), voice contains the powers of the unconscious and the conscious and the possibility of style. Voice is also the movement of a telling/writing through time, the economy of which is to use what it needs and to leave out what it does not need. Voice is the articulation of all perceptions in verbal expression written and oral (including the so-called non-verbal which we want to get into writing too). (412)

In short, voice has become a very large and vague concept for Schultz—pulling together ideas of self, expression of self, culture, connections and contrasts with aurality, and "the possibility of style" or craft. Furthermore, idea of voice is infused also with ideas like

“the articulation of all perceptions,” so that voice is everything possible that someone would ever want to say (412). Voice also becomes infused with other ideas like “the movement of a telling/writing through time,” which means that voice encompasses the limitations of space and time (412). As Schultz exemplifies, in less than a decade, voice became a concept too large to summarize in a sentence or two. Further, he shows how voice defined as a complex entity became a concept that is consistently redefined by each theorist for each academic article.

Peter Elbow admits in *Everyone Can Write* that voice became a concept that developed in his consciousness from his time as an author for beginning writers and later from his time as an academic (147). His first writings on voice were admittedly vague, motivated by enthusiasm (147). In one of those early writings of 1973, Elbow named voice as “the only source of power” in writing (*Writing Without Teachers* 7), with voice inherently connected to the natural way of writing for an individual—a natural way that a writer needs to become comfortable with. In *Writing with Power*, Elbow devoted two chapters to voice exercises, explanations of his vision of voice, how his vision of voice developed, and advice for writers. Voice is alternately termed a “mystery” (312) and “whatever yields resonance, whatever makes the words bore through” (312). Such conjuring of mystery and resonance that makes words deeply affect the reader need not be personal, according to Elbow, and may even be the result of pretending to be something or someone else. He insists in the chapters that the idea of voice facilitated better student writing than he had seen before using the idea. Elbow’s early writing only draws from his own theories and experiences. His later writing makes a distinct effort to be more specific, organized and researched—supporting key ideas from previous writing.



Elbow's later work sought to be more specific largely in response to criticism from Irving Hashimoto in the 1987 "Voice as Juice: Some Reservations about Evangelic Composition." In the article, Hashimoto effectively critiques of the use of voice as a vague "juice" (or power) that is used as an ultimate criterion of good writing. He cautions that a use of voice as juice or power can give students the impression that writing without personal juice is not good writing. He argues that voice, when used to make a writer feel as if s/he is being saved from something by being able to be more expressive, is dangerous and can cause overly expressive prose when technical or less personal prose is called for. Though he admits that he thinks that the term "'voice' has many uses" and insists that he is "not suggesting that we abandon it completely" (83), he guards against generalizations. Hashimoto asserts:

[T]he more we insist writing is a 'mystery,' that evaluations have something to do with spiritual vibrations generated by texts themselves [...] the more we begin to overstep our bounds and begin to abandon teaching for preaching. (83)

He is saying that voice should be more specifically defined than as a vague mystery that facilitates writing. If voice is more specifically defined, evaluations can be grounded in specific criteria—rather than in a judgment based on the teacher's feeling of voice.

In order to avoid the simple preaching Hashimoto criticized, Elbow's "What Do We Mean When We Talk about Voice in Texts" (1994) groups voice into "a family of five related meanings" (6): the aural element of writing, the dramatic element of writing, the recognizable or distinctive element of writing, the authoritative element of writing, and the resonant element of writing. This family of meanings is admittedly still

descended from his own experiences and thoughts, but also from the ideas of Gibson and Hawkes. Elbow's aural element is represented with an emphasis on the internal ear—how writing is heard through rhythms and implied intonation. Rather than citing Stoehr, Elbow focuses on an example of speech transcribed by a first-grader into print to show the natural audibility of text. His dramatic element represents the staged or crafted element of writing for a certain audience—with an emphasis on the drama of creating a personality for a work, rather than on the techniques of learning to identify and craft such personalities. He uses examples from Gibson and Coles and from fiction authors to illustrate the dramatic voice—a voice crafted for a certain audience. Elbow's concept of authoritative voice is related to the voice as power, in that there is evident “the courage to struggle with authority” (15) and to write with the “conviction or the self-trust or the gumption to make her voice carry” (15). He mentions that this is the meaning of voice used by feminists, and he quotes D. H. Lawrence as one voice with such authority. So far, Elbow's definitions fall fairly in line with the several of the simpler definitions that originated in the 1960's. The remaining two members of the family of related meanings are recognizable and resonant voice.

Recognizable voice, according to Elbow, is the distinctive style of a particular writer, in all of his or her resonant voices. Elbow attempts to avoid the concept of self (“Notice how I am still not broaching any of the sticky theoretical problems of self or identity that haunt arguments about voice in writing” (14)), by making distinctive voice indicative of a characteristic style. He says, “We recognize someone by their handwriting or their talk, but those behaviors are not necessarily pictures of what they are like” (13). Behaviors are limited to their venues, whereas self is a larger, more comprehensive idea

the topic. Ultimately, Elbow uses the five related meanings to defend the idea that he originally stated in earlier works—that voice as a whole entity is the power behind writing that makes it work for a reader.

Also in 1994, Mark Zamierowski similarly refused to simplify voice, arguing for a complex understanding of voice in his article “The Virtual Voice of Network Culture.” Unlike Elbow, though, Zamierowski does not insist that voice is what makes writing work for a reader. He contends that there can indeed be bad or unpleasant voices, like those of flammers (an on-line term for people who constantly write cruel and degrading messages). He analyzes the term “voice” throughout his article, at one point creating a fourteen-point list summarizing various ways voice has been defined and used. He then explores the term and what chat room discussions reveal about the term, deciding toward the end of the article that voice can be:

[...] a double sided phenomenon that has more of an event than an entity about it. On a molar description, in its hierarchical function, voice faces on one side the personal and on the other the social/institutional. On a molecular description, in its network function, voice is better conceived as an aleatory point which circulates in two different series (call them affect and concept, nonsense and sense, process and product, etc.) causing them simultaneously to communicate and diverge. (289)

Various binaries are constantly shifting and interacting, according to Zamierowski. On a large scale, voice is something that happens in writing when individual and society interact—a self exerts power and crafts something which affects its audience. Audience affects the self’s perception of what should be written. On the small scale, voice is

created by the balance and interaction of emotions and ideas and approaches to content and writing in the text. Zamierowski blends three of the four original definitions—with the idea that craft, self, culture, audience, and initiative interact to create an impression of voice as a larger concept. In his article, voice needs not make writing resonate for a reader—it is a personal, crafted initiative that may very well clash with a reader or seem malformed, unpleasant, and distasteful. In discussing voice's inherent initiative from self, the crafting of that self, and the influence of that self on others, Zamierowski recombines the concepts of voice as self, craft, and political force. He does not, however, seem to feel the need to regard voice as aural element. Zamierowski becomes another theorist who redefined the complex idea of voice in a significantly different way than other theorists have defined complex voice.

The combining of definitions of voice, however interesting, made voice an increasingly vague element of writing. Voice as a multi-dimensional aspect of writing becomes theoretically and practically suspect, if for no other reason than for the fact that it is nearly impossible to define consistently. Because voice becomes nearly impossible to define consistently, voice becomes nearly impossible to teach consistently.

## **Chapter 2**

# **Different Ways of Framing the Discussions on Voice(s) in Writing**

### **Introduction**

In the previous chapter it was shown that in the 1960s five ways of discussing voice emerged and that those five ways continued through the following decades. The five ways of discussing voice are another revised vision of how to organize the discussion of voice. This vision was influenced by previous attempts to organize what has been said and written on the topic. In the 1990s, Peter Elbow, Kathleen Blake Yancey, and Darsie Bowden all created praiseworthy overviews of the discussions on written voice that both organized and reviewed the theories of voice. It would be foolish to proceed with this chapter without first acknowledging the debt this thesis owes these three authors for their treatments of the term. Each of their examinations of voice is a sophisticated attempt to discuss and assess the body of analysis on this topic. The similarities between their discussions of voice are reminiscent of the four original ways of discussing voice—voice as craft (Gibson), voice as inherent to text (Stoehr), voice as the audible dimension of text (Zoellner), and voice as political force in writing (Murray)—outlined in Chapter One of this thesis. However, like the complex definitions written after John Hawkes, Elbow's, Yancey's, and Bowden's depictions of the rhetorical voice discussions vary from each other, at points significantly, in nuance and emphasis. How their three overviews and discussions of voice coincide and differ will be examined in this second chapter. In light of the individual and social forces involved in shaping written voice(s) that these three authors discuss, another voice besides the author's will also be examined—the possibility

of editorial voice—in Elbow and Yancey’s compilations of essays. Finally, the pedagogical implications of Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden’s assessments of voice will be determined.

### **Peter Elbow, Kathleen Blake Yancey, and Darsie Bowden: Three Ways of Charting the History of Discussion on Written Voice(s)**

In the last decade, three texts emerged which attempted to provide a comprehensive overview of the discussion of voice. Two of these texts, Peter Elbow’s *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing* (1994) and Kathleen Blake Yancey’s *Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry* (1994), were compilations of essays, with the introductions (and, as explored later in this chapter, with the very selections of essays themselves) shaping and reframing the multidimensional history of discussion on voice in writing. Both of these texts are written by proponents of the term “voice,” and attempt to perpetuate the term’s use. The third text, Darsie Bowden’s *The Mythology of Voice*, was published three years later to both chronicle the multidimensional history of the term and to provide a poststructural critique of the idea of written voice. The very different ways Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden each chronicle the history of voice show at least two things: that voice has a very complex history that is not easily simplified, and that voice lends itself to being a tool to discuss the individual and social elements that shape writing.

#### **Peter Elbow’s Introduction to *Landmark Essays***

The history of discussion on voice is, for Elbow, central to two major debates. He states that there is a larger, overarching debate of text vs. voice, where text is a visual approach to understanding writing and where voice is an aural approach to understanding writing. He also states that there is a historical debate of *ethos* as real virtue or as

presence of virtue that is continued in modern times in the debate if voice is indicative of a self or a role.

The overarching debate as described by Elbow questions if written discourse is pure text or if written discourse has an aural dimension of voice (a debate typified by his placing Derrida in contrast to Ong). In Elbow's opinion, written discourse should always be seen as having both textual and vocal elements. He criticizes those who would make speech more natural than writing, for he says that in a "literate culture, writing simply is [as natural] as speech" (xii). Because writing and speech both come naturally for someone of a literate culture, Elbow understands Jacques Derrida as simply fighting the claim by Walter Ong and Saussure that the literal voice "is metaphysically real while writing is not" by saying writing is metaphysically real as well (xii). Elbow speaks of voice and text as two ways of looking at written discourse, and calls them two lenses through which discourse is viewed. He says:

There is no problem with either the voice lens or the text lens. There is only a problem when people try to outlaw one and insist that [...] [there is] an either/or debate between right and wrong. The fact is we need both lenses. Each one shows what the other hides. (xii)

Therefore, Elbow feels that voice should always be seen to have both visual and auditory cues. Because the auditory elements of writing are more often ignored, however, Elbow chooses to place an extra emphasis on voice as an auditory element.

The second debate Elbow treats is the historical debate of rhetorical *ethos* as appearance of virtue or as real virtue (a debate typified by his placing Aristotle and Cicero in contrast to Plato and Quintillian). Elbow sees this classic debate as directly

reflected in the modern debate of voice as function of role or as function of self (debates typified by placing the New Critics, Marxists, Poststructuralists and Deconstructionists vs. Elbow, et al.). He also uses quotes from Keats and Tolstoy to support the idea that he calls the “naïve stance” (xv) where voice is a function of self, where Keats and Tolstoy urge writers to try to fully express themselves in writing. He also references the article by Freisinger as a complicated look at what he feels is usually seen as the naïve position. Between those who strictly believed in voice as a function of role and those who believed in voice a function of self, he cites a sophisticated, ironic view of self and sincerity which focuses on craft. Under those who take the ironic view of voice he places, among others, Walker Gibson and William Coles.

Elbow is not convinced that there needs to be an either/or answer to the debates voice engenders, and further believes that voice can be usable as a pedagogical term outside the debates. He says, “this is a metaphor worth using, but we can’t use it well unless we untangle five related meanings that have got caught up in it: audible voice, dramatic voice, recognizable or distinct voice, voice with authority, and resonant voice or presence” (xxiv). As described near the end of Chapter One of this thesis, these five related meanings tie in different key ideas from the history of voice: the audible voice is reminiscent of how orality shapes textuality (a la Zoellner, though Elbow does not mention him); the dramatic voice is reminiscent of Gibson’s idea that we craft ourselves for an audience and of the idea that texts can have multiple voices in interaction or dissonance with each other; the authoritative voice is reminiscent of the critical pedagogy idea of voice as power; the distinctive and resonant voices are reminiscent of Stoehr’s definition of voice in writing as indicative of self (distinctive voice focusing more the



habitual elements of a person's writing and resonant voice focusing more on how to connect self with an audience). Eventually, according to Elbow, in a classroom, the five related meanings will be able to melt together into one sense of voice because the meanings go together—thus Elbow perpetuates the idea of a complex definition of voice.

### **Yancey's Introduction to *Voices on Voice***

Rather than seeing voice as stemming from overarching debates or having five related meanings, Yancey views voice as a term which is discussed in a variety of ways. For example, like Elbow, she mentions the discussion of voice in the oral rhetorical context, but she means this less as a connection to how text sounds (vs. how it looks) and more as a metaphor that connects a unique voice with a unique individual. The written voice is reminiscent of the spoken voice, which “is said to be so individualized that each human has his or her own voiceprint, the speaking analogue to fingerprints” (x). Voice is a reminder of the unique attributes of each writer. The idea of voice is also, according to Yancey, a reminder of “a speaker articulating a message for another” (x). Since a speaker normally only uses voice so that another may hear him/her, the idea of voice is a reminder of communication for Yancey. Voice, by being a reminder of the literal voice and speech, is a reminder of individuality and the individual force in written communication.

In providing an overview of her discussion of voice, Yancey says that though she “found a concept signifying different things to different people, [...] [she] began to discern patterns among the discussions on voice” (viii). Her pattern, winds through the expressionistic idea that voice is inherent to self, through the expression of voices of self on a page, through the interaction of voice(s) and larger societies. Though Yancey had

noted how differently many theorists treated and discussed voice, the points of agreement in Yancey's "landscape of voice" (vii) end up being largely centered in ideas of voice as the reflection of self in writing and voice as a political force.

Yancey skips ahead from the oral rhetorical idea of voice to how voice has been discussed in composition studies, keeping her focus on the discussion of voice as inherent to self. According to Yancey, expressionists have used the idea of voice to humanize and personify writing. In the category of expressionists, she places Donald Graves, Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, Donald Stewart, and Ken Macrorie. She shows how Graves and Elbow feel that writers must "inhabit" or "imprint" themselves in their writing (ix): writers must find themselves in their writing so that their true self can be better and more consistently expressed in their writing until their true self is always inherent in their work. When the inherent voice emerges, Yancey shows how Elbow says that writing gains power. She points out that others, like Murray, Stewart, and Macrorie, feel the development of personal voice leads to authenticity. This idea of personal voice development, according to Yancey, tends to have several problems because many advocates of personal voice often expect students to learn rhetorically (without an audience, background, or discourse). Yancey criticizes the attempt to teach voice without regard to audience or task and without a sense of dialogue. Further, she notes voicists often expect students to learn naturally, "somewhat as do toddlers in an oral context, but without any component to supply 'motherese' (a language format taught by a social institution as an original language is taught to a child by the mother)" (x). Without rhetorical contexts, personal voice is left "frozen" and "denied the response that helps infuse and shape meaning" (x). Yancey feels that writing should always be seen in

context of the interaction between writer and audience, and to isolate a writer stagnates the process of writing because it denies the inherent level of communication and interaction at work. On the other hand, Yancey also asserts that “expressionists have made explicit an interconnection between voice and authority” (xi)—showing how writing is placed at the crux of individual and social forces of power play—an interconnection that she feels is perpetuated through most discussions of voice.

In order to show how voice can be and is used to discuss writing in context of communication and social forces, Yancey continues her description of expressionism’s use of voice by discussing “voice vs. voices,” the idea that Joseph Harris and others use to state that each self has multiple voices rather than one static voice. From there, Yancey also observes how articles by Carl Klaus and Laura Julier in reading E. B. White and Joan Didion (respectively) show how sometimes “multiple voices are not necessarily intentioned” (xii), but are created unintentionally. She explores the idea of Elbow’s resonant voice as part of the cause for unintentional voices, where, in her opinion, “voice is created as much by the reader as by the writer in the text” (xii). Voice is created for a reader by an interaction between the writer’s perceptions and expression and reader’s perceptions and interpretations. She says:

No longer is [voice] controlled exclusively by the writer, nor is it here by means of seeking truth. It is rather a means of speaking to another, of trying to create a resonance between reader and an audible voice carried in the text. (xii)

When expressionists sought voice within writing, according to Yancey, they used to look how to give the writer control (rhetorically) and to seek internal truth. When

unintentional voices are uncovered, for Yancey, an interaction is revealed between reader and writer (as “an audible voice” (xii)—or a perceived individual as Yancey uses the term—in the text).

The appropriation of voice, inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin, seems to be the most compelling idea of voice for Yancey. She describes how Bakhtin encourages the idea of language as never neutral but always holding many meanings for many different people. Each person “must appropriate the word, making it his or her own” (xii). By making a word his or her own, a writer shapes “a voice out of the voices of others, out of the heteroglossia that is language” (xiii). Voice becomes something that is not created in vacuum, but something that is constantly being shaped and reshaped by an individual and a society (each in tension with each other). She connects the idea of appropriation with the struggle of feminists with a patriarchal language by briefly analyzing Adrienne Rich’s “When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision”:

Appropriation for Rich is intimately connected to authority and to voice: the woman writer who is not careful will be appropriated, and thus silenced. She will have no voice, and thus no existence as woman. Alternatively, she can seek to appropriate the voice of others to create a new voice, in the process establishing her authority. (xiv)

Yancey argues that Rich exemplified the idea that while a patriarchal language oppresses the feminist expression, a patriarchal language can be appropriated and made anew to suit feminist purposes.

With the question of whether a discourse community oppresses or empowers an individual writer raised, Yancey reconsiders David Bartholomae’s claims that a “student

must learn to speak our language” (135). Students, according to Bartholomae, learn to appropriate the language of the discourse community they wish to enter, whether it be academia or otherwise. “Voice and authority”, are gained through “conscious appropriations called, ‘approximations,’ through which a writer composes him- or herself” (xv). The writer approximates the language observed in the discourse community and learns to make that language his or her own. By doing so, the writer gains greater control over his or her voice and authority. Yancey juxtaposes Bartholomae’s idea of approximating a discourse community with Elbow’s assertions that writers should “refuse to be appropriated by others’ notions of discourse, [and] exercise [...] authority to resituate a discourse” (xv). Writers should maintain their authenticity, resist conformity, and dare to change their community. According to Yancey, Elbow asserts that it is enough to learn a discipline, without having to learn a new way to use language or how adopt a foreign voice that would sound fake anyway. Yancey notes that in the pages of *College Composition and Communication* personal voices and collaborative texts that imitate personal voice “suggest that we are appropriating ‘discourse academic’ [as Bartholomae suggested] and making it our own [as Elbow suggested]” (xvii). These texts show the interaction between traditional social discourses and individual influences on those discourses, where traditional academic discourse was once formal and impersonal and now has become less formal and personal through the efforts of Elbow and others.

The idea that individual voices appropriate social voices is perpetuated by non-Western views of voice. Non-Western views of voice, as described by Yancey, are more culturally grounded than individually, where “the authority of voice derives more from

other” (xvii). The power of voice is in the collective, for non-western views of voice, in an idea larger than self. Typically, writing is less interpretive in Asian writing, for example, and more is left to the interpretation of the reader(s). According to Native Americans, “no writing can [...] be only expression of the self; it inherently expresses others and nature, of whom the writer is a part” (xvii). Again, there is the emphasis on the collective society, with the added emphasis of nature.

In concluding her mapping of the “landscape of voice” (vii), Yancey highlights the elusive nature of the term voice, yet claims the fact that so many are compelled to write about voice show voice “does exist—somehow literally, also metaphorically” (xvii). She insists voice does exist on the page, and does serve as a metaphoric reminder of the individual element in writing. Ultimately, like Elbow, Yancey is interested in the points of voice in which she sees different schools of thought agree. But rather than discerning five related meanings of voice, she chooses to show how voice is not an isolatable element of writing, but is “a means of expression, creation, and communication that lives according the intersection of several variables”: a writer, a reader, and the language itself (xix). Yancey’s definition, rather than revealing the individual process of writing (or reading) a text, shows how voice ties together and reveals the interaction between the writer, reader, and language used. Also, Yancey feels voice “suggests an ability to define oneself” and is simultaneously something “inherently choral” (xix). Voice reveals the tension and interaction between an individual and the discourse communities an individual participates in (and has been shaped by).

**Bowden's *The Mythology of Voice***

Bowden treats the history of voice by going back to Aristotle and Plato as Elbow did, and by largely focusing on the treatment of voice as an expression of individuality as Yancey did—an idea she spends much of her book criticizing. First, though, Bowden traces the use of voice in literature studies, which she says has had a large effect on how voice is used in composition studies. She then moves into how voice descends from *ethos* of traditional oral rhetoric, a discussion of orality vs. textuality, and finally into a description of how the idea of voice emerged in American writing pedagogy. This discussion of American writing pedagogy leads to an analysis of the idea of multiple voices in writing, the feminist perspective of voice, the idea of literal re-voicing of text, and the idea of written voice in computer hypertext of the World Wide Web.

In describing the literary studies heritage of the term “voice,” Bowden summarizes the ideas of Wayne Booth and Gerald Genette, who treat voice as an element of a written story that reflects some identity or second self of the writer. While they both mention the role a reader plays in creating the voice of the story, she criticizes them for not entirely focusing, as Seymore Chapman does, on the role a reader plays in the creation of voice. Bowden calls for a dialogic stylistics that focuses analysis on the constantly varying dimensions of an ever shifting language as described by Bakhtin and Kenneth Burke (who emphasized the performative element of writing). Bowden liked Burke’s idea that every audience (reader) will interpret a voice differently, based on its (his/her) understanding and interpretation of the words in a text. For Bowden, voice is something readers have read into text—“we anthropomorphize a textual phenomenon that

may or may not be centered in an individual person” (7). By reading into text a persona, she says, the text itself is clouded by an affective response. She concludes:

If there is voice in a passage—and I would argue there is not—it is so amorphous and formless that it defies definition. Even the descriptions I offered earlier (“opinionated,” “authoritative”) are vague, value-laden terms, and “irony” works through language play. Without a more explicit definition, voice is a useless analytical tool. (15)

While voice, or some authorial presence, may be sensed in a passage, she insists that it is an illusion—something that cannot be pinned down with explicit and detailed language. Rather than having students try to achieve voice, she feels students should be encouraged to be more dialogic in their writing. Otherwise, “the search for control—the search for a voice—often results in an overly confining and constraining approach to writing” (19) where, by looking too much for an internal source of inspiration, students lose sight of their purpose, audience, and the crafting of their ever shifting language.

Like Elbow, Bowden spends a good deal of time dealing with how the idea of voice descended from the idea of rhetorical *ethos*, but she focuses mostly on showing how Aristotelian *ethos* (voice as crafted for an audience) was imbued with ideas of orality and presence. Throughout the oral rhetorical history, *ethos* (the ancestor of voice) is imbedded with “literal and figurative voice” (23). Bowden explains:

The sense of *ethos* that is conveyed to an audience in a speech cannot be entirely separated from the actual speaking voice, nor can one undervalue the impact of the actual and literal presence of the author at the site of the utterance. A “forceful” orator, for example, especially in the sense we get



from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, not only has a suitable speaking voice, but the wherewithal to manage that voice and what he says to convey a commanding, and, hence, persuasive presence. (23)

Through the idea of *ethos*, then, the possible connection between orality and presence in the idea of voice becomes evident. She does an admittedly sketchy and brief overview of rhetorical history, focusing on Plato, Isocrates, and Quintillian, showing how certain views of writing developed: from seeing writing as far inferior to speech (Plato), to seeing writing as equally important to speech (Isocrates), to seeing writing as interactive with speech—with speech and writing informing each other's crafts (Quintillian).

Though Isocrates and Quintillian might have felt writing was imbued with a presence, Bowden finds their teaching techniques emphasized imitation rather than self-exploration, thereby emphasizing cultural formation over personal expression. Bowden explains that after the oral rhetorical period, though, writing generally tends to be still be seen as less important and trustable than speech (as was argued by Plato).

The preference of orality over textuality was due to a perception that speech was closer to human thought than writing. Bowden points out that throughout the Middle Ages, writing was viewed as more distant from thought than speech and therefore was less trusted; for example, contracts were more often verbal than written until the convention of *ars dictaminis*, which introduced a strict format for written contracts. Bowden states that “any consideration of the speaking ‘voice’ and its translation into written ‘voice’ is influenced by our perception of interiority and exteriority” (31). If we view writing as less interior to thought than literal voice, as the people of the Middle Ages did, it is then logical to use orality to inform textuality. On the other hand, Bowden

notes how some theorists even in the last century, like Ong, continued the prejudice that orality is closer to thought than textuality, even if to show how textuality is superior. She summarizes Ong's discussion of writing, which states that writing is superior because it is more distant from thought. But this idea of orality as closer to thought than textuality proves unsatisfactory for Bowden. As if in response to Ong, she summarizes Derrida's critique of the idea that writing is any more distant from thought than speech. Voice, in light of Derrida, then becomes problematic again because it is a reminder of speech and distracts from the study of writing as a primary symbolic system (rather than as secondary signifiers of oral signs).

Bowden pursues the distinctly American history of voice in writing, tracing the history of the teaching of writing and oral rhetoric from its British roots through the American celebration of "natural" language headed up by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman. Whitman and Emerson's celebration of working class language, and their hopes to move away from the complex, aristocratic language of Europe, according to Bowden, prefigured the later popularity of voice (which takes on an equally American flavor). While the celebration of "natural" language was a precursor to voice, the emergence of voice in the 1960s, according to Bowden, was in direct result to a fundamental change in pedagogy and politics. The previous decades had been dominated by a Cold War emphasis on the functionality of language (language that needed to be touted as chiefly functional in order to receive government funding and support); but in the 1960s, a British model introduced at the 1966 Dartmouth Conference emphasized student over subject matter and changed the way Americans taught writing. The idea of writing as a subjective and personal entity, rather than an objective and strictly

measurable entity, took over. Bowden describes voice in writing as generally defined as inherent to self, though quickly admits that different theorists tended to discuss voice in different ways:

The popularity of voice in the 1960s and 1970s likely contributed to its lack of consistency in definition or usage. One of the hallmarks of enduring metaphors is their flexibility; they can be adapted to suit a range of often conflicting purposes. (55)

Bowden admits different definitions of voice that emerged were conflicting because each definition was created to suit a different purpose. She quickly shows how Walker Gibson used the idea of voice to explain crafted persona or role-playing in writing, how Ken Macrorie used the idea of voice to promote truth-telling in writing, how Donald Stewart used the idea of voice to encapsulate a “narralogical [...] way of telling a story that [...] distinguishes one writer from all others” (56), and how Peter Elbow used the idea of voice to help a student distinguish their “natural” way of talking or writing. Overall, though, Bowden finds in the use of the idea of voice a preference for a literary personal narrative (that seems unique) over an overtly, sociologically-shaped piece of writing. She insists that if “one subscribes to a social view of language [...] then the voice metaphor [...] ceases to function effectively” (61). This is because the voice metaphor, according to Bowden, inherently privileges an individualistic, aurally-based, dramatic form of writing that, by assuming voice can be separated out of writing and analyzed, assumes language is a stable entity (49). Bowden’s belief in Bakhtin’s principles of shifting language make the idea of stable language outdated.

Bowden, furthermore, states that even the idea of voices inherent to self (which accesses the theories of Bakhtin and Vygotsky) is problematic, even when these voices are seen as developing entities. She feels the ideas of Vygotsky, which show how writing is shaped by social forces, support her claim that voice distracts from the social elements of written language. Bakhtin's theories, she feels, further support the social critique of language by emphasizing the dialogic and ever shifting nature of language. Moreover, Bowden finds the dialogic and social aspect of Bakhtin's theory so evident that she thinks Bakhtin's idea of voice problematic in its attempt to centralize the ever changing language through a single, consistent voice managed through a controlling persona. She uses ideas of Foucault's ideas to destabilize the idea of a controlling persona, concluding that ideas of power and agency in writing are outmoded. She also concludes that plagiarism is largely an outmoded convention based on the idea that writing is more an individually than socially created entity—an idea she finds perplexing. She says that if writing is “regarded as the outpouring of one's authentic self, [then plagiarism] is the equivalent of doing violence to another's self, a violation of considerable proportions” (80). The idea of written voice as inherent to self makes plagiarism a violent act. On the other hand:

If, however, we believe the boundaries between the individual and social world are always blurred, especially in language acts, then using the language of another person is a fact of life; it's the way language works.

(80)

Language as a social interaction makes the idea of plagiarism not only less wrong, but actually makes the practice seem natural and useful in the continuation of a cultural idea.

For Bowden, the idea of voice is connected to capitalistic ideas that perpetuate the idea of individual ownership of text over a collective language ownership.

Bowden feels the idea of voice, as something individualistic, becomes oppressive to more communitarian subcultures, like the Feminist culture. As voice is connected to capitalistic ideas, voice is also “a metaphor that has systematically privileged what is Western, what is white, and what is male” (100). She finds the individualistic claims underlying the idea of voice inherently non-feminine. Here, in her critique of the use of the individualistic term “voice” to empower a socially-oriented subculture, Bowden seems to echo Ellsworth’s critique of critical pedagogy—a pedagogy that states the idea of voice would empower students, but by perpetuating the dominant language and system of logic that has oppressed them, continues to disempower underprivileged minorities. Accordingly, Bowden searches for other metaphors which would discuss feminist identity—metaphors that relate to fluid, the body, the embrace, and the dance—all metaphors that emphasize a more communal and interactive approach to identity.

Bowden finally deals with the auditory elements of voice and the appearance (or lack thereof) of voice in computer hypertext in two of her last three chapters. Because she advocates a social perspective of language, she persists in framing the discussions of voice to show how the lines between self and other in the writing itself, and how the lines between writer and reader, blur in the act of reading. In her discussion of the auditory elements of voice, Bowden chooses to focus on how the reader shapes and adds nuance to text by having writers switch roles to become readers and read text aloud (thereby accessing their sensory knowledge of language—reminiscent of Zoellner’s Talk/Write pedagogy). But she divides out the idea of self as inherent to an auditory voice—leaving

voice entirely a reader-created phenomenon that informs the writing process. In her analysis of hypertext in the last chapter, she attempts to show how impossible it is to identify a persona, let alone an inherent identity, in computerized interactive text (which is constantly borrowing and shifting and reacting to other text). It could be said, then, that Bowden feels writing should be audience-oriented, without regard to self expression or voice, because the audience/culture/society has the ultimate control of how writing is interpreted and because the reality of self as an entity is dubious at best.

In short, Bowden sees voice as developing as part of the movement to get away from current-traditional strictures, as descending from oral rhetorical and from literature studies concepts, and as being suspect when put under a poststructural critique.

### **How Elbow, Yancey, Bowden Compare in Their Discussions of Voice(s)**

All three compositionists reveal their ties to and understanding of literature studies in their multiple analyses of voice and voices. As Bowden points out, literature studies have had a deep effect on composition studies' understandings of voice, and she, as well as Elbow and Yancey, use literary analysis and examples to punctuate their presentation of the topic. Elbow, for example, uses excerpts from literature, like the pieces of writing from D. H. Lawrence in his authoritative voice segment, to exemplify each of his five meanings of voice. Yancey uses poetry and poetic analysis to show how voice can be composed of many voices. Bowden spends an entire chapter of her book highlighting how the idea of textual voice developed in literature studies. Furthermore, in a later chapter, she reminds the reader of the literary connection to composition's use of voice when she criticizes Bakhtin's privileging of poetry over other forms in showing an authentic voice (in her analysis attempting to prove that even in poetry, text is so

socially formed as to make the idea of voice moot). The use of literature studies in the discussion of written voice for composition studies by Elbow, Yancey and Bowden is reminiscent of Walker Gibson's and William Coles' use of Literature Studies to illustrate the idea of a voice crafted for a text. Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden, however, by their use of literature to illustrate so many of their points, seem to show a connection between literature and composition studies more far reaching than in voice as in just Gibson's crafted voice; rather, they show a connection evident in the all the various ways of defining voice.

The three compositionists, in fact, barely focus on the concept proposed by Gibson of voice as crafted persona (as compared to their treatments of other ways of looking at voice). When Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden discuss the idea of voice as craft (as was proposed by Gibson; see previous chapter), they all see a need to place Gibson's crafted voice in context of the idea of voice as inherent to self (as was proposed by Stoehr).

Elbow does the most thorough treatment of Gibson's crafted voice by categorizing it as part of a sophisticated, ironic, critical view on voice:

In this view, either there is *no* "real self"—"self" consisting of nothing but the succession of voices or selves that we create in language; or perhaps there is a real self but it's completely invisible and unavailable to readers, so the only thing worth talking about is the created self on paper. (xvii)

The view that focuses entirely on the created self on a paper prefers to avoid or deny the connection between the self on paper and the actual self of the author. Elbow juxtaposes

this “sophisticated” view on voice (xvii) with the “naïve” view on voice that emphasizes the connection of authorial self with the self projected on a written paper.

Yancey’s description of the history of written voice skips what Elbow called the sophisticated view of voice, however, and focuses entirely what he termed as the naïve view of voice as inherent to self. When Yancey does discuss the idea of voice as a crafted entity, she only uses it in context of teaching and she means it as a dimension of self crafted onto the written page. She says, “The class is to be a safe place to craft voice, to share it and to experiment with it [...] and to understand that experimenting with it will not only reveal a self, but also perhaps construct it, perhaps change it” (309). She uses the ideas of Bakhtin to show how there are many voices of self that can be crafted on a page, and how through the act of crafting alternate voices to interact with new audiences on the page, their interior voice(s) can be perhaps be reconstructed—ideas developed in the next several years by Frank Farmer and others (see Chapter One, “voice as inherent to self”).

Bowden, like Yancey, skims over what Elbow terms the sophisticated stance, only mentioning Gibson’s use of voice as a manipulative rhetorical device in a brief overview of some of the various definitions of voice that arise in the 1960s (55). She keeps the focus of her history of written voice on the idea of voice as inherent to self. Later, it becomes apparent that because Bowden finds any idea of a coherent self troublesome (in light of all the social forces shaping and interacting with that self), even the idea of a crafted self devoid of authentic self is irksome for her. Generally, Gibson’s idea of crafted voice, perhaps because it is not very controversial, simply does not receive a significant amount of attention from Elbow, Yancey, or Bowden.



Instead, the chief differences among Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden are revealed mainly through their uses of the idea of voice as inherent to self, rather than through their use of the idea of crafted voice. Elbow's, Yancey's, and Bowden's attempts to frame the modern discussion of voice are very different, precisely because of how each compositionist tends to perceive the connection (or lack of connection) between written voice and self.

Elbow, while acknowledging the debates that surround written voice, attempts to show how voice can be a useful concept when bypassing the idea of self. However, Elbow admits that he tends to lean toward the idea that voice is intrinsically tied to an individual self (xix). His descriptions of a writer's interacting with a reader, therefore, tend to keep very distinct boundaries.

Yancey, on the other hand, feels that a discussion of self is central to any idea of voice in writing. Furthermore, she differs from Elbow in that she likes the idea of a dialogic self composed of multiple selves that are constantly developing. Therefore, her description of the history of voice in writing is centered in the discussion of how self is reflected by written voice(s) that are in constant interaction with societal voices.

Bowden, like Yancey, feels that a discussion of self is central to any discussion of voice in writing. Bowden likewise centers her description of the history of voice in writing around the connections between self and writing. However, because she fundamentally disagrees with the idea of self (to the point where she questions the concept of plagiarism), she finds the idea of written voice suspect.

Bowden, Yancey, and Elbow reveal how personal philosophy shapes an understanding of not only written voice, but of the history of written voice. Voice, by

bringing up the individual's role in writing, challenges the theorists to define their philosophy of how communication works.

For all three compositionists, the ideas of the theorist Bakhtin prove crucial to the understanding of written voice; however, Bakhtin is treated by Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden for three different purposes reflecting unique philosophies of communication.

Elbow uses Bakhtin to defend the idea that voice is audible. He shows how Bakhtin "describes all discourse in terms of 'voices' and 'speakers' and 'listeners'" (Elbow xiv) because Bakhtin criticized the dehumanization of the writing process by linguistic analysis, preferring the skeleton of "verbal discourse" with which to frame analysis of written text (xiv). Elbow cites how Bakhtin preferred the voice lens of approaching reading and writing over the textual lens (though Elbow says he personally values the use of both lenses).

Yancey, on the other hand, uses Bakhtin to develop the ideas of voices and appropriation she finds so key to writing. She quotes Bakhtin, showing how a word enters a "'speaker's context from another context, permeated with the interpretations of others. His own thought finds the word already inhabited'" (Yancey xiii). Yancey gathers from Bakhtin how a writer must learn to "'populate [the word] with his own intention, his own accent'" (xiii). Words, as Yancey interprets Bakhtin, come to a consciousness as foreign entities owned by society, but then become owned and used by a speaker through use and through creating "a voice out of the voices of others" (xiii).

Bowden agrees with Bakhtin's idea of appropriation, but criticizes his idea of voice (which makes him so attractive to Elbow) because she feels it gives too much agency to the individual. She questions, "given the stronger centrifugal or disruptive

forces that proliferate meaning and sense, could there still be such a thing as a consistent voice?" (71) Bowden does not think that there could be such a thing. She uses Bakhtin's ideas of the ever-shifting nature of language to reveal the strength of social influences in writing and derail the idea of voice(s). The three interpretations of Bakhtin's theories on voice by Bowden, Yancey, and Elbow reveal again how each of them perceives communication in a different way.

Bakhtin's ideas further influence Elbow's ideas of the audible voice (as described in Chapter One) and Yancey's ideas of the political voice (as in critical pedagogy). As described earlier, Elbow quoted Bakhtin as typifying a theorist who preferred the voice lens of looking at written discourse, a lens that reminds a reader of the oral heritage of writing. Elbow considers both lenses—written discourse as voice, and written discourse as text—to be equally important in understanding written communication. Furthermore, Elbow thinks that all writing should be understood to have an audible voice—a heard dimension. For Yancey, voice as an audible dimension is not as important as it is for Elbow. She touches upon the idea, but only in context of "hearing" different selves/voices in text, rather than as having an actual reference to literal sound. This concept of audible voice, if not explicitly referencing Bakhtin's explanation of voices, speakers and listeners, seemed to reflect his ideas. In addition, Bakhtin's ideas of appropriation and heteroglossia do develop Yancey's understanding of political voice. Yancey asserts that voice has a political force when a self shows evidence of having appropriated a societal language and made that language its own. Yancey's ideas are showcased in her example of Adrienne Rich described earlier in the chapter; through the analysis of Rich's essay, Yancey contended that women must appropriate male discourse

and recreate it to make it their own. Elbow and Yancey both show how Bakhtin's ideas intertwine with definitions of voice other than simply the idea of voice as inherent to self. The ideas of Bakhtin do not necessarily directly influence the remaining ideas of the audible and political ways of defining voice for Elbow and Bowden, but the influence of their notions of self vs. other on their remaining ideas of voice can still be discerned.

For Elbow, voice has a political force when the written text has an authoritative voice (a written voice that presents itself with conviction) and resonant voice (another of his five meanings of voice that signifies a strong, positive reaction by the reader). Even though Elbow admits and constantly emphasizes reader reaction to a writer's prose (first describing his meanings of voice as ways for a reader to read voice in text, then how to use voice to respond to and change text), Elbow tries to divorce voice from a discussion of self. Therefore, in Elbow's description of voice, the line between writer and reader is not explained in context of the constant, almost circular, interaction between self and other as it was for Yancey. Elbow is influenced by his idea of self as a separate entity from other. This is reflected in how he is able to separate reader from writer, and even the five meanings of voice from an idea of self (connecting them instead to the attributes of the literal voice).

Bowden is influenced by her perception of the interaction between self and other in how she views the use of audible and political voices. She criticizes the importance of the idea of voice as an audible dimension connected to consciousness/self, because she is persuaded by Foucault's doubts about the existence of a single controlling persona or self. Furthermore, because she feels voice is imbued with capitalistic, individualistic ideals, she considers the idea of voice as a political force to be a myth perpetuated by

white, middleclass males (100). However, because reading aloud is more about accessing physical language knowledge than creating a sense of individual identity, Bowden approves of the idea of the literal re-voicing of a text. Elbow's and Bowden's views of the audible and political dimensions of voice reveal how perception of individuality and self can shape the value and even description of different definitions of voice.

Ultimately, Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden all have a different sense of voice as a complex entity, and of the usefulness of such a concept. Elbow supports the idea of a complex definition of voice, believing his five meanings melt into one sense of voice. Yancey finds the idea of developing voices key to a sense of a complex definition, but leaves the door open for further discussion. Bowden finds the idea of voice suspect because of its emphasis on ascertaining a persona in writing—something she does not believe to be possible. She only feels that the use of the literal voice to access sensory knowledge of language is useful. The three compositionists find the concept of voice (as a complex entity) beneficial or problematic based on their understanding of how the individual and social elements of authorship work. Elbow, having a more autonomous vision of self, finds the concept of voice reveals audible, distinctive, authoritative, dramatic, and resonant elements of writing. Yancey, having an interactive view of self and society, finds the concept of voice reveals the complex individual interacting with social forces in the written text. Bowden, having a more socially constructed understanding of identity, finds the concept of voice diminishes a social perspective of language in its emphasis on individuality.

Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden all scrutinize the ideas of how authorship and social power influence a reader's perception of someone's voice as a complex entity. Voice

becomes a device for the discussion of such ideas as authorship, authorial identity perceived in the text, the power of the author on the text, and the power of social influences on the author and on the text. Bowden does not believe in authorship; in fact, she breaks apart the idea of plagiarism by showing that all texts have multiple named and unnamed influences. However, she fails to admit that to de-author writing would reduce all text to societal exhortation and would also risk stripping a reader's understanding of the idiosyncratic individual elements that shape writing.

Bowden's emphasis on societal influences is not entirely incorrect. She makes an important point that there are many social influences that influence the final product—and therefore voice in writing. But there are some individuals who affect the final product more than others; John Trimbur suggests that sometimes these voices can be heard in a text (Trimbur 217). Elbow highlights in his dramatic element of voice how the voices in a text interact with each other. Yancey's stress on the interaction of voices within and outside of the text reveals a many layered variety of influences on a text. That many voices influence writing and can be perceived or heard in a piece of writing does not necessarily, according to Trimbur, Elbow, and Yancey, mean that the individual voice ceases to be relevant.

In looking at the influences on a text, however, it is easy to see how the idea of an individual voice can become marginalized and even impractical. While the order of influences may not be listed perfectly, the following list provides a rough sketch of those who have power over the voice of a text. Each of these voices is representative of a self that crafts text (with certain idiosyncratic intonational tendencies) in hopes of exerting power and affecting the reader(s).

There are those that either shape or help shape content of the text, and shape ultimate presentation of the text itself: author(s), editor(s), and publisher(s) (all who are influenced by their perceptions of the future readers of the text). There are those who influence the revisions of in the text: author, editors, and reader responders. There are those who influence the content of the text overtly: those that created the texts cited by the said text. Then, there are those who influence the text on a less obvious level: anyone the said author, editor, or publisher has ever interacted with (through speaking, reading, watching, writing, etc.). Concentric circles could be drawn outward toward infinity citing all the influences that had ever affected the individuals who influenced the text.

Thus, writing is obviously a socially formed entity as Bowden claims. However, authorship is not an outmoded or even an illogical concept, even after social forces are revealed. Authorship reminds a reader that there are individuals who take direct responsibility over the integrity of writing, and individuals who particularly add their own distinctive insights (and prejudices) to writing. Admittedly, as Trimbur said, authors' voices are not the only ones we hear. They are not the only voices that shape the reader's understanding of text. The idea of voice, besides being a reminder of the authorial force in writing, reminds readers to be on the lookout for other individual voices that have had power in shaping their reading, like the voices of editors.

## **Reflections on Elbow and Yancey as Editors: Editorial Voice?**

Whether purposefully or not, by discussing voice and then creating a compilation of essays that are written by different voices, the editors Yancey and Elbow reveal the idiosyncratic tensions between different authors, and how their own editorial voices are powerful forces in the shaping of a reader's understanding of a text. Their two anthologies on the same topic of voice reveal not only some significant insights on the topic of voice and provide a venue for different "voices on voice" (as Yancey puts it in the title of her compilation), but they also reveal the power of the editorial voice.

What is there to conclude from seeing an editorial voice (evident in a complex entity that reflects the original ways of discussing voice)? It can be concluded, as Zamierowski implied when he described the multifaceted and dynamic forces behind voice (see Chapter One, complex voice section), that voice is a valuable, complex idea that reminds a reader and writer both of the individual force(s) behind writing and of the dynamic social forces that interacted with that individual force to create the text and the interpretation of the text.

Perhaps there is more that an understanding of editorial voice might reveal, but there is neither the time nor space in this particular thesis to explore them. For now, establishing that editorial voice could exist, and that the idea of such an editorial voice reveals yet another layer of what voice implies, must be enough. This section starts with the similarities between Yancey's and Elbow's selections and then moves to show the differences in the selections and the different ways the selections are ordered. In looking at these similarities and differences, beyond speaking to the different purposes of the two editors, the two editorial voices are revealed and discussed.



Randall Freisinger's "Voicing the Self: Toward a Pedagogy of Resistance in a Postmodern Age," placed near or at the end of both books, reveals the importance both editors place on Freisinger's analysis. As discussed before, Elbow and Yancey both find the idea of individual human agency and power to be important in a discussion of voice. It seems as if they both ordered the texts of their compilations to reflect this importance. For Elbow, it is the final essay. For Yancey, it is the second to last essay. Placing Freisinger's article near or at the end of their texts gives this essay, which emphasizes the idea of human agency, an added importance over other essays in their compilations. In order to make this distinction, I must first lapse into an explanation of a rule of ordering songs for a recital: choose your last songs carefully—they provide the audience with the last impression of your performance. This seems to be a general rule of any performance art (including dance, film, rhetoric), where the last things said or shown leave the longest impression in the audience's mind. Both Elbow and Yancey seem to find Freisinger's essay important enough to allow it to make a last impression. In both books, the essay stands out for its depth of research in rhetorical, philosophical, and pedagogical disciplines.

Placing Freisinger's essay at the end of the books also points to how Elbow and Yancey hope the reader will come to understand voice as a vehicle of individual agency. As already mentioned in Chapter One, Freisinger concludes:

We must negotiate the extremes of the traditional views of self and voice and the tenets of social construction. We must preserve a theory of human agency so that our students as well as ourselves can, like Archimedes, seek

a place to stand, a place from which to resist against a world so badly in need of change. (Yancey 272-3, Elbow 210)

Freisinger states that through voice—or presence of self—in text, there is the opportunity for political action through individual human agency, despite however much the individual has been formed by social contexts. At the end of both Elbow's and Yancey's texts, Freisinger's essay seems to work in chorus with Elbow's and Yancey's ideas of the power of voice as put forth in their introductions to the compilations.

Another article both books had in common, though under different titles, is a self-reflection on the term "voice" in writing by Toby Fulwiler. That Elbow chose the original, while Yancey chose the revised version, also points to the larger purposes of the editors. Elbow was establishing and reinforcing a historical, philosophical, and theoretical perspective, while Yancey was providing a series of reflections on the topic of "voice" in writing that lead to larger contemporary implications. While Elbow included the original version of Fulwiler's article (from the 1990 *CCC*), Yancey included a revised version. It can be surmised that the original version of Fulwiler's essay did not suit Yancey's compilation as well as it did Elbow's.

Elbow includes the original version, titled "Looking and Listening for My Voice," which looks inwardly to explore three voices Fulwiler has written in: his private voice, his public voice, and his eighteen-year-old self. In Elbow's edition, Fulwiler makes the important observations that "if there is such a thing as authentic voice, it is protean and shifty," and that "authenticity can best be found by looking at whole pieces of discourse, preferably more than one" (Fulwiler 162). By making comparisons between the private and public voices, he concludes that "published voices are more distinctive" and more

carefully constructed than private ones (163). In fact, private voice tends to have less voice than transactional language because it can be written in a sort of personal code, and does not worry about being “heard.” The edition in Elbow’s text is more philosophical than the Yancey version, creating theoretical ideas that contribute to the philosophical discussion in Elbow about what voice is.

The revised version of the article in Yancey’s edition, titled “Claiming My Voice,” is actually shorter, with fewer, more detailed observations. The closing remarks are more personally situated observations and less generalizations: “my private voice is less distinctive than public voice;” “my public, published voice is carefully constructed;” “the style of my public voice is largely determined by a discourse community from long ago” (first year college); and “the topics of my writing are posed by the discourse community I currently inhabit” (Fulwiler 44-5). The Yancey version of the essay concentrates more on Fulwiler’s personal exploration of voice, rather than on philosophy about the nature of voice based on his experience, leaving the reader to make his/her own conclusions about the importance of “voice” in writing.

The essays that Elbow chooses, like Freisinger’s essay and Fulwiler’s original essay, reveal theorists struggling with the concepts of aurality, textuality, individuality, plurality, authenticity, pedagogy, and craft and not necessarily always discussing voice, per se. Elbow’s essays are chosen as the key historical or landmark essays on voice in writing, with his introduction being the only new publication. Though a good portion of the essays never mention voice, they do reveal issues Elbow sees as important in the understanding of the term. Mikhail Bakhtin discusses the relationship between the spoken and written word, focusing on the limitations of the written word. Walter Ong

theorizes the primacy of aurality over literacy. Jacques Derrida, as represented by Barbara Johnson, puts forth the ideas of deconstruction to defend literacy over aurality. Roger D. Cherry provides a chronology of *ethos* (from Aristotle and Plato) to the modern idea of persona, and discusses the differences between the two and what has been lost between them. Clara Claiborne Park charts the death of the author in New Criticism and the birth of the textual term “speaker”—nearly devoid of individual agency outside of its culture. And Don Ihde criticizes the nature of philosophical and theoretical grounding in literacy, and calls for a philosophy of sound. Each essay develops the need for a word that calls attention to aurality and individual agency. The essays that do directly discuss voice develop the theory of voice (as a general and all-encompassing term—the way Elbow prefers to use the term) to include personal, classroom, and cultural repercussions.

Elbow arranges the essays in his book to emphasize the holes in theory that create the need for a term like “voice” in writing. This purposeful nature to the ordering of his texts is shown in how he ends his first section. Rather than being one of the more pragmatic essays on written voice, the last essay of the first section of essays is Don Ihde’s call for a philosophy of sound to balance the philosophy of literacy that already exists—with aurality key to how Elbow feels voice is important in understanding writing. Ihde’s essay, furthermore, reveals Elbow’s editorial craftsmanship in the ordering of *Landmark Essays*, for the essay is placed out of the chronological order Elbow promised the reader: “In this volume I have arranged the essays in the order of their publication” (xx). However, Ihde’s essay is dated 1976, twenty-four years before the essay that precedes it in the anthology (and before the previous eight essays before that, as well). The only reason to put the essay out of the promised order is to emphasize that Ihde’s

conclusions of the need to emphasize auralty echo Elbow's conclusions of how voice in writing is important because it emphasizes auralty.

Producing a very different text than Elbow's, all of Yancey's selections discuss voice directly with essays either written or revised for her compilation. Unlike Elbow's compilation, none of the essays in her anthology were previously published as they appeared in her book, except the segment of Elbow's introduction to his *Landmark Essays* that describes and explains his five related meanings of voice. Otherwise, the essays were written precisely to be published in her book.

Yancey's editorial voice is overt in her descriptions of the segments of the book, through her description of her selected essays and through her categorizations of her essays (she shows the reader two of several ways to read through the essays in her text). In describing the two ways of reading her book, Yancey tells readers that the essays she provides explore the issues of voice and the self, voice and the specific discourse community, voice and pedagogy, and voice and culture, with chapters that move "according to an inside-outside, ever widening spiral kind of logic" (xx). She describes the progression of the book from her summary background and history to theoretical reconsideration by Elbow, to personal reflections with analysis by Fulwiler, Gail Summerskill Cummins and Doug Minnerly. The compilation then moves to issues of voice in discourse communities (technical writing and print media) through the work of Meg Morgan and of Nancy Allen and Deborah S. Bosley. Yancey then moves to essays by Carl H. Klaus and Laura Julier discussing the connections between voice and personal essay to essays discussing pedagogical implications of voice by Margaret Woodworth and Paula Gillespie. She continues with an essay on how deaf students perceive voice in

writing by John A. Albertini, Bonnie Meath-Lang and David P. Harris. She ends with essays by Tom Carr, Gwendolyn Gong with and John H. Powers, Susan Brown Carlton, Freisinger, and Zamierowski resituating voice in non-Western and Western worlds (xx-xxi). Yancey's overt mapping of the selections in her book show how each essay can build upon the previous essay's ideas (though she admits that this reading, or her reading perhaps, is not the only reading of the essays). At the same time, Yancey's ideas of appropriation, of the multiple voices of self, of the interaction between self and others permeate each of her selections, leading to the overall choral sense of voice Yancey mentions in her conclusion (298).

Reading Elbow's description of the five related meanings of voice in his introduction to *Landmark Essays* is almost an entirely different experience than reading it in his book, for it lacks his overview of the two overarching debates around the topic and is placed instead after Yancey's introduction. The result is that Yancey's emphasis of multiple voices and of the interaction between writer and reader and discourse society shifts the focus of Elbow's selection for the reader. His belief that voice is composed of five related voices (emphasis on the plural) and his belief that voice can be intrinsic to self, because they speak in chorus with Yancey-the-editor, become more important than his attempt to insist that voice can be separated from the idea of self.

Furthermore, Elbow's insistence that the many meanings of voice come together in the idea of the literal voice is lost. Instead, Elbow's explanations of the connections between the literal voice and written voice remind the reader of Yancey's claim that the voice is a metaphor acting as a reminder of the unique attributes of the literal voice. Yancey does not ever focus on the philosophical importance of writing as text vs. writing

as voice, as did Elbow, so without the first part of Elbow's introduction, the reader does not have that sense of emphasis on the aural element of text evident in the original version of his essay. Yancey, by placing Elbow directly after her introduction to voice, whether intentionally or not, affects the reading of Elbow's essay, making it more about voices and self than about aurality and voice.

Of course, someone may just read Elbow's essay without Yancey's introduction, and the effect of de-emphasizing Elbow's attention to aurality would be reduced. But if we are to follow Yancey's idea that all writing is interaction with other social forces, the context of her compilation cannot help but lead to a different reading of Elbow's essay in the context of his own compilation. Even reading the table of contents in Yancey's text organizes the idea of voice as Yancey interprets it in a reader's mind. The titles in Yancey's table of contents emphasize and make evident the ideas of personal voice ("Technical Texts/Personal Voice: Intersections and Crossed Purposes;" "The Chameleon 'I': On Voice and Personality"), attaining voice ("Claiming My Voice"), developing voice ("Coming to Voice"), and multiple voices ("Voices in the News"). Because this list of titles focuses on the ideas of personal voice, attaining voice, developing voice, and multiple voices, it thereby shifts the reading and interpretation of essays, such as Elbow's essay.

However, both Yancey and Elbow as editors seem to be trying to allow voices to speak for themselves in either a lack of conclusion altogether (Elbow) or a "'concluding' chapter whose purpose is to preclude closure" (Yancey 298). The editors in this way reinforce their belief in the power of individual voices, though they do not admit entirely the power they have had over those voices by the way they have arranged the texts.

Elbow avoids a conclusion altogether, forcing a reader to make his/her own conclusions about the various ideas in the essays. Yancey indulges in an exercise “in unconcluding the text” (Yancey 298). So, though Yancey has a chapter titled “Concluding the Text: Notes toward a Theory and Practice of Voice,” she has no intent to “answer questions or put issues to rest, [...] re-voice or voiceover the earlier arguments” (Yancey 298). In fact, Yancey experiments with e-mail to create a duet between herself and Michael Spooner. In this duet, the issues of voice are discussed and left open-ended.

Despite their attempts to let the voices of the essays in their compilations speak for themselves, both Elbow and Yancey cannot help but affect how the essays are read (in much the same way as a teacher who tries to get out of the way of a student generally cannot help but affect a student’s voice). The editor, as the organizing force of the compilation of essays, has power over the organization and selection of essays—a power that inevitably affects the voices within the text. A compilation, becomes as Yancey pointed out, something like a chorus directed by the editor. There is the impression that “the texts spoke in chorus, although not without dissonance, through the contributors’ voices—all of them. It was our text, our sense of voice, our collective textual presence” (Yancey 298). A compilation becomes a collective choir, and to extend her choral metaphor, the editor is a choral director. In anyone else’s hands, even the same choir singing the same song would not sound the same, because each director brings a different self with a slightly different expertise, approach, and philosophy than another director.

Though they provide a comprehensive examination of the topic of voice, Elbow’s and Yancey’s compilations of essays, reveal more of the way they view voice to be valuable (Elbow’s highlighting issues of aurality and *ethos*; Yancey’s compilation



highlighting issues of individual and social interaction in creating voices of self). Their editorial voices have elements of voice as craft, as they crafted the order of their essays; they have elements of self, as their editor's personal philosophies and idiosyncrasies are reflected in the ordering of texts; they have elements of political force in attempting to shift a reader's understanding of a topic; and they even have elements of aurality in their introduction's syntax and in their silent presence (having at least selected the essays and approved of them, and perhaps even having edited the essays in Yancey's case—inserting bits of her own syntax patterning).

Silence, after all, is the flipside of sound, which can punctuate and emphasize voice. The idea of silence in writing is considered in Yancey's conclusion and in several recent CCC articles (Belanoff, Gere). Silence can punctuate and provide a place for sound. As Yancey states, "silence makes possible and accents voice, provides emphasis, sometimes even demonstrates power" (303). In the idea of editorial voice, perhaps it can be perceived that even in silence editorial voice is apparent.

Editorial voice reveals an important layer of social forces outside of the direct author that shape a reader's understanding of a text. This voice is one much less spoken of than authorial voice, yet one that can be a powerful force in a reader's final sense of voice in a final draft. Editorial voice is exemplary of only one of the other voices that affect the final voice of a document, showing the wisdom in Bowden's critique that voice in writing is socially formed. Because voice as a term is a reminder of individual agency, voice allows for the search for individual agents who had the most effect on the final sense of a presence in a text. Voice works as a term because individual forces are at work in the creation of a text, placing their own sweat, blood, and tears, so to speak, on

the line. There are individual reputations on the line, people who are willing to put themselves at risk to say something they feel is important. There are individual forces interacting with societal forces at work that seem more like Yancey's interpretation of voice, with individual forces interacting with and appropriating societal forces and then using their individual force to change their society (as modern compositionists changed the way academic discourse is written).

If acting as a reminder of individuality was all voice accomplished, voice would be a simpler term. However, voice also brings with it Elbow's ideas of aurality, distinctiveness, drama, authority, and resonance. Because "voice" is such a mercurial term in composition studies (simultaneously bringing to mind the crafted, audible, personal, social, political, and reader response dimensions of a text), it is a wonder anyone has the courage to use voice in a classroom in an effort to make the process of writing easier for a student.

### **The Pedagogy of Voice(s)**

The mercurial dimensions of the term "voice" make its pedagogy problematic, something all theorists who attempt to propose a pedagogy of voice struggle with, especially Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden, who had attempted to treat the spectrum of theory on voice. When voice can mean so many things, and bring up so many concerns in writing, the question remains as to how to explain voice to students and how to avoid confusing students by variously having voice mean one thing in one moment (like crafted persona), and something else in the next (like the aural dimension of text or the inherent self or the political force in text). Yancey notes this concern in her conclusion:

But I want to pursue this proposed pedagogy of voice. Aren't we still in the same trap? Which version of voice do we mean here? I have used it variously, to mean the speaking voice and its relationship to writing, but also what it suggests about what we do when we write, and then on other occasions to mean the self and bringing that to the page for others to interpret. Other times, in class, I use it to refer to Wayne Booth's rhetorical stance, as in the stance of inspiration embodied by Martin Luther King in much of his writing. Sometimes I mean authority, and sometimes presence, and sometimes the rhetoric that is appropriate to a given situation, as in the voice used in biology. Saying that voice helps people learn to write only begins to raise questions, for me. (308)

Even after an examination of voice as a more complex representation of interacting individual and social forces, Yancey admits that voice is a tricky concept in the classroom, representing various theoretical definitions at different moments. Using voice in a writing classroom, then, risks further confusing students with the various meanings of voice.

Others also see the vague and nuanced issue of voice to be troublesome in the classroom. Bowden's article, "The Rise of a Metaphor," for example, expresses a concern that voice in writing, in its variety of definitions, has eluded consistent methodology in the teaching of writing. In her article, she says, "Voice in writing, identified variously as style, persona, stance, or ethos, has never been clearly defined, and, as a consequence, there has never been a consistent methodology for how to use it in

the teaching of writing” (173). Because voice can be defined in so many different ways, it is difficult to use voice consistently in a classroom.

Within the Elbow and Yancey texts, there are other theorists who also express serious pedagogical concerns about teaching voice. Paula Gillespie, in “Classroom Voices,” an article in Yancey’s anthology, describes how three different teachers who teach voice use voice in vastly different ways from each other in their perspective classrooms. Each attempts in his or her respective classroom :

to enable or teach students to release or manipulate voice to their advantage. Jim tries to teach them to trust the inner voice on the first draft, yet Bronwen teaches her students not to, for the inner voice might use the word “society.” Eleanor teaches the students not to mistrust the inner voice, but to consciously decide what persona they want to be and to try to project that more or less fictional mask into the writing. (Gillespie 168).

Students who would be unfortunate enough to have all three teachers consecutively would be left confused as to what sort of voice or writing is expected of them because their teachers treated voice as a consistent term without explaining (or perhaps even understanding) that voice can inspire different sorts of definitions. Instead of being empowered, students are led to play the game of “beat the teacher”—masking and stifling their own experiences, preferences, and opinions in their attempt to understand what a particular teacher means by the term “voice.” Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden all find different solutions to untangling the metaphor of voice in the classroom, but their

respective solutions prove to be more examples of each teacher recreating voice to suit his or her philosophy of writing.

Elbow says in his introduction to *Landmark Essays* that the key to using voice in the classroom is to begin by teaching his five related meanings of voice: audible, dramatic, recognizable, authoritative and resonant voice. Rather than get into the tricky ideas of self, he explains how his meanings of voice reveal five elements of writing that a reader intuits when scanning through a text. The audible voice is how the reader hears a text, for example. When a teacher comments on the quality of the audible voice in a section of writing, a writer can come to understand how a particular audible dimension came to be crafted in his/her text and how to adjust the audible voice. The teacher can use each of the five meanings of voice to respond to student writing, and readers' responses to each of the five meanings can reveal to writers how to adjust each type of voice. Eventually, though, Elbow urges that the lines between different meanings of voice can again be blurred. He says:

But once we have had our critical conversation about voice in writing so as to make the concept more solidly understood and widely acknowledged, I don't think we'll always have to be so fussy about distinctions. We'll be able to say to a friend or student, "I hear more voice in these passages; something rich and useful and interesting is going on there; can you get more of that?" and not necessarily have to make careful distinctions between [the five meanings of] voice. There are crucial differences between the various kinds of voice in writing—but more often than not they go together. (xlvii)

Elbow is saying that students, after being instructed in his five meanings of voice, will gain a holistic sense of voice as a larger entity, thereby intuiting what a teacher or reader of their text specifically refers to when commenting on the voice of a particular section of writing.

On the other hand, Yancey's pedagogy of voice, as described in her conclusion to *Voices on Voice*, celebrates an exploration of the various voices of the developing self. Despite her concerns about the many ways she uses and defines voice in a classroom, she does not explain how to more clearly define voice to a class. However, she still believes that voice should be used in a classroom. She encourages the idea of a classroom as a place to craft, share, and experiment with voice—which will:

not only reveal a self, but also perhaps construct it, perhaps change it. For altering the voice—changing it, adapting it to meet the needs of the audience—is, at the least, changing the presentation of the self, which can then lead to more profound changes. (309)

Yancey envisions a classroom as a place for students to experiment with their voice and the voices they are capable of creating. By experimenting with voice, students experiment with how they define themselves. Despite the shifting nature of language and communication, Yancey believes that authenticity and authentic voice(s) are possible because they can be both inherent, yet also shifting (as someone learns how to adapt to new purposes and audiences). The goal of a pedagogy of voice, for Yancey, then, is to have students learn how to read different voices within a text, to be aware of the different voices that affect a text, to learn how to hear and hone their own voices, and to learn how to develop new voices of self.

Bowden's doubt that self exists logically extends itself into the idea that there should not be a pedagogy of voice, except in one specific way—using the concept of voice as a literal re-voicing of text. Any reference to self is suspect. She says that she ultimately suggests “that the only useful application of voice may stem from an understanding of how the literal voice operates in reading” (83). Other ways of defining voice typically associate a person with the words, whereas the literal reading voice is associated with a reader's accessing a developed aural language instinct. In studies of people who read silently, she notes, there is evidence that people subvocalize the text as well as skim patterns of text. Bowden says that by vocalizing a text while reading visually, readers who attempt to edit writing access their aural and visual knowledge of language. By re-voicing text as they read, students can develop another tool of stylistic awareness. Bowden's idea of only using the term “voice” when asking students to read text aloud is by far one of the most cogent and clear pedagogical plans for teaching voice in a classroom; however, it remains merely one plan amid many pedagogical plans proposed by different theorists. Bowden provides another definition that implies another pedagogy.

Perhaps it is in the inconsistent and multiple definitions of voice that there is a heuristic pedagogical opportunity. Spooner reminds us that “theory implies practice” (Yancey and Spooner 307). Let pedagogy utilize the richness of the body of theory on voice by using voice heuristically to explore the discussions of aural, personal, cultural, and developmental issues voice inspires. The discussion of voice has its strengths in the questions it raises; as Bowden admits, “voice obliges us to entertain some of the key issues in composition theory” (Bowden, 173). Voice puts into question the roles of self

and others that pervade David Bartholomae's "Inventing the University," and placement of voice in society as explored in James Paul Gee's *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses*. Discussions of voice thread through the proposed needs for freewriting (finding voice), drafting (developing voice), and final draft presentation to an audience (performing voice). The idea of voice begs the question again if Plato was right that all discourse is best when oral or grounded in orality. Voice forces one to consider if there is an identity behind a text that has a power outside of his/her society.

Rather than fight the disarray in definitions of voice, teachers can use the disarray in their classrooms. Rather than trying to make voice a standard to judge a piece of writing, voice should be used as the theorists use it—as a heuristic device to help students decide what is important in writing. If students are provided with the binaries of writing reflected in the body of writing on written voice(s) (writing as sound vs. writing as text, writing as function of self vs. writing as function of others, writing as authentic vs. writing as craft, writing as self vs. writing as an amalgam of selves), students can be encouraged to explore the middle ground between the binary ideas, as Elbow's, Yancey's and Bowden's texts have done. Students can be asked to reflect on and consider the tensions between aurality and textuality, self and others, authentic and contrived, voice and voices. Then students can be asked to create their own definition and critique of what voice means to them. But first, in order to create a definition and critique of voice, students should be prompted to examine the personal philosophies that shape how they believe writing and communication work. Voice thereby becomes a heuristic tool to uncover personal philosophies of written communication.



Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden admit that the most important thing about the idea of voice(s) in writing is that it brings up crucial discussions about how we view and create writing. Through its reminders of aurality, individuality, political force, and craftsmanship, voice is used by different writers to embody their vision of how an individual self communicates in writing. Yancey admits, “an inquiry into voice is about more than writing, and about more than epistemology, ideology, and politics. It is, ultimately, about ourselves, about what it means to be human, and about why and how that matters” (xx). The idea of voice is about more than getting students to write well. In being a reminder of craft, aurality, individuality, and politics in writing, it investigates how personal written communication works and why it works.

Because a study of voice leads to questions about how writing and communication works, as Elbow states, “voice is a lightning rod that attracts ideological dispute” (Elbow xlvii). But this dispute is inevitable in any discussion of philosophy and values. It is in the ideological debates where the idea of voice has value. Theorists use the concept of voice to show how the individual in human communication works and why each philosophy of human communication reveals something a previous philosophy ignored. As Bowden states:

Whatever language we use to describe how we think and write ultimately comes down to what we value, making the whole issue both highly political and highly personal. That is why voice is so important to understand and question, and why it is not only useful but desirable to question regularly metaphors that are so firmly entrenched in our lexicons. We come to understand thereby a bit more about ourselves. (Bowden 140)

Bowden summarizes how the ideas entrenched in the concept of voice are based on values, which makes the term charged with political and personal issues. But by questioning and attempting to understand what has made voice an important term in writing, Bowden echoes Yancey's claim that people can be led to understand more about themselves.

In a pedagogy of voice that encourages an exploration of multiple definitions of voice, the concept of voice is used to reveal how each student perceives how writing works. Further, the exposure to various philosophies of voice in writing will no doubt challenge students to examine and critically adjust their perceptions of how written communication functions. In an examination of the idea of voice, the idea of individuality could be explored and utilized in a broader sense as well, for different students with different personalities and talents may respond to the concept of voice differently simply because of their temperament preferences. As Yancey says:

I argued above that no one method or approach would work for all writers, and yet here we are almost suggesting that kind of uniform approach. We'd need to know, in other words, for whom this pedagogy would be suitable: individually, categorically. I wonder, for example, about the "helpfulness" of voice or the oral context for a shy student. (310)

Perhaps some students will find voice to be an excellent metaphor and use it to help focus their writing. Other students will no doubt reject the term. But all students who learn about the concept voice will be forced to come to terms with some of the key issues in rhetoric and composition, especially those of "voice/discourse/identity" (Elbow xix). Probably, each student will accept or reject the term "voice" for different reasons; in

those reasons, and through justifying those reasons, students will learn more about not only how the voice does or does not work, but how they believe communication works. Presenting the questions inherent in the different presentations of the concept of voice, and allowing students to come up with their own answers, empowers the students to make decisions about their writing and will help them develop their own criteria to critique their writing and others' writings.

**Chapter 3:**  
**Teaching about Voice—the Upper-Division**  
**Undergraduate Class**

*Voice in Writing: Myth or Reality? An Exploration of Theories about*  
*How Writing Works*

Whatever language we use to describe how we think and write ultimately comes down to what we value, making the whole issue both highly political and highly personal. That is why voice is so important to understand and question, and why it is not only useful but desirable to question regularly metaphors that are so firmly entrenched in our lexicons. We come to understand thereby a bit more about ourselves.

--Darsie Bowden, *The Mythology of Voice* (140)

**Introduction**

So far, this thesis has focused on the theoretical discussion of voice. Chapter One organized the discussion of voice into categories based on five of the first articles on voice: Walker Gibson's "The Voice of a Writer" (which touted voice as crafted persona); Taylor Stoehr's "Tone and Voice" (which touted voice as inherent to self); Robert Zoellner's "Talk/Write: A Behavioral Pedagogy for Composition" (which touted voice as the audible element in writing); Donald Murray's "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent" (which used voice as a political force); and John Hawkes' "The Voice Project: An Idea for Innovation in the Teaching of Writing" (which first used voice as a complex entity, combining previous definitions of voice).

Chapter Two then summarized and analyzed three other modern attempts to chart the history of discussion on written voice: Peter Elbow's *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing*; Kathleen Blake Yancey's *Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry*;

and Darsie Bowden's *The Mythology of Voice*. The chapter then showed how a personal philosophy of how communication functions frames each compositionist's history of voice. Yancey's and Bowden's philosophies, especially, reveal the power of social forces other than the author on the final reading of (and sense of persona in) a written text, so Elbow's and Yancey's two compilations of essays on voice were examined to show the possibility and implications of the idea of editorial voice. Finally, pedagogical implications of the body of theory on written voice were explored, and found lacking in their inconsistency. Chapter Two then introduces the idea of a new pedagogy of voice which uses voice as a heuristic tool to uncover and critically examine personal philosophies of how written communication works.

This third chapter discusses, then, an undergraduate upper-division course designed to help students develop a perspective of how writing functions, using voice as a springboard for discussion about personal philosophies of how written communication works. The course examines the five different ways of defining voice in composition studies so that students may critique the definitions, experiment with the definitions' implications, and come to their own conclusions about what voice exactly is or could be in writing. Because the body of theory on the concept of voice generally uses voice as a reminder of individual agency and personal awareness, the course uses the Myers Briggs Personality theories to develop a variety of classroom projects. These projects are then used to facilitate critique and discussion of the ideas of personality and written voice by encouraging increased student self and social awareness.

The course admittedly difficult, requiring a good deal of reading and writing. It is designed to be a capstone course for an undergraduate in English, Rhetoric, Composition,

Professional Writing and Editing, English Education, Communications, Media Studies, and perhaps even Creative Writing. The course is designed in the hope that by developing the students' self awareness and personal philosophies of written communication, the students will then go on to be better writers, editors, and teachers. Admittedly, though, the course design is idealistic, ignoring the possibilities of holidays and student fatigue, because it is assumed that a teacher modify the course design for unique classroom needs.

### **MBTI Theories and Possible Implications**

In order for voice to work as a heuristic device it is crucial that the course be designed with an awareness of how different people work in different ways. John K. DiTiberio and George H. Jensen's work on how personality indicators provide one theoretical model utilizing the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) that attempts to predict how personality influences writing preferences and authentic voice. In this course, DiTiberio and Jensen's theories are used to test, by application, how valid are the ideas of how personality affects written voice and writing choices.

According to DiTiberio and Jensen, through knowing the MBTI preferences, it is then easier to identify why different people prefer different types of writing, and therefore it is easier to understand why some speak in chorus or clash with others in how we approach writing. When "voice" becomes an issue—it makes writing personal. Because it is personal, in writing, there can be personality clashes just as there are in life.

To remind the reader of the sixteen types, this thesis repeats the chart from Chapter One:

**Table 2. Preferred Writing Approaches.**

<i>Extraversion-Active Writers</i>	<i>Introversion-Reflective Writers</i>
Write from experience	Write from ideas
Talk about ideas	Jot down ideas
Begin writing	Pause before writing
Take breaks	Concentrate in a quiet place
<i>Sensing-Realistic Writers</i>	<i>Intuition-Imaginative Writers</i>
Report factual information	Discuss concepts
Follow a format	Try new approaches
Attend to instructions	Attend to complexities
Say it directly	Say it with a flourish
<i>Thinking-Analytical Writers</i>	<i>Feeling-Personal Writers</i>
Are objective	Communicate personal viewpoint
Prefer logical organization	Use human examples
Analyze an argument	Anticipate reader's reaction
Guided by criteria for a "product"	Guided by sense of flow and feeling
<i>Judging-Decisive Writers</i>	<i>Perceiving-Inclusive Writers</i>
Narrow options, decide quickly	Keep topic options open
Follow a schedule	Let deadlines motivate
Work on one project at a time	Work on multiple projects
Work from present material	Search for facts or ideas

Source: Adapted from DiTiberio and Hammer (8)

Each personality preference, then, induces different writing preferences. As a reminder for further reading, the thesis puts the short hand for MBTI here: extraversion preferences are represented by the letter E and introversion preferences are represented by the letter I; sensing preferences are represented by S and intuition preferences are represented by N; thinking preferences are represented by T and feeling preferences are represented by F; judging preferences are represented by J and perceiving preferences are represented by P. Each set of preferences—E and I, S and N, T and F, J and P—are measured on a graduated scale based on a complex multiple choice personality test.

A personality with the type indicator of INFP (introverted, intuitive, feeling, perceiving) will approach writing in a vastly different way than a personality with the

type indicator of ESTJ (extroverted, sensing, thinking, judging). For example, ESTJ personalities, according to DiTiberio and Jenson, typically “almost immediately begin to schedule” an assignment, “often breaking it down into steps with interim deadlines for each step” (80), whereas for INFP personalities:

outlines typically work [...] only if they are not formal. Instead they dash off and write random thoughts about a project on a piece of scrap paper wherever they are, often while engaged on another project. After they retrieve these notes, reread them, and draw arrows among them, they can then begin to work on a semblance of structure. (102)

ESTJ tend to be more comfortable with a structured approach of writing, whereas INFP tend to be more comfortable with what seems to be a more chaotic approach to writing. According to personality typing, this is not to say that one has a better approach, for both can get the job done well.

As each personality has a different approach to writing, each personality also tends to have a certain kind of writing that comes more naturally. INFP personalities typically tend to be better at human-interest writing, whereas ESTJ personalities tend to prefer writing argumentative and technical writing. This does not mean that an INFP cannot write argumentative and technical writing, or that an ESTJ cannot write human-interest and creative writing, but that it takes more effort and perhaps a different process to get to the same spot. In fact, each personality could also have a particular gift to give to a field more foreign to the natural personality. For example, an INFP could be particularly good at intuiting how to make technical writing flavorful and interesting or how to make exciting interdisciplinary connections within the writing, while an ESTJ



could be particularly good at making a human interest or creative story with a sharp structure, sequence, and sensory detail. INFP and ESTJ are only two personalities of the sixteen types (which can be created by any combination of the four binary preferences), and each personality has natural writing tendencies shaped by the four basic ways they habitually process and interact with reality (where energy comes from, where information comes from, how decisions are made, and how the world is ordered).

However, before proceeding, it seems prudent to provide a reminder of the way the Myers-Briggs theories work. Many reading this thesis may be concerned that it proposes putting people into categories. It does not. A personality develops through choices and preferences, and a person is always free to re-define him/herself. However, personalities generally are, at the very least, habits that have developed over a lifetime—habits as entrenched as the habit of handwriting style. Isabel Briggs Myers and Peter B. Myers explain:

Under this theory, people create their “type” through exercise of their individual preferences regarding perception and judgment. The interests, values, needs, and habits of mind that naturally result from any set of preferences tend to produce a recognizable set of traits and potentialities. Individuals can, therefore, be described in part by stating their four preferences, such as ENTP. Such a person can be expected to be different from others in ways characteristic of his or her type. To describe people as ENTPs does not infringe on their right to self-determination: they have already exercised this right by preferring E and N and T and P. Identifying and remembering people’s types shows respect not only for

their abstract right to develop along lines of their own choosing, but also for the concrete ways in which they are and prefer to be different from others. (10)

This long quote shows how personality typing is not about stereotyping people into biological predispositions, but is based on an individual's choice (habit) to be different from others. The MBTI was created in an effort to appreciate and understand the diversity of individual personality—not to limit it.

DiTiberio and Jenson also treat the concerns of those who are afraid of typing leading to stereotyping:

To hypothesize about the personality of writers can certainly help us learn about and understand variations in the ways people go about such tasks. Any attempt to foster an appreciation for diversity is worthwhile, we believe. But there is a fine line between gaining a perspective on differences on the one hand and reducing people to fixed categories on the other. The former is the appropriate endeavor of Jung's type theory. The latter involves stereotypes. (214)

DiTiberio and Jenson advocate the use of MBTI theories in the interests of understanding human diversity; however, they agree that stereotyping is dangerous risk that must be avoided. For this thesis, the possibility of MBTI diversity is used to understand if voice and individual selves are possible and at work in writing, and to understand how personality may affect the other senses of voice from composition theory.

The course designed, on one level, explores the idea that different approaches to voice in theory could exist, perhaps because theorists with different personalities are

treating the topic. No single theorist studied in the course is considered wrong in his/her approach or criticism of voice. For example, in the debate about the primacy of aurality or textuality, each approach to writing will reach different writers. If looking through the lens of MPTI, individuals who gather information more through their senses will probably tend to hear text more than individuals who gather information through intuition and imagination.

Other debates inherent to voice in writing can be translated into personality and intelligence preferences. For example, the idea that personality should be shaped and crafted to suit the audience capitalizes on an extraverted approach to writing. Someone who prefers to focus on audience in such a way probably tends to focus on and be energized by the outer world. The ideas explored in the category of authentic voice, on the other hand, capitalize on an introverted approach to writing. Such a person tends to focus on and be energized by the inner world, paying very close attention to his/her thoughts and feelings. Aural voice in writing, crafted voice in writing, and authentic voice(s) in writing might be concepts born of certain personality and intelligence preferences—and therefore appeal to different people depending on their personality type.

The idea of political voice in writing is more complex. It has at its core the acknowledgement of the power and agency of communication, but it asks that a writer look both internally and externally to find a way to shape the perceptions of outside individuals and thereby change society. It can come from someone either introverted or extraverted. Political voice focuses on reality and practical matters, as a sensing personality would, but also focuses on the big picture and essential patterns and

possibilities as an intuitive personality would. Political voice capitalizes on logic and emotion, and can either leave issues open or try to close issues. Every personality may be attracted to the idea of forming an effective political voice. In political voice, we are reminded that human beings do have the power of individual expression and each individual has the power to affect, even shape, his/her environment by his/her words.

Complex voice while appealing to intuitive feeling (NF) personalities especially (who love to make connections between different ideas), will also appeal to nearly every personality type. But, every personality will probably want to exercise his/her capacity to create a complex definition of voice in writing differently. Several personalities, sensing thinking (ST) personalities first among them, will find the entire concept of voice dubious, preferring descriptions of how writing works to be more concrete and less personal.

But the class would not be complete without discussing how different personalities have an effect on each other—how being a member of a group can shift our preferences and perhaps changes our personality. Bowden's ideas that self is a conglomerate of societal selves must be considered, so students will be asked why they feel they have the personality preferences that they have. The concept of voice, bringing with it the concept of self and personality, is a natural heuristic device for questioning how the individual functions in written communication, alone and in context of others.

## **The Course**

### **A Change in Voice**

While reading through the explanation of this course, it will helpful to refer to the appendix of course materials, which include the syllabus, calendar, and assignment sheets. These provide a summary core of the course, and make it easier to follow along the day-by-day progression of the class.

From this point on, I also wish to warn the reader that I am switching to first person. It made sense for me to do so at this point because it seems more human and natural to say “I plan to welcome the students” than to say “the teacher should welcome the students.” Other teachers who use this course design will no doubt *not* follow my design exactly (in fact, it would be impossible to do so, because I follow the old dictum that it is better to over-plan than under-plan and there is simply too much to do here in a term, unless the class is particularly gifted). In the preceding chapters, the third person “voice” felt more natural to me as a writer, perhaps because I am only a budding academic, and perhaps because I truly wanted to at least try to get out of the way of all the theorists and concepts I was discussing. But this course design is more personal, and therefore I present it that way.

### **How I have constructed the course.**

The course on voice in writing works as a composition theory appreciation course for junior or senior level undergraduates. As the course progresses, I develop it to prepare students for graduate study. The readings become more theoretical and less application oriented, and the classroom activities revolve more around the readings than on experiences. It is not an easy course, with writing and reading loads that would rival

differences, similarities, and effects of the interaction between oral discussions and written discussions.

These oral and written discussions can have theoretical implications for all five categories of voice in writing. Students will be challenged to tackle the following questions, based on their readings, personal experiences, and class discussions: What is political voice? What makes political voice effective? What is the interaction between aural and textual? How does authenticity affect writing? How much should writing be crafted? Through discussion, writing, and presentation of each student's ideas, in context of theoretician's ideas, I believe each student will grow as a writer with a greater appreciation for the theories and ideas that shape how writing works. Through developing an understanding of multiple theories, students will be enabled to write a preliminary philosophy of writing that explains how each of them approaches writing.

### **A Reminder**

One more reminder: students will be allowed to choose from any of the assignments suggestions for each project. I will explain in the following sections how each course assignment corresponds with a particular personality type, but I will not presume student preferences. Students will be free to choose any assignment option, and will be encouraged in the last assignment to design their own project, in collaboration with me, their teacher.

I will not even ask students to reveal their personality types once they receive their results if they do not wish to do so. When the time for sharing arrives, students who do not wish to share their results will simply read any portion of DiTiberio and Jenson's *Writing and Personality* that they find appealing or disagree with.

On the Wednesday, Week 14 of the syllabus, though, I will share with students how I constructed the assignments so that they may assess how their assignment choices, writing style preferences, and understanding of voice was perhaps affected by their personality. Perhaps they will not feel personality had anything to do with their choices. In either case, students will not only be forced to verbalize their preferences, but to come up with reasons for those preferences and to critique the MBTI method of assessing those preferences. It is my hope that after the class discusses each of their different conclusions, the class as a community will have a better collective understanding of how the idea of “voice” in writing works for different individuals.

### **The Syllabus Information**

The course presented assumes a semester (rather than quarter) format, which will have students meeting for one hour on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

#### **How I describe the course to the students:**

This course is designed to explore the idea of voice in writing. Voice in writing is a concept that has inspired discussions that lead to “some of the key issues in composition theory,” (quoted from Darsie Bowden’s 1995 *Rhetoric Review* article “The Rise of a Metaphor.”) You will be reading various theorists discuss voice in writing. We will talk about our readings, talk about our writing, and discuss the role of voice in writing as different theorists have presented voice—voice as crafted persona in writing, voice as authentic self reflected in writing, voice as the part of writing that is heard, voice as the human agency behind writing, and voice as a complex entity. This course will require you as the student to explore the concepts of craft (the shaping of personality), authorship and authenticity, aurality and textuality, and power in writing. In so doing, you will be

expected to analyze how your personality and learning styles possibly shape your approach to writing voice.

**Required readings will be:**

- \*Bowden, Darsie. *The Mythology of Voice*. 1997.
- \*DiTiberio, John K. and George H. Jensen. *Writing and Personality: Finding Your Voice, Your Style, Your Way*. 1995.
- \*Elbow, Peter. *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing*. 1994.
- \*Stewart, Donald. *Authentic Voice: A Prewriting Approach to Student Writing* 1970.
- \*Yancey, Kathleen Blake, ed. *Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry*. 1994.
- \* Ellsworth, Elizabeth “Why Doesn’t This Feel Empowering? Working Through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy.” *Harvard Educational Review*. 1989.
- \*Gibson, Walker. “The Voice of The Writer” *Composition and Communication*. 1962.
- \*Murray, Donald. “Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent.” *College Composition and Communication*. 1969.

**The recommended text will be:**

Gibson, Walker. *Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy*. 1966.

**Grades will be divided as follows:**

Reflective Journals and Reading Responses	20%
Crafting Voice Project	15%
Authentic Voice Project	15%
Audible Voice Project	15%
Political Voice Project	15%
Complex Voice Project	20%



[NOTE: From now on, it may become more crucial to follow the course calendar and assignment sheets attached in the appendix, if the reader wishes to see the day-by-day organization along with the explanation of the weeks' activities.]

## **Week 1: Introduction**

On the Monday of the first week of class I plan to welcome the students to what promises to be a both engaging and sometimes challenging term. I will admit that the term will be frustrating, because voice in writing as a concept brings up a lot of ideas that students may or may not agree with. On the other hand, I know the course will be engaging, and perhaps even exciting, because as the class progresses students will come to understand how they approach writing, reading, and what learning methods best suit who they are. Further, students will be led to understand exactly how different students, writers, teachers and theorists approach how writing works. While I may not believe that there is a right or wrong way to define voice in writing, I will leave the ultimate decision up to each of them individually. Before going over the syllabus and calendar, I will begin the term with the first writing for their portfolio: What is voice in writing? I will explain that this is a blind exercise that will be used as a foil for their later definitions of voice. This exercise first utilizes intrapersonal intelligence for reflection, before moving to the interpersonal activity of the round table sharing of why each is interested in the topic of voice in writing. Finally, I will end the class by reviewing the syllabus and calendar.

The preliminary writing on voice will be used throughout the course. As students learn about different theories of voice, they can look back to their blind sample to see if they have an idea (or have ideas) of what voice in writing is, and how these ideas developed (perhaps from certain teachers or writing books or other media that had

ingested the theories as realities and facts). As we go around the room, I hope that students begin to see that many of them define voice differently. This discussion will thereby introduce the students to the complexity and sometimes confusing array of definitions from theorists on what voice in writing is. The introduction to the course syllabus and calendar will then begin to show students that voice in writing is a highly complex and difficult concept.

Wednesday and Friday are then absorbed by an introduction to Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality types and personality testing. Understanding different personality and intelligence tendencies helps introduce the next several weeks of more deeply entrenched composition-focused study about crafted voice and then authentic voice. It seems important to at least begin to explore the ideas of personality, for crafted voice asks a writer to create a personality to suit each audience, and authentic voice asks a writer to express his/her innate personality. It will be good to introduce personality types for an understanding of the construction of personality, and as the testing results return several weeks later, students can look to see if their personality type, and DiTiberio's description of writing preferences for this personality type, match their understanding of their own writing preferences, style, and voice.

Because the class will still be a new environment, I will keep the first discussion simple, asking students to briefly each state why he/she is interested in the topic of voice in writing. The rest of the week's questions will be answered in class journal entries and then shared voluntarily as answers to lecture questions. At this point, the class is teacher centered because it takes certain personalities some time to acclimate themselves to a new environment and to feel comfortable speaking.

I feel a sense of adventure in the topic of voice, a sense of exploring the murky shadows of the writing process that sometimes trip students (and teachers, for that matter) up, and I'd like to take students with me on a journey to understand this concept of voice—if it is valid or not, and how. I use a guided exploration model of learning with my students, because my goal is less to teach a way of writing, than to explore how and why we write in different ways. Some of my favorite classes in college were geared to both increase my knowledge base and encourage self and social awareness, so I construct my class to mimic many of the things I enjoyed and found effective. I find a brief and oversimplified introduction often provides the skeleton framework for the rest of the course's meat to be later attached to, so I plan to give an introduction to the topic this week that will be admittedly brief and oversimplified.

I will introduce the first four articles on voice in composition theory that use voice in the four fairly distinct ways: Walker Gibson's "The Voice of a Writer," Tayler Stoehr's "Tone and Voice," Robert Zoellner's "Talk/Write: A Behavioral Pedagogy for Composition," and Donald Murray's "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent." I will then briefly introduce the fifth article by John Hawkes, "The Voice Project: an Idea for Innovation in the Teaching of Writing," that combines the four uses of voice in writing. Only Walker Gibson's, Donald Murray's, and John Hawkes' articles will be used in the class later, but I think it will be important for students to see the various ways voice was treated when it was first discussed in composition theory. I hope for students to begin to have a preliminary understanding of the topic. With the preliminary understanding of the topic, I hope for students to begin to think about their own theories about voice in writing and how writing works. I am

curious what students will conclude, and hope I can spread my enthusiasm about the implications of this topic as I see them: if we all approach writing differently because we think differently, then we need to be careful when we construct a writing process and even more careful when we try to teach a writing process.

### **Week 2-3: Crafting Voice**

I begin the second week with the activity I call “Circle of Voices.” It is the most kinesthetic activity of the term, and works as both an ice breaker and an introduction to writing for different audiences. I begin the class by clearing away all the desks and dividing the class into groups of 8-10 students. I then ask the students to reach across and grab the hands of two different students. Once everyone is appropriately tangled, I set up the contest: which group can untangle themselves without breaking hands until they are all standing side by side with their arms at their sides? At the conclusion of the activity, I have the students bring back their desks in a circle, and divide them into partners. I randomly hand out a hat filled with sheets of paper. On each slip of paper there is a different type of audience and I ask each pair to choose one slip of paper. Then, I ask each pair of students to describe the warm up activity in a voice that would suit their particular audience without mentioning their audience. The students then present their description of the activity. At the end of each presentation, I ask the class to guess the assigned audience of the pair. After the presentations, I will have volunteer pairs analyze the effectiveness of their description. Why was it effective or not? If we guessed their audience, how did we do it? Did their description exemplify a voice that would suit the audience assigned? How? I will ask if the class concurs with their self evaluations, and why. After several students volunteer, I will begin a class discussion of how and if we

tend to change the way we speak and write for different audiences. At the end of class I will introduce the Crafting Audiences assignment. If I have time, I will introduce the next day's reading, Walker Gibson's "The Voice of a Writer."

The Crafting Voice assignment is broken down into four assignment choices that are geared toward four core personality types: ST (sensing thinking), SF (sensing feeling), NT (intuitive thinking), NF (intuitive feeling). According to DiTiberio and Jenson, ST types prefer writing that is "factual, objective, clear, realistic, unambiguous, and to the point" (188) and that they enjoy using facts and statistics, so in the first option I ask for an analysis of text for crafted voices:

1. Analyzing Crafted Voices—find three professional writing texts and see how their voices are crafted for different audiences. Use *Tough, Sweet, and Stuff* by Walker Gibson to help you analyze these voices and how they are created. Write at least a 1-page analysis per text.

I ask for careful, small scale analysis that capitalizes on the organizational and detailed strengths of the ST personality. SF personalities, while also enjoying details, tend to prefer a more personal approach, so I created a case study assignment to suit the SF personality:

2. Case Study—go into a classroom, work environment, or the Internet and see how many written voices a student, teacher, professional writer, or web site publisher uses. *Or* survey a limited group of individuals in the same trade or profession to see the crafted voices they are aware of creating. Write a 3-4 page paper describing the conclusions of your research in context of your readings. Include carefully documented results of your findings.

Note the documented results—results that can include the facts and statistics ST and SF types love to work with, but because I ask for an analysis of particular students or individuals, there is the personal element so important to an SF. NT personalities, on the other hand, are as impersonal as the ST personalities, but they prefer to go beyond the facts and want “just the interpretation” (DiTiberio and Jenson 190). NT’s are drawn to abstract theory that is emotionally neutral and explains why things work as they do. So, for the NT, I crafted a research paper:

3. Research Paper—how prevalent is the idea of voice in professional writing and editing? We have one textbook on teaching professional writing and editing that uses voice as a persona in its style chapter. Look up 2-3 other texts to see if voice is also used. If it is used, how is it used? What does this tell you about how voice is shaped? If voice is not used, what other words are used to describe Gibson’s idea of voice as a crafted persona? Analyze the overall implications of your findings. (minimum 3-4 page paper)

What would make this paper particularly appealing to the NT is the question of what the results of his/her research reveal about how voice is interpreted and the analysis of overall implications of researched results. NF personalities, on the other hand, prefer the freedom to be more creative. They value people issues, as do SF personalities, “but NF’s are more likely to see people issues as part of a big picture rather than as relating to specific people. In their writing they seek to foster a general spirit of human growth and goodwill” (DiTiberio and Jenson 192). Furthermore, NF personalities are supposed to be particularly good at shifting for different audiences because they value harmony so much.

For the NF personality, I created an assignment which encourages creativity and utilizes their adaptability in shaping different voices:

4. Create 3 different crafted voices for 3 short papers on the same topic that are each geared to a different audience. *Or* create a web site that has sections crafted for 3 different audiences. After creating your papers or web site, write a short paper describing how your readings and class discussions helped you do this assignment and explore the implications of writing for several audiences in the larger world—for example, how must advertisers, corporations, and other individuals be aware of each other when they write?

This assignment will appeal to the NF personalities because it asks big questions about how crafting writing voice affects society at large.

It is important to remind the reader of this course design that the assignments should be chosen by the student. They are not crafted in order to be assigned to a student based on a theoretical model of personality. When the student chooses, the MBTI model is being tested for further implications and validity. When the teacher assigns these projects based on the MBTI results, we slip into pigeon-holing students, and we subvert the point of the assignment construction (which is to show how personality theory may play itself out in practice, to have students test how valid the theory may be, and to have students assess what still needs to be added or what needs to be changed in the intersections between personality and voice).

At this point in the course, I will concentrate only on explaining the assignments and answering questions of the assignments. I will not yet explain that I have constructed the assignments to suit different personality types. That does not mean that I do not plan

to tell my students, for I do. While each assignment option is geared toward a different personality category, all assignments explore and analyze the concept of voice and have approximately similar difficulty levels. I think it would be interesting to return to the assignments in the next section of the term (when we are discussing MBTI and authentic voice), explain how they were constructed, and allow students to see if they chose assignments that matched their personality indicators. I would like to allow students to come to their own conclusions about the validity of Myers Briggs Type Indicator and DiTiberio and Jenson's writing theories based on MBTI.

It will be very important to explain that I expect every student to do a five minute oral presentation of the content of their Crafted Voice Project the following week (even if the paper is not done yet), so that each student in the class can see and comment on each other's work. At this point, I will have students sign up for their presentation times the following week. Because different students will be choosing different assignments and coming to different conclusions, I think it will be important to have all projects presented to the class.

By the middle of the week the class should have read and responded to Walker Gibson's "The Voice of a Writer," which discussed the idea that all writing should have a voice which suits its audience. I then move into a discussion of the Aristotelian triad and the comparison of ethos to crafted voice, even placing Aristotle's triad next to the triad created by Gibson juxtaposing audience, subject, and voice. We will begin to discuss how subject affects how a writer should craft voice, along with an idea of the audience. After introducing the class to Gibson's ideas of tough, sweet, and stuffy writing, I will pass out a handout of Gibson's Appendix A "Style and Statistics: a Model T Style



Machine” from his book *Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy: An Essay on Modern American Prose Styles*. After spending about twenty minutes very briefly skimming over the various stylistic and grammatical questions Gibson uses to analyze writing that has a tough, sweet, or stuffy voice, I will encourage students to go home and study the style machine in further detail. When they return to class, they will be ready to analyze passages from magazines, newspapers and web sites for tough, sweet, and stuffy voices.

I will begin the next class by passing out copies of the style machine without answers for us to fill out in groups. We will begin by analyzing a passage of writing as a class, then break into groups to analyze another passage or two. Fifteen minutes before the end of class we will break, draw back into a circle, and discuss our analysis results.

Week 3 will consist of presentations of crafted voice projects and discussions about those projects, culminating with an in-class journal reflecting on what had been learned about voice so far. Students will be asked to answer the questions: Does the idea of crafted voice work for you? Why or why not? What could make it more effective? What are the most important things you learned while studying crafted voice these past two weeks? At the end of this last class focusing on crafted voice, we will go around the room and briefly share a part of our journal.

#### **Week 4-6: Authentic Voice**

On the last day of the previous week, I would have assigned the reading of Donald Stewart’s *Authentic Voice: a Prewriting Approach to Writing*. The reading will be divided among the class, with groups of 2-3 students each tackling one chapter. We will gather at the beginning of the first week focusing on authentic voice in a round table and discuss how Stewart’s approach to voice was different than Gibson’s. Students will

share quotes and passages they found either particularly interesting or perhaps disturbing.

I will share the quote by Stewart that attempts to summarize authentic voice:

Your authentic voice is that authorial voice which sets you apart from every living human being despite the number of common or shared experiences you have with many others: it is not a copy of someone else's way of speaking or of perceiving the world. It is your way. Because you were born at a certain time, in a certain place, to certain parents, with a particular position in the family structure, you have a unique perception of your experience. All the factors of your environment plus your native intelligence and particular response to that environment differentiate you from every other person in the world. Now the closer you come to rendering your particular perception of your world in your words, the closer you will come to finding your authentic voice. (2-3)

Experience combined with intelligence and habits of perception lead to unique approaches to writing, according to at least one authentic voice theory. We will end the class by doing an in-class journal outline history of our lives, focusing on influences and experiences that make us different than our classmates. We focus on experiences this first day because the following class period I will hand out the results of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator and discuss how personality patterns could shape our writing. Each student will be asked to read about their personality type in DiTiberio and Jenson's book *Writing and Personality*, and write about whether the descriptions ring true.

After I return MBTI results and assign the readings, I will then go over the Authentic Voice Projects options, which are again designed to suit different personality

categories (but, because students are free to choose their assignment option, their choices may or may not reveal personality preferences). The first assignment is crafted to suit the ST personality in its emphasis on microanalysis:

1. Choose 3 of your classmates who are creating a portfolio (assignment #2), or choose 3 writers of nonfiction who write for multiple genres (and perhaps even write multigenre forms). Write a 2-4 page paper that analyzes your findings. How is each author unique? How are the authors similar? Do you perceive authentic voices in your readings? Why or why not?

Students who choose this project will be challenged to assess if authentic voice can be perceived in writing as a factual reality.

The second assignment asks students to create a portfolio of writing and analyze it for personal authentic voice. It again includes the microanalysis sensing personalities enjoy, but includes the personal element SF's particularly like:

2. Create a personal portfolio of at least 4 pages of free writing, several examples of writing in process, and several examples of polished writing (writing from previous classes can and should be used). Craft a 2-4 page introduction to the portfolio that analyzes and describes your authentic voice(s) to a friend. Do you think you have an authentic voice? Why or why not?

I ask the introduction to be written to a particular person because this personal touch makes it even easier for an SF to write.

The NT (intuitive thinker) will want to analyze the impersonal theoretical implications of authentic voice in writing, so I constructed an assignment that utilizes the argumentative strengths of the NT personality:

3. What are the possible benefits and dangers of using the idea of authentic voice(s) in the classroom? Pick a stance: for the use of authentic voice, for the use of authentic voices, and/or against the use of authentic voice(s) (I say and/or because you can be against the use of authentic voice, but for the use of authentic voices. Or you can be for a use of authentic voice as a developing voice, but against the use of authentic voice in any other way). Write a 3-5 page paper arguing your stance with evidence from readings, classroom discussions, and your life.

This assignment asks the writer to utilize the knowledge gathered inside and outside the classroom to argue for or against the reality of authentic voice(s) in writing.

The NF personality would like to do a similar broad analysis of authentic voice, but with a personal touch, so I constructed the following assignment:

4. Write a 3-5 page multi-voiced research paper that analyzes and compares crafted and authentic voices. Use evidence from readings, classroom discussions, and your life. Discuss whether you believe authentic voice(s) can be represented in writing, and if you think they even exist. Analyze within the paper how the multi-voiced research paper does or does not better represent your authentic voice(s). Perhaps even discuss how such writing could change academic writing for you and for others.

This assignment would be attractive to the NF personality because, while analyzing the big picture of how crafted and authentic voices work (or don't work), the assignment is creative and personal.

All four assignments ask students to approach authentic voice from different angles, which I hope will add to a collective understanding after the presentations of how authentic voice(s) work and don't work.

If there is time after the discussion of the Authentic Voice Project and the sign ups for presentations in two weeks, I will allow students to begin to read over their MBTI results and begin reading DiTiberio and Jenson's book. The next class day, I will review personality types and ask students to volunteer if they felt the personality typing rang true based on their reading of DiTiberio and Jenson.

After our discussion, I will begin a far too brief lecture on the idea of authentic voices, rather than simply authentic voice. I will introduce the name of Michael Bakhtin for those who would like to read his theories more at length at another time, and simplify the idea that self is comprised of different voices because we have appropriated, or absorbed, the voices of others around us. I will remind the class of the Circle of Voices activity and ask the questions in sequence: How can we write in other voices, if those other voices are not already a part of us? How did those voices become a part of us? Do you think that you are a conglomerate of many voices? If so, do you still have an authentic voice? If yes, how? After a brief round table discussion on the topic, I will have students break off and write an in-class journal answering the questions in more detail. This is the point in the exploration of authentic voice where I allow the term to be turned upside down and become less clear and plausible.

I will expect students to read pgs. 63-74 in Darsie Bowden's *The Mythology of Voice* for the following class which tears apart the ideas of individuality and selfhood upon which authentic voice(s) are based. I will introduce the class to a brief description

of the philosopher Foucault, whose ideas shape Bowden's ideas and form the basis of her criticism of the use of authentic voice(s). I will then begin a round table discussion where each student will select a passage from Bowden's text s/he found either particularly insightful or disagreeable so as to spark a discussion of her ideas. In order to balance the fact that I constructed the class activities to assume authentic voice exists up until this point, I will encourage criticism of the idea from this point on in the course.

For the next class day, students will be asked to bring in two examples of their writing—one that seems to represent their authentic voice and one that doesn't. In light of Bowden's criticisms, I will ask groups to try to disprove the existence of authentic voice in both pieces of writing. After the groups do their presentations, I will ask students to write an in-class journal explaining if they still believe in authentic voice and why.

The following week will be occupied by presentations of the Authentic Voice Project and discussions of those projects, culminating in a round table discussion analyzing the idea of authentic voice in writing. My hope is that it will become apparent that the idea of authentic voice will be more important to some students and utterly useless to others, precisely because each student has different backgrounds, personalities, and beliefs. But the students may prove me wrong, which would be educational as well.

### **Week 7-9: Audible Voice**

When we begin the three weeks discussing the idea of audible voice in writing, the class takes a big step in the theoretical direction. I would have asked at the end of the previous class for students to have read by the next class Robert Zoellner's "Talk/Write: A Behavioral Approach to Writing." Because of the length of the article, a group of four

students would have been permitted to break the article up into sections, and just read their section.

At the beginning of the first class of this three week segment, I will introduce the idea that writing and speaking may or may not be connected. I will then allow the groups to get together for 20 minutes and discuss the article with these guiding questions: What is my favorite quote? What is my least favorite quote? Do I agree with the content of the article? Does it help to talk out what we will write about? What is the connection between writing and talking? For the following 20 minutes, I will ask each group to present their synthesis of the article and their ideas to the class, and then close the class with an in-class journal recording personal responses to the questions. The purpose of reading and discussing Zoellner's article is to get students thinking about the connections between speech, aurality, writing, and textuality.

In that first class of this segment, I will also introduce the Audible Voice Project. Once again, I designed the course with the four basic personality types in mind, but instead of having one project per personality type, I mix things up a bit.

The first two projects will appeal to ST personalities because they ask for small scale analysis of how textuality and aurality work together. The first project option specifically asks the student to analyze whether text can dictate how it is read:

1. Choose 3 passages of writing—preferably of 3 genres. Have 3 different people read each passage (but none of the people should hear one of the other readers). Record each reading and analyze for similarities and differences. What do your findings tell you about whether voice is audible or textual (or how audible writing is and how purely textual it is). How does the reader's

voice affect the sound of the writer—or who has more power, the reader or the writer, in shaping voice? The whole project with analysis and records of findings should be at least 3-5 pages long.

The use of small scale analysis and factual information will make this assignment appealing for the ST personality and will make the next assignment appealing as well.

The next assignment asks students to do a close analysis of a transcript to show the differences between effective speech and effective writing:

2. Get written transcripts of an interview. Have a group of volunteers listen to the interview and then read the transcripts. Choose a passage that is not written well but sounds nice. Poll what needs to be done to improve the passage as a piece of writing. Reflect on the key differences between what is generally considered effective speech and what is generally considered effective writing. The whole project with analysis and records of findings should be at least 3-5 pages long.

This project, rather than testing to see what about text dictates auralness, simply compares the differences in structure between what would be effective speech and effective writing. Depending on how strong the feeling preference is for an SF, the second project might be appealing because it asks for students to interact and work together—emphasizing more of the personal element.

The personal element is all the more utilized in the third project, which asks students to work as partners to write as they speak and then analyze each other's writing for authenticity:



3. Challenge yourself to write as you speak. Pick a partner in the class and record each other speaking. Is there something more authentic about your transcripts of speech? What does writing gain when you write exactly as you speak? What does writing lose when you write exactly as you speak? The whole project with analysis and records of findings should be at least 3-5 pages long each.

This project asks for an exploration between the larger ideas of authentic voice and audible voice which would probably appeal to NF and NT personality (though the NT would probably ask me to write an abstract paper, rather than a letter to a fellow student).

The next assignment would appeal the most to the NT personality in the concise argumentative paper option because it asks for theoretical ideas to be developed and argued in a clear and precise fashion:

4. Vygotsky stated that thought is internalized speech, so some theorists ask if writing is externalized thought (after originally being speech). If speech comes first, it could mean that speech is more internal than writing. Elbow would say it is important to hear voice in the text—its intonation, rhythm, and cadence. Derrida, on the other hand, would say that writing is just another symbolic form of communication, as close to thought as speech is (if not closer). In other words, according to some theorists, writing doesn't have to have anything to do with sound. Explore these ideas. **Either** write 10 pages of reflection on these concepts, **or** write a more refined and researched argumentative 5-page paper siding either for or against the connection of writing to aurality.

Because NF personalities might like to try the theories out to see how they work with people, NF personalities might like option 4 in its ten pages of reflection writing option. The final assignment could appeal to any of the four personalities, depending on how they choose to construct the paper:

5. How can audible voice be connected to crafted voice and authentic voice? How is it distinct? Write a 5 page analysis (yes, this can be a multi-voiced genre).

An NF personality would revel in the ability to make connections between the three definitions of voice so far and working with the multi-voiced genre. An NT personality would like analyzing the implications of connecting audible voice to crafted and authentic voice and arguing for or against a technique of connecting the three definitions. An SF personality might like making a letter to a friend that utilizes detailed analysis showing connections and dissimilarities, balanced by personal anecdotes. An ST personality might like to do a microanalysis of writing to prove or disprove the possibility of connecting the three definitions of writing. The complication of the assignments reflects the complication of the topic voice as we progress through the course. After explaining the five options, I will have students sign up for aural presentations two weeks later.

Wednesday, the next class day, will be geared to continue an exploration of the connections between aurality and textuality by discussing, again in groups, Darsie Bowden's chapter "Voicing and Revoicing" from *The Mythology of Voice*. In this chapter, Bowden defends the use of voice in promoting the connections between aurality and textuality. After discussing the segments of the chapter they each read, students will

be asked to experiment with sample texts to determine if they can read the same text in the same way. I will ask students to question what about text determines sound and how much is up to the reader. Each group will then present its ideas and conclusions to the class.

The last day of week seven, we will explore Bowden's criticism of the idea that writing needing to be closer to speech because speech is closer to consciousness. In "Voicing and Revoicing," Bowden is adamant that revoicing a text is useful not because it brings text closer to the consciousness, but because it provides just another way to test writing through the senses (98). In her chapter that I want students to read for this day, "The Speaking Voice and Rhetorical *Ethos*," Bowden outlines all many of the main theorists from the beginning of rhetoric who have debated whether writing or speaking are closer to the consciousness. She criticizes those who would believe speaking is closer. Voice is viewed as a dangerous term because it presumes writing must have a vocal or aural quality. Because Bowden discusses the ideas of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Quintillian, Derrida, and Ong, I will ask each group to present a description of her summary of two of the theorists to the class. I will then add a short explanation of Piaget's theories of human development and of Vygotsky's theory of internalized speech, and show how these theories also affect the discussion of writing's aurality and textuality. I will then ask the class to write an in-class journal explaining how they think the relationship between speech, writing, and thought works.

Week eight will be absorbed in discussions of Chapters 2, 3, 5, and 14 in Peter Elbow's *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing*. Chapter 2 is Walker Gibson's "The 'Speaking Voice' and the Teaching of Composition" from 1965 that makes connections

between sound and personality. Chapter 3 is Walter Ong's "Word as Sound" which analyzes the power of sound and then the power of word as sound rather than as print. Chapter 5 is the "Translator's Introduction to *Dissimulation*," written by Barbara Johnson who translated Jacques Derrida's work. In this work, the idea that words as sounds have more power than written words, or that talking is any closer to thought than writing is criticized. Chapter 14 is the philosophical work of Don Ihde, "In Praise of Sound" which calls for a philosophy of sound rather than of visual symbols. I will ask groups of three to four students to choose one of the essays to read, and then I will have them present their reading to the class throughout the week. We will then discuss how each essay can be valid and can be criticized, deepening our understanding of the interactions between aurality and textuality.

Week nine will be absorbed in presentations of the projects and discussions of the Audible Voice Projects, concluding with a round table discussion of the issues raised by voice. The final assignment of the week will be in-class writing on the student's developing understanding of the term "voice" in writing.

#### **Week 10-12: Political Voice**

The first day of week ten, I introduce both the Political Voice Project and the Complex Voice Project options. I introduce the Complex Voice Project now so that students have ample time to begin or to construct their own project idea.

The Political Voice Project is again divided into options geared for different personalities, yet open to any student to choose.

The first project asks for a small scale analysis of how different letters attempting to make a political stand are similar and different:

1. Ask 3 random people to write a short letter that takes a stand against something they wish to change *or* find 3 examples of letters in history that take a stand against some element of society. Compare the letters to find how each of them is similar and different. How do your findings inform your opinion of what political voice is or isn't? Write a 3-5 page analysis.

Because of the small scale analysis, this assignment would probably appeal to the ST personality. Because the project asks for how the findings inform what political voice is or isn't (a larger theoretical issue), the assignment will probably appeal to the NT personality as well.

The second project option is clearly for a SF personality:

2. Write a 3-5 page letter that takes a stand against some aspect of society you wish to change. Write 2-4 page analysis of the letter that explains how you voice yourself and exhibit human agency.

The personal focus and small scale analysis makes this assignment, which asks for a less palatable focus on larger societal issues, more personal and concrete for the SF personality.

The third assignment is written specifically for the polar opposite of the SF—the NT personality—emphasizing impersonal theoretical analysis:

3. How is the idea of individual voice tied into the western ideals of democracy and individuality? Are there other cultures that de-emphasize voice? What would the strengths of de-emphasizing individual voice be? What would the weaknesses of de-emphasizing individual voice be? You might want to read/skim "Individualism, Academic Writing, and ESL Learners" by Vai

Ramanathan and Dwight Atkinson to help inform your opinions. Craft a 3-5 page paper synthesizing your conclusions, using your readings and class discussions to support your opinions.

As the NT personality struggles with and crafts new theories, the NF personality would love to see how theories work and have worked in society.

The next option allows the NF personality to analyze writings that demonstrated political voice, and explore societal implications:

4. Pick an interest group, like feminists, African Americans, Asian Americans, etc. Choose 3-5 key pieces of writing from that interest group that changed American society at large. How did the writing represent the interest group? How did the writing represent the individual writer? What was it about the writing that made it so powerful? Write a 3-5 page paper, using quotes from the readings to support your analysis and conclusions.

The difference between this paper and the first option is that it asks for a large scale more impressionistic analysis, whereas the first option geared to the ST personality asks for small scale, sentence level analysis. Also, this paper asks the writer to make implications about how the writer understood both their own interest group and audience—asking for the NF personalities to analyze the interactions between human beings.

The final paper option can be crafted by the student, perhaps in conjunction with me in a private conference, to suit their personality.

5. How does political voice compare to crafted, authentic, and audible voices? How is it distinct? (Again, this can be a multi-voiced genre). Write a 3-5 page analysis.

I will provide a list of four ways of approaching the above assignment: ST personalities would probably like to do sentence level analysis to show how the four definitions of voice can interact (or not); SF personalities would prefer finding a situation from their experience in which they saw all four voices at work and to analyze that situation; NT personalities would do an analysis of the theoretical implications of mixing the four definitions of voice; and NF personalities would revel in making connections and playing with the form to help express their opinions. Examples of different approaches will be discussed at that time. After having students sign up for presentation times two weeks later, I will introduce the Complex Voice Project.

The Complex Voice Project is the project where I finally ask the students to try to fully express themselves. I provide a list of possible ideas and allow students to decide how to construct and develop the assignment. Before beginning the final project, students will be asked to have me to approve their project idea and research approach so that all projects have a similar complexity and difficulty level. The deadline for choosing and/or creating a Complex Voice Project overview will be the day Political Voice Projects are due.

The next several weeks, we will work quickly through the discussion and analysis of many readings that develop the idea of political voice. The second class day of the political voice segment will be dedicated to idea of empowering students through choice and self expression. Students will have read Donald Murray's "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent" and be ready to discuss the connections between the ideals of democracy and the idea of voice in writing as a source of personal power. I will then expand upon the ideas of Murray by handing out

selections of quotes from Henry Giroux and Paulo Freire (who inspired Giroux, among countless others). We will discuss the possibility of voice in writing as personally empowering, and then I will pass out quotes from Elizabeth Ellsworth's *Harvard Educational Review* article, "Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering? Working Through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy." I will pick quotes which highlight how the idea of voice can be falsely hopeful as a tool of empowerment, especially for members of the subcultures of our American society.

The following two days will be absorbed in discussion of what comprises a cultural political voice, analyzing writings of African-Americans, Asians, Native Americans, and women. The class will be divided into groups of 3-4 students who will each take an assigned culture group and chapter. The fifth group will be assigned to assess the mixing of minority interest groups. Each group will be assigned a chapter from Yancey's *Voices on Voice* to read and present for the class and asked to bring in another example of the assigned subculture's writing to share with the class. The group assigned to African American writing will be asked to read, "Nobody Mean More to Me Than You And the Future Life of Willie Jordan: July, 1985" by June Jordan from Peter Elbow's *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing*. This article explores the African American dialect and the political ramifications of its use. The group assigned to Asian writing will be asked to read John H. Powers and Gwendolyn Gong's "East Asian Voice and the Expression of Cultural Ethos" in Kathleen Blake Yancey's anthology, *Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry*. This article explores how the idea of *ethos* is more communal in East Asia. The group assigned to Native American writing will be asked to read Tom Carr's "Varieties of the 'Other': Voice and Native American Culture,"



from *Voices on Voice*. This article explores how Native Americans incorporate other into self, including nature. The group assigned to women's writing will be asked to read Susan Brown Carlton's "Voice and the Naming of Woman" from *Voices on Voice*. This article explores the feminist voice which reframes the male discourse. The group that will discuss the mixing of groups will read an example of a combination of women's interests and African American interests in bell hooks's chapter "'When I Was a Young Soldier for the Revolution': Coming to Voice" included in *Landmark Essays*. This article discusses bell hooks coming to voice as a feminist and as an African American.

Each group will be expected to summarize for the class what makes writing of their culture unique to that culture, how authors attempt to present their culture, and how authors hope their depiction of their culture will affect society at large. We conclude by discussing what each cultural group tries to achieve and how each group compares to each other in political voice.

The next day I transition to the tensions between personal and professional voices, focusing on technical and academic texts. I will have expected students to have read Nancy Allen and Deborah S. Bosley's "Technical Texts/Personal Voice: Intersections and Crossed Purposes" from *Voices on Voice* in groups of four. This article discusses how after assimilating a business discourse, writers in a business can start to voice themselves and change the shape of that discourse, in much the same way Yancey noted Elbow and others have changed academic discourse. After a brief lecture on the function-oriented purposes of academic and technical texts, I will ask students if academic and technical texts can have personal voice, and/or can individuals affect some change by their writing on the larger academic or business writing world. I will allow

students to discuss their reading in their groups for 20 minutes in context of my questions. The students will then present their conclusions to the class as a whole in a round table discussion. If we have time, I will have students get back into their groups to analyze technical and academic texts for political voice.

On the final day before presentations I steep the students in theory, introducing them to the philosophy of postmodernism to add to their understanding of resistance pedagogy, voice, and self. Each student will be assigned a portion of Randal R. Freisinger's "Voicing the Self: Toward a Pedagogy of Resistance in a Postmodern Age" from *Voices on Voice* to read and summarize for the class in a round table presentation. We will then discuss Freisinger's ideas in context of the other ideas presented when studying political voice, and, if we have time, in context of the other ideas presented throughout the course. In preparation for the last several weeks, I will end the class by asking if the students believe in the concept of political voice or in voice in writing at all and why.

The following week will be tied up in presentations and discussions of the presentations, with the final day ending in a round table discussion of political voice and its possible connections with the other definitions of voice. I will again ask if the students believe in the concept of political voice or in voice in writing at all and why. My belief is that some students will like the idea of political voice, while others will find it a flimsy and possibly distasteful way of looking at writing, depending on their personality and experience. I hope for the class to see how individual differences play into preferences for certain theories, but as I said before, if the class proves me wrong, then we will have learned from that, too.

**Week 13-15: Complex Voice and Closing Activities**

The final several weeks will have students comparing their complex definition of voice with the definitions of Peter Elbow and Kathleen Blake Yancey in the introductions of their anthologies. After reminding the class of John Hawkes' use of voice in its four definitions in 1970, I will begin class by doing an outline on the board comparing the ways Elbow and Yancey situate voice (as Yancey would like to have termed the process of wading through all the theories of voice). The class will then discuss and compare the two approaches of situating voice for the next two days, culminating in an on-line chatroom discussion about how to define and categorize voice in writing.

For the following classroom period, each student will have read a small portion of chapter 16 of *Voices on Voice*—Mark Zamierowski's "The Virtual Voice of Network Culture"—for presentation and discussion. While the chapter can be highly analytical and may be the hardest to read, it has interesting segments analyzing written voice for a complex voice with definitions of voice that combine two or more of the term's traditional definitions. Students who stumble through the presentation of a confusing segment will be forgiven. I will then highlight how Zamierowski analyzes chatroom segments for voice and ask students to go back to our chatroom to again analyze their writing for voice in any or all of the four categories—creating their own complex definition of voice for their journal.

If the students were unable to create a definition of voice, the following class period will be their chance to go back one more time to the chatroom and disprove the presence of crafted personality and/or authentic voice(s) and/or audible voice and/or

political voice after having read Darsie Bowden's "Networks: The Technological Disruption of Voice" from her *Mythology of Voice*.

The last two days before presentations and discussions of presentations allow students to analyze the possible effect of personality and intelligence preferences on the preference of one theory over another. For the last class period, students will each state how they define voice and why. Furthermore, the students will be asked to expound on the following questions: What do you look for in writing, what helps you create your best writing, and why? How has voice in writing as a concept developed this term for you? How has the concept of voice developed your understanding of writing? The homework will be writing a final reflective journal synthesizing the class discussion. The last days of class will consist of presentations of the Complex Voice Project and discussions of those presentations, culminating with a final get together for dinner where we relax after our intense term of self and social analysis.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

It is my hope that the course I constructed will serve to develop a new way of using voice in writing in the classroom—to use voice in writing as a springboard for discussion about how and why writing works. If I succeed in at least showing the potential of voice in writing as a topic geared to help develop a personal philosophy of writing, then I will feel my thesis has been successful.

## **Epilogue: My Theory of Voice**

### **My theory of voice**

My theories of voice are shaped largely by my understanding of personality theory (and intelligence theory, although I never got to explore my theories of how Howard Gardner's ideas make this topic even more relevant). Further, my theories of voice are shaped by my understanding that each individual has highly unique experiences and interests that shape how each moment, let alone piece of writing, is approached. Finally, my theories of voice are shaped by an understanding of human interaction and learning reminiscent of (influenced by) Kathleen Blake Yancey's explanation of individual and social elements constantly interacting and influencing each other (with her theories influenced by Mikhail Bakhtin, and his theories influenced by others). I am aware my ideas have all been given to me by others who were affected by a longer list of others. I am aware that I am now reshaped by still others. I am aware that my ideas, and perhaps my sense of self, will continue to be reshaped as long as I live. Of course self is social. Why else would we be able to look within and find voices that would resonate with other people? At the same time I am cautious about slipping into an idea of self as entirely social. There is some aspect of inertia in the individual, some human agency or human will. This human agency is shaped by society. But even while being socially formed, each human is very unique in nuance.

Of course, I admit that I have been shaped to think in terms of individuality. My training as a teacher in my undergraduate degree was engineered to develop my understanding of how unique each of my students would be and how to shift my teaching throughout the course of a year to suit different personalities and intelligences. However,

my experience in the teaching field supported my training. Teaching showed me how approaching each student as unique and special (even if it is possibly a theoretical fallacy) encourages and seems to empower a higher quality of work. Personality theories are one way of exploring how one person is different from another.

Does personality theory help me understand my authentic voice? Yes, I think it does. After studying the theories, I came to understand perhaps why voice is such a fun concept for me. As an INFP, I find the concept of voice fascinating. I think that crafted voice is pretty much acting on paper. Because I tend to empathize with people, I enjoy crafting a personality or voice in smaller, more focused pieces of writing. I just need first to study and practice the voice of the genre. Like other INFP's described in DiTiberio and Jenson, my voice is at best naturally personable, engaging, and full of insights. At worst, it can ramble on without sufficient connections between my ideas—something I need to normally revise extensively to fix (and, sadly, don't always catch in my revisions, and then feel I should apologize to the reader). Like other INFPs, I also tend to avoid conclusive answers, preferring the exploration of ideas. I like to look within myself to see the society around me and seek harmony with the readers I anticipate. My sense of structure is creative and sometimes may be hard to follow, especially for someone dedicated to a more rigid form of structure. My authentic voice is complex, so I tend to believe in authentic voices leading into a whole sense of voice—like various atoms join together to create a whole.

But personality theory does not explain why I feel more comfortable writing about other academics in the third person. That comfort points more to how my reading of academic articles have fixed a way of approaching academic writing in my mind. I am

both aware of the societal influences that shaped me, but see those influences to be various and to have shaped me in sometimes conflicting (and ultimately sifting together to create unique) ways—like clouds create infinitely different snowflakes.

My opinions of aurality and textuality are shaped by my experiences of teaching first grade in the past year. Having taught first grade and having taught students to read and write, I now believe that for most of us, language is primarily aural, but I do think that we can develop a primacy for textual communication. And if we are deaf, textual communication will always have primacy. It is all about how we build the pathways of the brain through our experiences. Hence, as a first grade teacher, I emphasized the memorization of sight words as much as I emphasized the learning of phonics. The more written communication is practiced as a visual pattern event, the more the brain will accept it that way. I have both a visual and textual connection to text. As a musician, I tend to hear text. As one who also loved mathematics and visual arts, I tend to also see textual patterns. Personally, I do not find one to be primary over the other.

I also have come to believe that all writing has a political voice, but whether that political voice is effective or not is another matter. Political voice is a way of identifying the human agency behind writing, rather than viewing it as an abstract group of symbols that are constructed for meaning.

After studying voice, I now like to look at my writing and see how effective it is in the four types of voice. But as a teacher of students who will mostly not be my personality type, and as someone who has studied theory and seen that criticisms of voice can have merit especially for certain personalities, I do not believe voice in writing should be used as a pedagogical tool to assess and teach how to write. I would never use

voice as anything but a springboard for discussion of how writing works and for self-exploration.

However, I do think that the concept of voice forces students to consider how they believe writing works. Students should ask themselves how they approach writing and reading: whether they tend to shape themselves for an audience (or not), whether they prefer self exploration, whether they view self as monolithic or multifaceted, whether they tend to hear how a text should be or simply see the pattern of how text should be. Why should students ask themselves these questions? Social and self awareness should make them better writers, teachers, editors, and communicators. Discussion among a class of students on how they approach writing will, I hope, show students that many individuals approach writing and voice in a different way and lead to questions as to why that might be.

At the same time, I do not think that idea of voice as a general complex term will work for many students. Some students, especially those who are more intuitive and make decisions by how they feel, will grow as writers using the ideas inspired by the general term “voice” in writing because they tend to intuit patterns when given analogies, metaphors, and other broad explanations. Sensing personalities that make decisions by logical thinking, on the other hand, need details and structure, which could make the idea of voice frustrating.

However, as I’ve said through out this thesis, voice in its five definitions can still be useful for every student if it is used as a springboard for discussions about how writing works. Talking about how writing works involves understanding how we think communication works, how we view ourselves, how we view the world around us, and



how we think we affect the world and how the world shapes us. Discussions about the interaction between writer and reader become crucial.

Does writing work differently for every reader? Perhaps it does, to the extent that every writer has a different personal history and biological makeup. And yet, if several writers are from the same social group, they may tend to approach writing in a similar way based on their socialization. Maybe we prefer to read writers who think like we do. Maybe there is a social way of writing pleasing to all or most people.

The answers are not easy. In fact, they are very complex and will vary according to personal and social philosophies. Discussions of voice can begin to pit one philosophical approach against another. In an Elbow-like way, my approach to voice is not to say one approach is better than the other, but that all approaches drawn together lead to a greater, even if still incomplete, understanding of both what I value in written communication and what others around me value.

Exploring the development of the term “voice” in writing can stimulate curiosity about the theories about how writing works, and that topic can be very useful in a classroom. By asking questions about how writing works, students can begin to construct and understand their own writing process. By finding a process that works for them and understanding why it works and why other approaches may not work, students can be empowered to write more effectively.

I end my thesis in a way reminiscent of Elbow, Yancey, and Bowden: I encourage the idea of voice as a starting place for further questions. Michael Spooner says in Yancey’s conclusion, “But one can divide voice(s) forever, and then there is really is no end to this chapter. Only a last page that precluded conclusion, eavesdrops on

an unending conversation..." (Yancey 313). In the conversation based on different ideas of voice, we will learn more about ourselves, about others, and about how we all function in the social act of written communication.

**Appendix A: Course Syllabus, Calendar, and Assignment Sheets**

**Voice in Writing: Myth or Reality?**

An Exploration of Theories about How Writing Works

**Instructor:** Ms. Christina Hancher  
**Office:** Library  
**Office Hours:** by appointment  
**E-mail:** 4voice@yahoo.com

**Required Texts:**

- \*Bowden, Darsie. *The Mythology of Voice*. 1997.
- \*DiTiberio, John K. and George H. Jensen. *Writing and Personality: Finding Your Voice, Your Style, Your Way*. 1995.
- \*Elbow, Peter. *Landmark Essays on Voice in Writing*. 1994.
- \*Stewart, Donald. *Authentic Voice: A Prewriting Approach to Student Writing* 1970.
- \*Yancey, Kathleen Blake, ed. *Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry*. 1994.

**Articles on closed reserve in the library:**

- \* Ellsworth, Elizabeth "Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering? Working Through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy." *Harvard Educational Review*. 1989.
- \*Gibson, Walker. "The Voice of The Writer" *Composition and Communication*. 1962.
- \*Murray, Donald. "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent." *College Composition and Communication*. 1969.

**About this course...**

This course is designed to explore the idea of voice in writing. Voice in writing is a concept that has inspired discussions that lead to "some of the key issues in composition theory," (quoted from Darsie Bowden's 1995 *Rhetoric Review* article "The Rise of a Metaphor.") You will be reading various theorists who discuss voice in writing. We will talk about our readings, talk about our writing, and discuss the role of voice in writing as different theorists have presented voice—voice as crafted persona in writing, voice as authentic self reflected in writing, voice as the part of writing that is heard, voice as the human agency behind writing, and voice as a complex entity. This course will require you as the student to explore the concepts of craft (the shaping of personality), authorship and authenticity, aurality and textuality, and power in writing. In so doing, you will be expected to analyze how your personality and learning styles possibly shape your approach to writing voice.

**Grades**

Reflective Journals and Reading Responses	20%
Crafting Voice Project	15%
Authentic Voice Project	15%
Audible Voice Project	15%
Political Voice Project	15%
Complex Voice Project	20%

**Recommended Text:**

- \*Gibson, Walker. *Tough, Sweet, and Stuff*. 1966.

## Calendar

15 Week Semester, meeting one hour a class 3 times a week

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Week 1	*Introduction *Blind Voice Journal *Discussion of why each student is interested in the topic of voice in writing	What kind of writing to you prefer to write? What kind of writing do you prefer to read? MYERS BRIGGS Personality Testing.	Introduction and overly brief history of the five categories of voice definitions outlined in the course.
Week 2	Circle of Voices Activity: How do we create different voices for different audiences? Discuss Crafting Voice Assignment	For class have read Walker Gibson's "The Voice of a Writer" and Reading Response. Aristotelian triad. Handout from <i>Tough Sweet and Stuffy</i> .	What makes voice?—using the handout from <i>Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy</i> . Analyzing Magazines and Newspapers for Voice Analyzing Web Sites for Voice.
Week 3	Presentations	Presentations	Crafting Voice Project Due. In class journal: Does the idea of crafted voice work for you? Why or why not? What could make it more effective? What are the most important things you learned while studying crafted voice these past two weeks? Brief Discussion.
Week 4	*Have read assigned chapter of Donald Stewart's <i>Authentic Voice: A Prewriting Approach to Writing</i> *Reader Response Journal *Discuss	*Assign and discuss Authentic Voice Project *Myers Briggs Results returned—individually assigned chapters in DiTiberio and Jenson	*Discuss writing preferences after having skimmed <i>Writing and Personality</i>

Week 5	<p>*Voice or voices? Small lecture on Bahktin and the appropriation and development of voice(s)</p> <p>*Back to the circle of voices: how do communities shape our voices?</p>	<p>*The opposition: Bowden, pg 63-74</p> <p>*Reader Response</p> <p>*Journals</p>	<p>Group work: Analyzing examples of writing that best represent us in light of Bowden's criticism. What if authentic voice doesn't exist? Do you still believe? Why or why not?</p>
Week 6	Presentations	Presentations	<p>Authentic Voice Project Due. Round Table on the concept of self/selves and if self/selves can actually be represented in writing. In class journal reflecting on the ideas presented by authentic voice, and the validity of those ideas.</p>
Week 7	<p>*Read "Talk/Write: A Behavioral Pedagogy for Composition." (you may read this article in groups of 4). Does it help to talk out what we will write about? What is the connection between writing and talking?</p> <p>*Discussion.</p> <p>*Assign and discuss Audible Voice Project.</p>	<p>*Darsie Bowden, Ch. 5, "Voicing and Revoicing" (you may read the chapter in groups of 4)</p> <p>*Group Work. Reading text aloud. Does text determine how it should sound? Attempts at reading a text the same way.</p> <p>*Class discussion and analysis of the experiment.</p>	<p>*Darsie Bowden, Ch. 2, "The Speaking Voice and Rhetorical <i>Ethos</i>" (you may read the chapter in groups of 4)</p> <p>*What is closer to thought—speaking or writing?</p> <p>*Small discussion of how Bowden treats Aristotle, Plato, Isocrates, Quintillian, Derrida, and Ong (with an added short lecture on Vygotsky and Piaget.)</p>
Week 8	<p>Landmark Essays, Ch. 2, 3, 4, 5, 14—as three of us each tackle a chapter—we will then get back together and discuss the key issues of orality and literacy.</p>	Landmark Essays, cont.	Landmark Essays, cont.
Week 9	Presentations	Presentations	<p>*Audible Voice Project Due.</p> <p>*Round table discussion of Issues so far. *In-class journal on voice.</p>

Week 10	<p>Assign Political Voice Project</p> <p>Assign Complex Voice Project</p> <p>Discuss</p>	<p>Democracy: Donald Murray's "Finding Your Own Voice: Teaching Composition in an Age of Dissent" 1969</p> <p>Empowerment: --Henry Giroux --Paulo Friere --why isn't this empowering? (handouts)</p> <p>Round Table Discussion</p>	<p>Cultural Voice: --Afr. Am. voice (Ch. 8 <i>Landmark</i>) --Asian voice (ch. 13 <i>Voices</i>) --Native Am. (ch 12 <i>Voices</i>) Again, 3 tackle a chapter, present, and discuss as a class</p>
Week 11	<p>Cultural Voice cont. --women's voice (ch. 14 <i>Voices</i>) --bell hooks (Ch. 7 <i>Landmark</i>)</p>	<p>Academic voice Professional voice --Nancy Allen and Deborah S. Bosley "Technical Texts/Personal Voice: Intersections and Crossed Purposes" (Ch 5 <i>Voices on Voice</i>) *Brief Discussion *Group Work—let's look at our texts to find examples of personal and impersonal text. Do both display voice? How?</p>	<p>Human Agency --Randal R. Friesinger "Voicing the Self: Toward a Pedagogy of Resistance in a Postmodern Age" (Ch 15 <i>Voices on Voice</i>) Round Table</p>
Week 12	Presentations	Presentations	<p>*Complex Voice Project outline due *Political Voice Project due *Round table discussion *In class journal</p>
Week 13	<p>*Peter Elbow's Introduction to <i>Landmark Essays on Voice and Writing</i> *Kathleen Blake Yancey's Introduction and Conclusion to <i>Voices on Voice</i>. *An overview of unread chapters in <i>Landmark</i> *Class discussion</p>	*Discuss in chatroom.	<p>*Ch 11 <i>Voices on Voice</i> *Ch 16 <i>Voices on Voice</i> *Group Work: Let's examine the chatroom to find voice.</p>

<p>Week 14</p>	<p>*Darsie Bowden, Ch. 7          “Networks: The Technological Disruption of Voice”          *Is voice a myth?          *Let’s go back to that chatroom to look at how Bowden deconstructs the possibility of voice.</p>	<p>*Does personality affect writing preferences?          How?          *Looking back at DiTiberio and Jenson as the term comes to a close.          *Discuss.</p>	<p>*Around the room:          Define voice in writing for you—what do you look for in writing, what helps you create your best writing, and why. How has voice in writing as a concept developed this term for you? How has the concept of voice developed your understanding of writing?</p>
<p>Week 15</p>	<p>Presentations</p>	<p>Presentations</p>	<p>Complex Voice Project Due          Hand in Portfolio          Class Dinner</p>
<p>Finals</p>	<p>Get your materials back</p>		



## Crafting Voice Project

150 points

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS

1. Analyzing Crafted Voices—find three professional writing texts and see how their voices are crafted for different audiences. Use *Tough, Sweet, and Stuff* by Walker Gibson to help you analyze these voices and how they are created. Write at least a 1-page analysis per text.
2. Case Study—go into a classroom, work environment, or the Internet and see how many written voices a student, teacher, professional writer, or web site publisher uses. *Or* survey a limited group of individuals in the same trade or profession to see the crafted voices they are aware of creating. Write a 3-4 page paper describing the conclusions of your research in context of your readings. Include carefully documented results of your findings.
3. Research Paper—how prevalent is the idea of voice in professional writing and editing? We have one textbook on teaching professional writing and editing that uses voice as a persona in its style chapter. Look up 2-3 other texts to see if voice is also used. If it is used, how is it used? What does this tell you about how voice is shaped? If voice is not used, what other words are used to describe Gibson's idea of voice as a crafted persona? Analyze the overall implications of your findings. (minimum 3-4 page paper)
4. Create 5 different crafted voices for 5 short papers on the same topic that are each geared to a different audience. *Or* create a web site that has sections crafted for 5 different audiences. After creating your papers or web site, write a short paper describing how your readings and class discussions helped you do this assignment and explore the implications of writing for several audiences in the larger world—how must advertisers, corporations, and even individuals be aware of each other when they write?

Whichever project you choose, be ready to do a 5-8 minute oral presentation of the project to the class the week the project is due. Your oral presentation should summarize the content and conclusions of your project. [Reminder: you will do oral presentations for every project in this course]

100 points per project, 50 points for presentation of project

## **Authentic Voice Project**

150 points

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS

1. Choose 3 of your classmates who are creating a portfolio (assignment #2), or choose 3 writers of nonfiction who write for multiple genres (and perhaps even write multigenre forms). Write a 2-4 page paper that analyzes your findings. How is each author unique? How are the authors similar? Do you perceive authentic voices in your readings? Why or why not?
2. Create a personal portfolio of at least 4 pages of free writing, several examples of writing in process, and several examples of polished writing (writing from previous classes can and should be used). Craft a 2-4 page introduction to the portfolio that analyzes and describes your authentic voice(s) to a friend. Do you think you have an authentic voice? Why or why not?
3. What are the possible benefits and dangers of using the idea of authentic voice(s) in the classroom? Pick a stance: for the use of authentic voice, for the use of authentic voices, and/or against the use of authentic voice(s) (I say and/or because you can be against the use of authentic voice, but for the use of authentic voices. Or you can be for a use of authentic voice as a developing voice, but against the use of authentic voice in any other way). Write a 3-5 page paper arguing your stance with evidence from readings, classroom discussions, and your life.
4. Write a 3-5 page multi-voiced research paper that analyzes and compares crafted and authentic voices. Use evidence from readings, classroom discussions, and your life. Discuss whether you believe authentic voice(s) can be represented in writing, and if you think they even exist. Analyze within the paper how the multi-voiced research paper does or does not better represent your authentic voice(s). Perhaps even discuss how such writing could change academic writing for you and for others.

100 points per project, 50 points for presentation of project

## Audible Voice Project

150 points

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS

1. Choose 3 passages of writing—preferably of 3 genres. Have 3 different people read each passage (but none of the people should hear one of the other readers). Record each reading and analyze for similarities and differences. What do your findings tell you about whether voice is audible or textual (or how audible writing is and how purely textual it is). How does the reader's voice affect the sound of the writer—or who has more power, the reader or the writer, in shaping voice? The whole project with analysis and records of findings should be at least 3-5 pages long.
2. Get written transcripts of an interview. Have a group of volunteers listen to the interview and then read the transcripts. Choose a passage that is not written well but sounds nice. Poll what needs to be done to improve the passage as a piece of writing. Reflect on the key differences between what is generally considered effective speech and what is generally considered effective writing. The whole project with analysis and records of findings should be at least 3-5 pages long.
3. Challenge yourself to write as you speak. Pick a partner in the class and record each other speaking. Is there something more authentic about your transcripts of speech? What does writing gain when you write exactly as you speak? What does writing lose when you write exactly as you speak? The whole project with analysis and records of findings should be at least 3-5 pages long, each.
4. Vygotsky stated that thought is internalized speech, so some theorists ask if writing is externalized thought (after originally being speech). If speech comes first, it could mean that speech is more internal than writing. Elbow would say it is important to hear voice in the text—its intonation, rhythm, and cadence. Derrida, on the other hand, would say that writing is just another symbolic form of communication, as close to thought as speech is (if not closer). In other words, according to some theorists, writing doesn't have to have anything to do with sound. Explore these ideas. **Either** write 10 pages of reflection on these concepts, **or** write a more refined and researched argumentative 5-page paper siding either for or against the connection of writing to aurality.
5. How can audible voice be connected to crafted voice and authentic voice? How is it distinct? Write a 5 page analysis (yes, this can be a multi-voiced genre).

100 points per project, 50 points for presentation of project

## Political Voice Project

150 points

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS

1. Ask 3 random people to write a short letter that takes a stand against something they wish to change *or* find 3 examples of letters in history that take a stand against some element of society. Compare the letters to find how each of them is similar and different. How do your findings inform your opinion of what political voice is or isn't? Write a 3-5 page analysis.
2. Write a 3-5 page letter that takes a stand against some aspect of society you wish to change. Write a 2-4 page analysis of the letter that explains how you voice yourself and exhibit human agency.
3. How is the idea of individual voice tied into the western ideals of democracy and individuality? Are there other cultures that de-emphasize voice? What would the strengths of de-emphasizing individual voice be? What would the weaknesses of de-emphasizing individual voice be? You might want to read/skim "Individualism, Academic Writing, and ESL Learners" (1999) by Vai Ramanathan and Dwight Atkinson to help inform your opinions. Craft a 3-5 page paper synthesizing your conclusions, using your readings and class discussions to support your opinions.
4. Pick an interest group, like feminists, African Americans, Asian Americans, etc. Choose 3-5 key pieces of writing from that interest group that changed American society at large. How did the writing represent the interest group? How did the writing represent the individual writer? What was it about the writing that made it so powerful? Write a 3-5 page paper, using quotes from the readings to support your analysis and conclusions.
5. How does political voice compare to crafted, authentic, and audible voices? How is it distinct? (again, this can be a multi-voiced genre). Write a 3-5 page analysis. [Meet with the teacher to discuss further details and parameters for this assignment]

100 points per project, 50 points for presentation of project

## Complex Voice Project

200 points

CREATE YOUR OWN PROJECT. The following prompts can be used for inspiration:

1. Analyze how personality could shape opinions about what voice is or isn't, could or couldn't be.
2. Based on your work in the classroom, what do you believe voice is or isn't, should or shouldn't be? Write argumentative researched paper defending your position.
3. How does your understanding of voice change how you will now teach writing?
4. How does your understanding of voice change how you will now write and/or read?
5. How does your personality and learning style shape how you define voice?
6. Write a multi-voiced research paper that creates and defends a complex definition of voice and, within the paper, analyze how your paper represents your definition of voice.
7. Argue against the concept of voice, and show why it should not be used anymore.
8. Analyze the importance of institutional voices vs. personal voice and how the two interact. For example, is there personal voice in academic writing, or in business writing? How so? How not? And/or how does institution shape personal voice and how does personal voice shape institutional voices? If you can, use your knowledge of voice as crafted, authentic, audible, and/or political to shape your argument.
9. Create a portfolio that displays your command of voice in each of its definitions.
10. I'm open to any equivalent project you are would like to suggest that will show a command over the material presented this term.

WRITE AT LEAST 8-10 PAGES FOR ANY ONE OF THE ABOVE OPTIONS

150 points per project, 50 points for presentation of project

## **Portfolio of Reflective Journals and Reading Responses**

200 points

150 points for weekly reading responses and reflective journals  
50 points for the introduction for the portfolio

Each week you will be asked to write about 5 pages responding to readings and/or responding to classroom discussions for 10 points. Extra writing will give you up to 50 extra credit points (at a wholesale price of 2 points a page).

As you go, you may want to keep a record of how your understanding of voice develops. This will feed into a several page introduction that analyzes the content of your portfolio, especially focusing on both the development of the concept “voice” and on an analysis of what you perceive your writing voice to now be.

The final journal entry should be a preliminary personal philosophy statement about what voice in writing is and how writing works.

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