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Voice in English Studies

by

Doreen Dasher Hamilton

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of**

Doctor of Philosophy

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1997

Approved by 
Chairperson of Supervisory Committee





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Doctoral Dissertation

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Abstract

Voice in English Studies

by Doreen Dasher Hamilton

**Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee: Professor George Dillon
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This study brings together two topics -- voice and English Studies. It demonstrates significant differences between the ways Rhetoric and Composition, Literature Studies, and Creative Writing define, understand, and use the term *voice* to denote features of writing. It argues that a study of these differences offers insight into the dynamics of both voice and English Studies. Traditional methods, such as comparative analyses and close readings, are combined with an original method that reads databases as hermeneutical/rhetorical sites.

Chapter One shows that while many practitioners proceed as if the meaning of voice were settled, the uses and presumed definitions of voice vary widely throughout documents listed in major disciplinary databases; this is consistent with the deeply conusable dynamics of voice.

Chapter Two traces voice through Greek, Roman, early Medieval, Enlightenment, and Twentieth Century rhetoric, studies its presence in Composition textbooks and academic literature, critiques the voice-evangelism controversy, and assesses recent efforts to define voice. It also constructs a database portrait of voice in Rhetoric and Composition, considers the significance of database administrative policies, and argues that databases contain information about voice not available from other sources. Overall, voice in Rhetoric and Composition is shown to

project an exceptionally carnivalistic ethos consistent with Rhetoric and Composition's recent history.

Chapter Three shows that voice denotes for Creative Writing certain stable meanings of practical consequence. Database portraits of Creative Writing at one major research university reveal a robust enterprise rivaling expository writing in allocated resources. Chapter Four examines voice in Literature Studies, concluding that in this branch of English Studies, voice is typically used idiosyncratically to suit practitioners' needs. Database analyses show that voice exerts a presence in the MLA database comparable to metaphor's.

Chapter Five argues, following Walter Ong's work, that voice in writing may reflect an effort to humanize "voiceless" print. It recommends a new category of metaphorical, deliberately unbound technical terminology, for which voice would be the first candidate. It also recommends further studies of how English Studies writes itself in web sites, course catalogues, and through voice's companion terms -- "sight," "point-of-view," "write," and "writing."

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PREFACE

MAJOR PREMISES, HERMENEUTICAL DEFENSE, AND METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION

I

This Dissertation brings together two topics: *voice* and English Studies. Its main premise is that voice, a term *apparently* like metaphor or tone, has had the radical, unintended, and largely unstudied consequence of registering key interior structures of English Studies and the dynamics that produced them. Most of a discipline's main terms convey some evidence of both the discipline's characteristics and of their own genesis, but this Dissertation will argue as a second premise that voice, being an exceptionally transparent, malleable, and accommodating term, bears, perhaps, the deepest impress of English Studies' facets. Like "[s]ounds [that] all register the interior structures of whatever it is that produces them" (Ong, 72), voice, a metaphor for sound and more, turns the inside of English Studies out, and thus a study of voice will show us in ways not otherwise available something of where voice and we in English Studies have been, where we are, what we are, and what we might be.

To give just one example of how voice registers the structures and

dynamics of English Studies, Chapter Two argues that the profuse, rich, but undisciplined characterizations of voice found throughout Composition's professional literature correspond with certain of Composition's characteristics -- one of which is an as yet unabated carnivalistic exuberance. Having given itself play, as in *latitude*, and permission to play, as in *to experiment*, Composition developed an ethos quite distinct from that of Creative Writing and Literature Studies. This different ethos plays out (and can be seen *at play*) in voice acting as mirror, lamp, instrument, act, scene, agent, and agency. In one academic database the Identifiers *Voice-Rhetoric* raise 167 documents asserting that voice is, can, or must be found; that there are as many as thirty-two kinds of voices, ranging from adult to polyphonic; that voice can be affected in as many as nineteen ways, ranging from redefined to unheard; that it can have an effect, as in affecting readability; that it can act, as in oppressing and evolving; and that it can be defined as point of view, expressiveness of style, authenticity, or writer's attitude; and that it is a metaphor.

Other key terms in English Studies have generated their own history and meta-literature, but this Dissertation will argue that none has

produced a situation nor a literature comparable to voice's. The study of metaphor stretches back to the ancients, but whatever the arguments advanced over the millennia about how metaphor works or about its characteristics, its value, and its role in literature and writing, they all proceed from common agreement that the thing called metaphor is, to begin with, a certain way of arranging words to produce a certain effect and to convey certain relationships: "[I]n a metaphor a word which in standard (or literal) usage denotes one kind of thing, quality or action is applied to another, in the form of a statement of identity instead of comparison" (Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms, 61). Whatever the embellishments to this definition, such as I. A. Richards' ideas about *tenor*, *vehicle*, and *implied metaphor*, metaphor is generally understood across English Studies to be fundamentally what is quoted above. Such is not the case with voice. It has been defined as the speaking voice, as a grammatical construct, as author's attitude, as authenticity, as presence, as self, as expressiveness of style, and as metaphor. Very large and varied claims have been made about it. Of the latter, perhaps the most remarkable is Donald Murray's assertion that voice is "... the most important, the most **magical** [my emphasis] and powerful element in

writing" (33).

A large part of what this Dissertation will investigate is how and why voice metamorphosed from literal signifier to grammatical construct to magical element.

A third premise this Dissertation will advance is that English Studies needed voice to signify the multiple meanings which more disciplined and bounded terms, such as style, tone, and metaphor, could not convey. We will see that in certain important ways voice, a metaphor and more, not only represents, expresses, uses, and objectifies (to use M. H. Abrams' verbs) aspects of "the given world as its essential source and subject matter" (Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp, 12) -- it *is* an essential source and subject matter and will studied as such in this Dissertation.

II

As metaphor, as "essential source and subject matter," and as a radically reflexive move, voice will be studied through two approaches, one traditional, the other nontraditional. The first relies on standard critical methods, such as close readings and comparative analyses, and needs no defense. The second advances a hermeneutical premise leading to

method: it is that academic databases are hermeneutical/rhetorical sites besides being depositories of information. This Dissertation will show that databases, designed to store, organize, and locate discrete bits of information quickly, have had the additional, intriguing, unintended consequence of cueing, shaping, and promoting the synthesis and meaning-making of the information contained within them.

That databases cue, shape, promote, and synthesize meaning may seem an odd assertion to make about indexed collections of articles, books, and conference papers, especially if we think of databases as mechanistic arrangements for locating information. But if we remember that an academic search engine uses as descriptors terms appearing first in the literature of an academic discipline; that those terms are abstracted as significations of that discipline and of its texts; that descriptors both direct us to, and cluster, texts; that databases serve writers' purposes and have intended audiences; and that clustering generates a paratactic logic between items, we can hardly avoid concluding that using descriptors to search a database is always already a fundamentally hermeneutic and rhetorical enterprise. In short, the meaning-making dynamics of reading and the rhetorical dynamics of

purpose and audience (the document writers', the database makers', and the database users') involve us *necessarily* in a rhetorical/hermeneutical event set into a *necessarily* hermeneutical/rhetorical context. It is also possible, as my Supervisor points out, that "[w]e may use the descriptors as mere tags of convenience or even as necessary evils, withholding thereby access to the real names of the discipline's conceptual scaffolding" (Dillon, written comments, 1996). A study of such differences takes us beyond the limits of this Dissertation but might produce very interesting results.

The linguistic and rhetorical patterns of a database (like those of a language and of language users) generate opportunities, contexts, actions, intentions, significations, interpretations, results, and conclusions. For example, a collection of entries from the Modern Language Association database located by the descriptors *Voice-Rhetoric*, and *Voice-Metaphor* yields the following: the opportunity to observe the frequency, by year, of the publication of articles and books that fall within the descriptors' contexts; to observe the rhetorical and linguistic actions of writers who use the term *voice*; to discern intention from those actions; to observe and interpret the significations attached to voice by writers who write

about it and the significations derived from context, action, and intention; and to interpret all of the preceding and to draw conclusions about them. For example, one such analysis suggests that voice, an upstart, "floating signifier" (Crowley in Yancey, viii) now possibly exerts as strong an influence (judging from Literature Studies' database self-portraits) over Literature Studies as does metaphor, suggesting further that "something" important has happened in Literature Studies since voice's arrival on the scene of English Studies just thirty years ago.

A person using a database only to locate particular works for the purpose of finding and reading them is, of course, engaged in a legitimate academic activity, and this was indeed what I did for several years as I studied voice first in seminars and then to prepare for written and oral examinations. But after awhile, familiarity bred contemplation, leading to insight and eventually to a conclusion bearing special weight: that voice, being English Studies' least traditional, settled, and bounded term, is to a significant degree inaccessible by traditional research and interpretive methods. A standard reference source, such as M. H. Abrams' A Glossary of Literary Terms, Third Edition, does yield an orderly definition of voice emphasizing its "recently evolved usage [into] the

equivalent in imaginative literature to Aristotle's 'ethos' in a work of persuasive rhetoric and suggest[ing] the traditional rhetorician's concern with the importance of the physical voice" (125). The definition goes on to define voice as authorial presence and identity, mentions other ways of approaching the same concept, such as Wayne Booth's term, *implied author* (125), and acknowledges some disagreements about these matters, namely Walter Ong's ideas about *false voice*, *true voice*, and the relationship between the two, leading to discovery of the self (126). And indeed it is possible to use a database to find books and articles by writers who rely on such ideas. It is also possible to discover through the same, standard uses of databases ideas about voice that are not "voiced" in Abrams nor in any other standard reference sources and that may well conflict with Abrams' definitions of voice and with each other.

In casting about for works on voice -- searching one database and then another, trying out combinations of descriptors, getting one result and then another, I found myself casting about for a way to understand something unexpected that I had glimpsed. It was a certain telling detail -- that voice casts a **varied** shadow or presence across English Studies. The *voice* of Composition is not, really, the *voice* of Creative Writing nor

of Literature Studies. There are certain similarities, but they are contingent and might well be obscured, disregarded, and occasionally denied as voice is written to suit not only Composition's, Creative Writing's or Literature Studies' needs, but more than occasionally to suit individual academicians' needs, as I will show throughout this Dissertation. None of this on the face of it suggests any particular reason for concern, as understanding linguistic phenomena necessarily proceeds from both a discipline's accumulative efforts and from individuals' insights. However, as I will show later, one of the most unusual features of voice is that it has been almost entirely excised from public scrutiny and debate within English Studies as an academic discipline but incised into the relatively private life of the individual English Studies practitioner, making it possible to find in the literature numerous assertions about voice but very few inquiries into it. In my view such a situation reveals certain intriguing characteristics and dynamics, warranting an inquiry into both.

III

Perceiving a database as the constructed, meaning-bearing face of a discipline requires that the database be read much as one reads an article

or book in the modern way: one reads a few pages or chapters, puts the book down or carries it around, thinks and talks about it, reads something else, does other things, goes back to it. Unfettered, unremarkable access over time promotes, sustains, and enhances both the general effects of the rhetorical offices -- "to teach, inform, instruct (*docere*); to please (*delectare*); and to move or bend (*movere, flectere*)" (Burke on Cicero in Lanham, 114) and the ruminative, reflective, and meditative hermeneutic efforts that eventually "unfold the signification" (Websters, 1169) of what one is reading.

Until recently, reading a database resembled reading a "book" in, let's say, Twelfth Century England when books or manuscripts were secured in a place -- an abbey, cathedral, university, scriptorium, high government office, or royal household -- and were available only to people authorized by virtue of position, knowledge, or political power, such as monks, scribes, dons, peers, and monarches. Books were expensive, scarce, valuable, and sacred. Few people could read, knowledge was indeed power, and as such it was the province of the powerful and knowledgeable.

Less than a decade ago, academic databases were secured in a place

-- on mainframe computers at a few "clearinghouse" sites. A relatively few people had more or less unlimited access to them -- database managers, senior librarians and researchers, some members of the tenured professoriate, and high government and defense officials. Most other people had limited access, if at all, by virtue of their work, interests, and connections. Time online was expensive, hardware and software could be unreliable, resources were scarce, and demand exceeded supply. In addition there was something special, indeed almost sacred, about the medium that delivered the message and about its portent beyond mere information. The most knowledgeable and thus most powerful individuals were those who knew how to go online *and* why it mattered.

Book or manuscript culture in England changed swiftly with the arrival of the printing press in the Fifteenth Century, with the "explosion" of knowledge precipitated by exploration, trade, and travel, and by its relatively wide and quick dissemination to people engaged in the expanding enterprises that eventually constituted the work of the professional classes that now dominate modern life. The online information culture saw itself radically revised as technological changes in the form of the personal computer, the CD Rom, the modem, and

telecommunications software swept aside the information mandarins and opened information networks to anyone who could complete a few keystrokes and read what appeared on the screen of a personal computer located literally anywhere --in a home, dormitory, office, machine shop, kindergarten classroom, research laboratory, police car, airliner in flight, motor home, or PC coffee bar. A short account of my own experiences during this time of rapid change might help illustrate why I have come round to arguing that databases display far more than "just" information and how that understanding this leads me to one of my research methods.

III

In 1988 while working on a graduate degree at the University of Washington I had my first occasion to use the ERIC database online. I reported to the graduate library reference desk, my search was scheduled onto a calendar, and at the appointed time several days later I was ushered into an office and introduced to a senior librarian and online search specialist. She reviewed my questionnaire responses, asked questions, we refined the search strategy, and then we logged on to a mainframe in Berkeley. We stayed online long enough to be certain the search would be productive. Then I was told that the printed results

would be available in a few days and was ushered back to the front desk. The search cost me around fifty dollars; I received a 146-page document containing 202 citations plus abstracts and prefaced by a copyrighted cover page imprinted with a trademark.

In October of 1988 I went back to schedule another search. This time the desk librarian pointed to a terminal across the room and told me to ask if I needed help. This was not an online search terminal, as the data was stored on a compact disk updated monthly, but it suited my purposes perfectly. Use was limited to thirty minutes with sign-up in advance, but I soon learned when the terminal was least used and scheduled my time accordingly. Within another year the University installed more terminals, and access to hardware became a non-issue at about the same time access to database information became fundamental to my purposes as I began work on a doctorate. Still, I did not suspect then that database information ever would or could serve any purpose other than previewing and locating books and articles.

In 1994 I acquired an Internet account giving me access *on my computer at home* to databases around the world, including the database in Berkeley to which access had been so limited, privileged, and restricted

just six years earlier. Everything changed. My research has nearly slipped the bounds of time and space. I can log on and print at two a.m. or before breakfast or between phone calls or after dinner. I can work in my slippers with coffee at hand and my dog at my feet. I can print as often and as much as I want. I can read the print-outs while cooking, watching T.V., or waiting for my daughter's track practice to end. In short, gathering and reading information from a database has been folded into the ordinary/extraordinary fabric of everyday life. As a result, I process the data in the ordinary/extraordinary ways that are the commonplaces of commonplace literacy. My fifty-dollar printout has been carefully filed away and has no marks on it, but the citations on the printout that I ran this morning will be underlined, circled, annotated, stuffed in my briefcase, used for a few days, and then "filed" in a big box where I keep old data runs. This is not to say that they are not valued. It is to say that the kind of database information I get these days, plus the way I get it and the way I use it, are valued intrinsically the way I value my walking shoes or my Ph.C certificate. They get me where I want to be and where I never knew I could be, for in the course of ordinary reading, reflecting, thinking, talking, writing, and living, I began to see as I had not seen before --

extraordinarily.

IV

Thomas Kuhn writes that during a paradigm shift, "anomalies" and "crises" are "terminated"

not by deliberation and interpretation, but by a relatively sudden and unstructured event . . . Scientists then often speak of the 'scales falling from the eyes' or the of the 'lightning flash' that 'inundates' a previously obscure puzzle, enabling its components to be seen in a new way that for the first time permits its solution (122).

It is not my contention that the way I use database information in this Dissertation constitutes a paradigm shift. The paradigm shift occurred in the way the library sciences think about and deliver information and was made possible by compact disk technology, "next generation" personal computers, and telecommunications advances. It also occurred in the course of a paradigm shift in Composition, during which voice, a tame and bounded term, turned into a rogue phenomenon, energized, expansive, faceted, carnivalistic, plastic, elastic, and context sensitive, accommodating itself equally well to certain concepts in search of a

theoretical home and to certain theories in search of trenchant expression: self, identity, self-expression, expressiveness, authenticity, empowerment, presence, point of view, tone, style, grammaticality, author, dialectic, subjectivity, polyphony, and dialogism. Such circumstances made it possible for this researcher to see certain of her "research components in a new way for the first time that permits . . . [a different] solution" (122). That "different solution" includes the realization that a collection of abstracts of the content of books and articles, gathered by a common descriptor derived from their content, adds up to more than just information for previewing and locating documents.

- **It conveys the presence and progression of a concept within a discipline over time, including its earliest appearance in the discipline's literature; the dynamics of the discipline's interest in it (expanding, stable, declining, revisionist); its attitudes toward it (enthusiastic, expansive, cautious, reflective); its changing features; the degree of its influence on the discipline; and the nature and degree of its influence on other disciplines.**
- **It is amenable to established methods of textual analysis,**

including analyses of diction, tone, theme, syntax, audience, purpose, emphasis, and rhetorical strategies.

- It is accessible to data analyses showing frequency, proportion, and ratio, including comparisons of such.

In sum, when the I and the eye are willing to read and see differently, database information tells a coherent, textured, layered, and complex "story" very different from the one we are used to letting it tell us, which is a very short story about what a document is, who wrote it, and when, and where it may be found.

A Note on Database Descriptors

The database descriptors used throughout this Dissertation were chosen partly from obvious necessity (*Voice*), partly because they produced useful results (*Rhetoric*, not *Writing*), and partly because the database allowed them (*Literature*, not *Literary Studies*). However, when working with database descriptors, one learns to use the word "chosen" advisedly. One can choose only from those terms "approved" by database overseers. Nonetheless, database architecture is not a cavalier enterprise. It is guided by clearly articulated standards, including at one

point in the process of advancing a descriptor from lower to higher status, judgments about its "scope, definition, authoritativeness, and 'staying power'" (Weller, vi). Chapter Two, Section 2.4.3 contains a detailed discussion of these matters, including issues raised by the symbiotic relationship between information scientists and a discipline's practitioners.

Ironically, as Gail Stygall observes, such considerations as those described above may become moot with increased availability of full text searches: academic disciplines and information science "will loose control of the profiles generated, since anyone can choose her own 'key' terms" (via Dillon, e-mail, May, 1997).

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For Jim, John, and Catlin

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, JUSTIFICATION, AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction and Justification

1.1. 1. The Promises and Problems of Voice

For many people in English Studies the promises of *voice*, like the qualities of mercy, are not strained; they fall from heaven like a gentle rain. Like April's sweet showers they pierce dry discipline, bathe its veins, and engender shoots. And yes, then longen folk to goon on pilgrimages, which is what many English Studies' practitioners do when they follow voice's star.

Pilgrims and palmeres of English Studies, setting their sights on voice, find it (often know it to be) an unstable star, leading them sometimes to where they mean to go, sometimes to where they ought to go, and yet othertimes to truly straunge strondes. Now this is part of what many people like about English Studies; for them it is a promise, not a problem. The Canterbury Pilgrims, being multiples of writerly and readerly constructs, joined with and created by the multiplicities of writerly and readerly identities (and all that *identity* signifies), embark on a multiply-significant pilgrimage which soon proves to be both what, and far more than, and other than, it seems to be. Such, too, is the case

with voice. Its simultaneously inside-out, outside-in, more-than, less-than, other-than characteristics are perfectly consistent with the nature of English Studies and with what many people in this discipline value .

For others in English Studies, promises turn into problems. The practitioners who use voice as a synonym for **writer's tone**, hoping merely to soften metaphorically the hard edges of a technical term, find other people in English Studies telling them that voice is **authority**, others that there is such a thing as a **written voice**, others that there is a **personal voice that can be found and lost**, others that voice is **expressiveness of style**, and yet others that voice is never one voice but always **multiple voice**. None of these is necessarily a problem by itself; all of them promise possibilities and probabilities. But the practitioner who holds that voice is tone, defined as author's attitude toward subject matter and audience, would be hard pressed to explain how tone can also be expressiveness of style or lost and found or authority; and any adherent to any of these definitions would either be obliged to account for voice as tone or to provide a rationale for denying that definition. As I will show, one of the most unusual features of voice is that it has been almost entirely excised from public scrutiny and debate within English Studies as an academic discipline but incised into the

relatively private life of the individual English Studies practitioner, making it possible to find in the literature numerous assertions about voice but very few inquiries into voice.

One conflicted term does not augur the fate of a discipline. English Studies will neither implode nor explode because of the voice star's instability. But when we set our sights on a star we set a course to get somewhere. Setting our sights on the visible and enticing voice-star gets us these days on a collision course with each other. Voice is not always to literary criticism what it is to creative writing or to composition and rhetoric; nor is it not always what it is not; nor is absolute consistency across a multiply variant, non-empirical discipline desirable or possible. But multiplicity, normally a virtue in English Studies, tends toward vice when an important term becomes so varied that its multiple versions contradict, deny, cancel, and confuse each other; and when the discipline declines to address the matter; and when, therefore, its practitioners use the term naively, unaware of its variants; or guardedly, sensing problems; or cynically, knowing the problems; or not at all, convinced that the term has de-generated into de-signification.

"Sounds all register the interior structures of whatever it is that produces them" (Ong, 1982, 72). If this is so, and I think it is, then we will

find that voice serves a larger purpose than setting us a course. Like interstellar matter containing residues of the universe's origins, voice turns the inside of English Studies out, showing us something of where we have been, where we are, what we are, and what we might be. This is what I plan to argue in this Dissertation.

1.1.2. Voice as Displayed in a Disciplinary Database

As of May, 1997 the Identifier *Voice-Rhetoric* locates in the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ERIC) database 204 conference papers, studies, articles, and books published between 1996 and 1977.

Figure 1.1 shows the number of these documents published per year during this period.

[The ERIC database catalogues documents published from 1966 on, so we may assume that *Voice-Rhetoric* locates no documents published before 1977. However, there is about a year's delay between the publication of a document and its appearance in ERIC (a July, 1996 search using *Voice-Rhetoric* located 186 documents), and therefore documents published in 1997 cannot be included at the time of this writing.]

Figure 1.2 presents the same data graphed by three clusters -- 1977 - 1986, 1987 - 1991, and 1992 to 1996. Clearly, the overall attention given to voice has been steady, intense, and recent. Eleven percent of the

articles is located in the first cluster, 44% in the second cluster, and 48% in the third cluster. The 44% represents a 400% increase in just four years over the number of articles published in the previous nine years. Such findings confirm what has been evident to any observant English Studies practitioner: interest in voice has surged. What is not evident in the data -- but discoverable in the content of ERIC *Voice-Rhetoric* abstracts -- is what voice is to the practitioners who use the word as a technical term in the academic literature of English Studies.

[Before I proceed I must explain that my purpose in the next two or three paragraphs is to convey **concretely** the extremely wide range of ideas about voice that a reader of these abstracts will encounter. Since these will be my summarizing words of an abstractor's (her) words of an other's (the original writer's) words (c.f. Dillon's "My Words of an Other"), I will not cite single words and brief phrases in general use back to their writerly sources, but instead adhere to my purpose of conveying the diction of a discipline as it "voices" ideas about a concept that interests it.]

The most common assertions about voice in the 204 Voice-Rhetoric ERIC documents are that voice **is** or **can be** or **must be found** and that there are **multiple voices**. These ideas are found six and five times each,

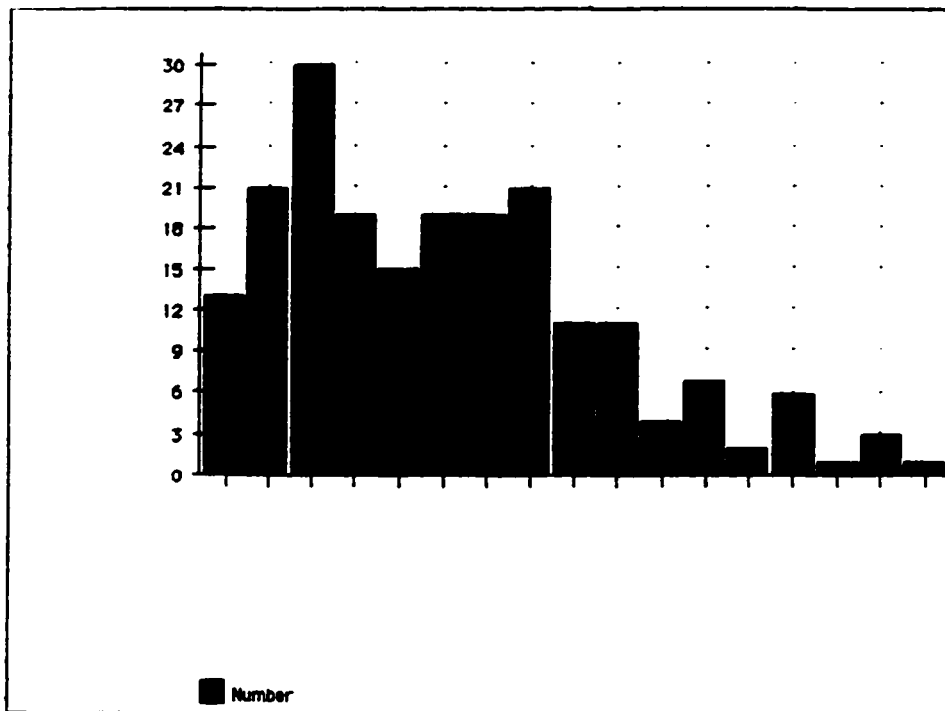


Figure 1.1: Results of an ERIC search using the descriptor *Voice-Rhetoric*. Data are graphed by the number of documents published per year, 1970 - 1995.

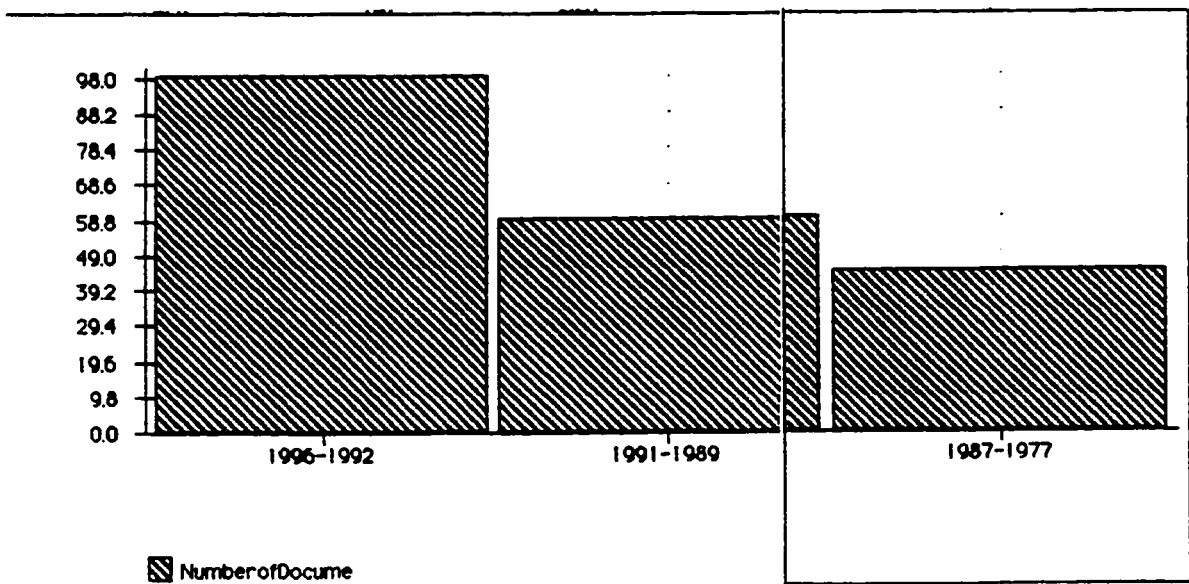


Figure 1.2: The data in Figure 1.1 graphed by the clusters of years they create: 1970 - 1982; 1983 - 1988; and 1989 - 1995.

respectively. The next most common assertion is that there is *a* **writing or written voice** and that there is *a* **personal voice**. Then we find the following: that there are *kinds* of **voices: adult, middle school, literate, female, maternal, developing, institutional, authoritative, committed, authorial, strong, Gothic, children's, storyteller's, advertising, teacher's, public, private, group, lyric, competing, complex, emergent, dialectical, necessary, conflicted, appropriate, and polyphonic**. We find that voice can *be* **affected: it can be acted on, redefined, lost, found, assigned, shaped, orchestrated, perceived, demonstrated, delivered, silenced, allowed, enabled, activated, created, distorted, empowered, unheard, and known**. Voice can *have* an effect: it can **affect readability, persuasion, and expressiveness**. Voice can *act*: it can **oppress, shift, improve understanding, unlock writing, and evolve**. It can **matter**. We also find that voice can be defined. It is **point of view, expressiveness of style, authenticity, and writer's attitude**. And finally, we are told in one of these documents that **voice is a metaphor**.

Clearly, we have some sorting out to do. It is in the nature of ideas in English Studies, like cats, to do a certain amount of unescorted

roaming, and we would seem as foolish as the Illinois State Legislature if we tried to enact our own "Cat Bill"¹ upon voice. Nevertheless, if voice is as crucial to texts and textuality as its proponents (among whom I count myself) assert, then we need to set aside some time and space for reflection on where we are with voice, how we got there, where we are going, and what it all might mean.

1.1.3. The Significance of Presumed Settlement

It is one thing to say that voice is point of view, expressiveness of style, authenticity, or writer's attitude and quite another to try to measure it against, align it with, or reconcile it with at least some of the assertions about voice also found in the ERIC documents. As an example, if we decide that voice is writer's attitude, then we must account for how an attitude can be found, for if found, it necessarily embodies some prior, recognizable identity conducive to being found *and* to being lost.

A theory of a prior, recognizable, identifiable, situated entity called writer's attitude thrusts us backward: in rhetoric it relocates us into the current traditional paradigm from which those of us working in epistemic or new rhetoric thought we had emerged. In literary criticism writer's attitude returns us to I.A. Richards' work in Practical Criticism,

1929, in which he advances the idea that tone is a "literary speaker's ' attitude to his listener . . . reflect[ing] his sense of how he stands toward those he is addressing" (Richards in Abrams, 124). Looking backward is not necessarily a bad thing as anyone who has watched the revival and renewal of rhetoric knows. What is missing from the backward turn that voice as writer's attitude takes is any apparent conscious sense of the implications of such a definition, which is what is missing from most definitional moves on voice, the notable exceptions being expressivist compositionists' efforts to define and understand it (I will take a close look at voice and expressivist composition later in this chapter).

A few paragraphs from Miriam Brody's Manly Writing provides us with a good example of what can happen when a writer (and by extension, a discipline) presumes that definitional matters are settled. Proceeding not only as if we have a theory of voice but as if that theory hypothesizes coherence, settlement, and design, the terms she uses characterize a "metaphor of design" (213), she writes, "when a metaphor of design suggests coherence, it must be acknowledged that such coherence *stands in* [my emphasis] for settlement of difference, or for a locus or terminus toward which argumentative positions point in all their differences from each other" (213).

The fact that Brody, like the rest of us, seems to presume for voice a coherence and design makes it possible for her to write a few sentences later that a "metaphor of design may wishfully propose there is a coherence and the possibility of settlement underwriting our many *voices* [my emphasis], but such a wish may be one of those human games we play . . ." (213).

In citing the examples above I mean no criticism of Miriam Brody. What I do mean is to point out is that we have become so used to the presumption that voice is a coherent, settled term that writer and readers alike find themselves comfortably settling into a situation where a radically undetermined, unsettled, and (as I will show later) unsettling term "stands in" for coherence and design in a discussion of how a metaphor of design stands in for coherence.

Miriam Brody knows some of the "human games we play" very well indeed. But she, like all of us, must choose the games she will play and those she will not, those she will think about and those she will ignore, so that even as she thinks and writes about unsettled, undesignated gendered metaphors for writing, she turns to a metaphor of coherence -- voice -- wishfully proposing design and the possibility of settlement where, as she has shown for gendered metaphors, there is none.

1.1.4. English Studies' Scene of Wishful Propositions

The example from Brody cited above is not unlike the scene against which English Studies plays out its own wishful propositions about voice. Voice resonates literally and metaphorically in the human organism. Embodying the properties of physical phenomena and meta-physical signs and significations, it provides a kind of comforting and comfortable hermeneutic and terministic screen through which we project what we desire -- in Brody's case settlement, in the case of English Studies as a discipline a collective sense of possibilities ranging, as I have shown, from deliverance to distortion, from Gothic to lyric, from public to private, from subjective to objective and tacit agreement that voice's dichotomies do not, under the circumstances, necessitate voice-nullification.

The four definitions of voice located among the ERIC abstracts mentioned earlier are remarkable in part for how radically they differ from each other, considering that each asserts a definition of the same term. Point of view cannot be rewritten as expressiveness of style, authenticity, or author's attitude (nor can any of the other terms be rewritten as each other) unless one's major premise is that everything is everything and then is willing to abandon all previous work leading to

definitions of these terms, advance and defend a rationale for doing so, and begin (and defend) the arduous task of persuasively redefining them as synonymously encapsulated in voice.

Nevertheless, a truncated process of abandonment and redefinition has begun. Voice is summarily defined as author's attitude; or elaborately defined as authenticity; or defined presumably as self; or tentatively defined as expressiveness of style; or archly included in a discussion of tone. Only a few of the definers seem interested in or troubled by multiple definitions of voice, although there is evidence that some observers of this phenomenon find inattention to definition odd. Randall K. Albers imagines his audience's response to the news that they will be sitting through yet another panel on "What We Mean When We Talk About Voice" as something like this:

Now, this being the age of evangelism, I know what you are saying: 'Good Lord! Not another sermon on voice!' And you are thinking about all of the CCCC panels where you got the latest rendering of The New Testament for Teacher Success, complete with easy-to-read notes and non-sexist language.

'You shall not teach your students to be inauthentic. You shall not teach him or her to covet his or her neighbor's voice.' Or

you may simply be muttering, 'What We Mean When We Talk About Voice': nothing! These people can talk themselves hoarse, and we won't be any closer to knowing what voice is' (1).

This is one of the many places where we and voice presently find ourselves (and "many places" seems to be one of the few constants we can count on when we study voice in English Studies).

Not all our voice-places seem as dysphoric as the one cited above. Some euphoric sites, such as Donald Murray's exclamation that "[v]oice is the most important, the most magical and powerful element in writing" (33) would seem to deny the dysphoric ones, but that raises other matters that need inquiring into, such as how a discipline has managed to accept and sustain a situation in which such dichotomous positions on the same topic remain, for the most part, unexamined, untroublesome, and, seemingly, part of an apparently natural state of affairs.

1.1.5. Beyond Wishful Propositions

Peter Elbow, the most prominent and authoritative of voice-theorists, has recently tried to put the matter of what voice *is* to rest. In 1994 he proposed a "family of five related meanings that people imply when they talk about voice in writing: audible voice, dramatic voice,

recognizable or distinctive voice, voice with authority, and resonant voice or presence" (1), suggesting that such a model and the analysis leading to it might help "make voice a practical critical tool" (30). However, as I will show, voice's rebellious ethos remains relatively unabated in English Studies, Elbow's sanguinity notwithstanding. The primary difference between voice in its present form compared with its history is that its main carnivalistic venue has shifted somewhat from Rhetoric and Composition to Literature Studies.

It is this Dissertation's contention that observing, recording, describing, and studying the kinds of patterns described above may provide us with an improved understanding of both voice as a technical term important to our discipline and of where we as a discipline have been, where we are, and where we eventually might be. It is also this Dissertation's contention that the characteristics of both voice and English Studies leading to the kind of dissonance I have described above preclude characterizations that would bind voice to the kinds of formularies recently proposed by Peter Elbow and by other theorists throughout voice's history: grammatical construct, tone, style, self, or action.

What is needed is a "new way" of thinking about voice. Ironically,

as I will show, the most promising "new way" is an "old way" in the sense that it both preceded and helped initiate and nurture the voice-theorizing that began in English Studies in the mid-1960's and continues today. I am referring to Walter Ong's work on orality and literacy and in particular to his contention that "voice" represents a fundamentally animating psychological and physiological human need/desire/phenomenon: that written, disembodied, silent, dissecting text convey the warm, embodied, sounded, aggregative force of the human voice, which emanates from, and is the manifestation of, the total human interior -- physical, psychological, historical, social, and spiritual.

There is no way for a discipline such as English Studies to not "talk" about voice as it does, tautologically grounded as it is in the word, uses of word, theories of word, significations of word, and sources of word, all of which are linked to voice. However, the way English Studies talks about voice has consequences which need to be better understood. My intention is not to prescribe a way, for I have learned too much about voice and English Studies to presume that either would submit to prescription or that prescription would advance us in any useful direction. Neither do I intend to try to stabilize, prune, or otherwise set voice-terminology in order. Anything of this kind -- which I do not

recommend and do not attempt -- could necessarily (and only) result from consensus within a discipline, not from fiat from without. Neither am I interested in wreaking havoc on the work of practitioners who in their own way in their own contexts worked with the conceptual materials at hand to advance our understanding of voice in writing. I do critique their work (as I hope mine will be critiqued) to accomplish my intentions, which are to add to the aggregate of voice-ideas in these respects:

- **To sharpen our awareness of how we use voice and of how voice uses us, the presumption being that self-awareness is prerequisite to change if change is what English Studies desires.**
- **To argue for an understanding of databases as texts and to use them to advance our understanding of voice, English Studies, and voice in English Studies.**
- **To read the literature of voice through the lens of English Studies in hopes of understanding both better.**
- **To suggest that a fuller understanding of voice in writing as phenomenon of the interaction (and perhaps collision) of orality and literacy might lead us to accept voice as a candidate for a special category of English Studies' technical terminology: a simultaneously metaphorical and mimetic, uniquely bound and unbound sign for**

phenomena not fully understood but fully characteristic of certain paradoxical human desires and needs that always accompany writing.

1.2. Overview of the Dissertation

1.2.1. Chapter One: Introduction, Justification, and Overview

Chapter One has characterized voice as an enigmatic, problematic, resistant, paradoxical, but natural and necessary term that opens to examination both itself and the discipline that uses it. Specifically, the evidence presented shows that even as individual English Studies practitioners proceed as if the meaning of voice were settled, the uses and presumed meanings of voice vary wildly throughout documents listed in a major disciplinary database. This unsettled scene of wishful propositions is shown to be consistent with the deeply conusable dynamics of voice and is interpreted as an opportunity to advance our understanding of both English Studies and voice.

However, Chapter One also argues that understanding voice in English Studies requires that we include, but also look beyond, some of English Studies' traditional methods and sources. Regarding methods, traditional analysis and interpretation of individual texts will be supplemented throughout most of this Dissertation by the use of information databases as coherent texts from which meaning can be made;

as containing abstracted texts to be read as texts; and as containing information directing us to the full texts of cited texts. Regarding sources throughout the Dissertation, efforts to understand voice in writing will rely heavily upon English Studies' academic literature but also reach beyond it to include key material from linguistics and cultural studies, mainly Walter Ong's work on the intersection of orality and literacy in writing. The combination of traditional and less traditional methods and sources will increase our chances of advancing toward the stated goals of sharpening disciplinary self-awareness and arguing persuasively for the proposition that English Studies may need to develop for voice a special category of simultaneously bound-unbound, mimetic-metaphorical sign representing the human desire and need that unsounded writing (embodying exteriority) "sound" or "voice" human interiority.

1.2.2. Chapter Two: Voice in Rhetoric and Composition: Background.

Patterns and Issues

Chapter Two sets out five goals, each of which is listed and discussed in turn below.

1. *To describe voice in classical rhetoric by tracing voice and synonymous concepts through pertinent writings of Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Quintillian, and St. Augustine and through applicable passages of*

the Rhetorica ad Herennium

The project proposed by this first of Chapter Two's five purposes has not been attempted outside of this Dissertation, although Miriam Brody has followed the concept of *enargeia* over similar ground, and we will address her findings as they apply to our purposes. The material covered in this section of Chapter Two shows that classical rhetoricians possessed no concept equivalent to our idea that writing has voice. However, conflicts between the world views of rhetoricians and performing artists or "poets" animated conflicting ideas about theory and practice, right and wrong, and means and ends; these foreshadow some of the modern ideas that cluster around voice, such as authority, power, authenticity, and self.

In general, Greek and Roman rhetoricians addressed the matter of voice as a sub-topic of delivery or *elocutio*; over the centuries we observe changing attitudes toward voice and an increased interest in it, although always relatively small compared with other matters. Aristotle judged delivery "a vulgar matter when rightly understood" (Politics, 218); Cicero held that the subject "deserves serious attention" (De Oratore, 119); Quintilian that "[d]elivery ought to conciliate, persuade, move, and thus delight, all of which can come somehow from voice and delivery . . . "

(Institutes, 302); and the anonymous author of Rhetorica ad Herennium observed that "... good delivery ensures that what the orator is saying seems to come from the heart" (Rhetorica, III, 205). Plato's contributions to modern voice-theory are linked to his "three-stage regress" (Abrams, 8) mimetic theory of art, which brings to modern voice-theories the issues of imitation, self, and the contrary nature of language, as explored in Phaedrus.

It is with Augustine, the classically (i.e. paganistically) trained Christian rhetorician, that we find the first significant signs of an interest in "voice" as we understand it beyond the speaking voice (Plato's approach notwithstanding, as it is not rhetorical). Laboring at the daunting task of training illiterate elocutors to convey Divine Scripture effectively, Augustine folded most rhetorical matters into style and audience by asking the pragmatic and necessary question, "What profits correctness in a speech... if what is said is not understood by those on whose account we speak?" (Doctrine, 134). On the face of it this may seem a rather narrow matter, but for voice it represents attention to *lexis* and *phrasis* leading to *elocutio* leading to *style*, one of oldest and most persistent ways of understanding and defining voice.

2. *To summarize and evaluate recent findings on Twentieth Century*

influences on the development of voice

Two unpublished dissertations -- Jeanne Jacoby Smith's The Origins of the Individual Voice in Writing From 1890 - 1990, 1991 and John Ward Amberg's Voice in Writing, 1980 -- thoroughly cover significant aspects of the modern history of voice in writing; this section of Chapter Two presents and assesses their findings. Smith traces the roots of "individual voice" to such influences as immigration, Deweyan pedagogy, Freudian and Rogerian psychologies of the self, the democratization of education, the rise of creative writing, Scottish faculty psychology, Romanticism and New Criticism, post-modern ideas about knowledge, language and the self, increased academic specialization, and linguists' work on how heard qualities of the voice are communicated in written language. Amberg focuses mainly on The Voice Project, a government-supported initiative sparked by ideas about voice in writing advanced by Walter Ong in "Voice as a Summons for Belief" and promoted by John Hawkes, noted fiction writer. Hawkes envisioned college writing classes in which rehearsal methods used in actors' workshops, supplemented with Ong's ideas about literacy and orality, would be applied to the problems writers face when they consider the matter of voice.

Both Smith and Amberg propose definitions of voice: Smith that

voice is the expression of the individual personality of the writer and Amberg that it metaphorically bridges the gap between inner speech and writing, making it possible for the writer to create the divided self that leads to editorial decisions about distance, content, audience, and effect. The significance of their work for this Dissertation is to balance and contextualize the information it gathers from databases, composition textbooks, and key disciplinary studies. Through their work we see that the conditions necessary to support English Studies' relatively recent explosion of interest in voice had been developing for many decades.

3. To describe the portrait of voice in Composition and Rhetoric sketched by database information and from that portrait to identify and discuss the issues most central to advancing our understanding of voice in both Composition and Rhetoric and across English Studies

Guided by premises about databases as rhetorical and hermeneutical text-sites advanced in this Dissertation's Methodological Justification, Chapter Two next presents and analyzes the results of ERIC database searches. For each descriptor used in each of the searches -- such as the Keyword *voice* -- searches using comparative terms were also conducted. For example, the comparative Keywords for voice are *metaphor*, *tone*, and *persona* and the ratios of numbers of documents raised by each are

displayed and discussed. The same is done, with cross-referencing, for the "descriptors" used in Keyword-Subject Heading and Subject Heading searches.

Database anomalies and limitations encountered during the searches raise questions about how databases are organized and how "descriptors" are chosen. Two ERIC print publications -- Identifier Authority List (IAL) and Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, 13th Edition (TED) indicate that two matters relative to our purposes come into play. The first has to do with the structure of the ERIC Hierarchical Display and the second with decisions made by individuals working within and for ERIC organizations. Both are shown to be directly related to voice in English Studies, as descriptors are classified on the basis of universal standards and assigned the higher status of Subject Major or Minor or the lower status of Identifier. The standards are "scope, definition, authoritativeness, and 'staying power'" (Weller, vi) and are applied equally to a term such as "Administrator Behavior" and a term such as "voice."

This data-based research produces three particularly interesting results. First, it demonstrates that voice occupies an unequivocally prominent presence in ERIC, relative to other related terms, such as metaphor, tone, and persona. It also reveals the unexpected result that

Creative Writing shows by far the least theoretical interest in voice. [The Creative Writing Results will be discussed in Chapter Three]. Second, the research demonstrates a remarkable congruency between database portraits, document portraits, and lexicographical portraits of voice, suggesting that whatever each portrait's other limitations, they do capture certain of voice's key features and issues which in turn are reflexively positioned: scope is a feature of, and an issue in, voice in English Studies; likewise are definition, authoritativeness, and staying power. Third, we are able to see very clearly the extraordinary degree to which constructed intention leading to meaning is always already found everywhere in databases -- in their premises, in their administrative and disciplinary policies, in their processes leading to the construction of generic trees, in the data they raise, and in the relationships between the databases and the data they contain. Databases are not just sources of information -- they *are* information -- and the information they convey about voice, a rogue phenomenon, is not, to my knowledge, available in any other form from any other source.

4. To describe the portrait of voice found in two other major sources that construct and manifest a discipline's (and in voice's case, a term's) identity -- composition textbooks and key selections from

*Rhetoric and Composition's academic literature***Textbooks**

Composition's fundamental association with, and interest in, the writing classroom argues persuasively for studying voice from the point of view of composition textbooks, and indeed from early on Composition practitioners sought ways to explain voice to students. This necessitated definition, discussion, analysis, and writing assignments focusing on voice. Thus we find in many composition textbooks evidence of voice's evolution.

A study of voice in Composition textbooks published over the last thirty years demonstrates the following: in 1958 a major college textbook devoted less than a page of text to voice, defined it as a grammatical construct, and listed two indexed citations in reference to it. Twenty-three years later, another major college textbook devoted two full chapters to exploring what voice might be and included twenty-one indexed, cross-referenced citations. During those years and following them, definitions proposed for voice ranged from tone, style and persona to the "sound" of words in writing to "authentic" (Stewart, 9) to "juice" (Elbow, 1981, 186) to "magical and powerful element" (Murray, 1993) and then back to the "sum" of persona and tone (Miles, 1991).

Some order can be made out of this extraordinarily dissonant scene, as it is evident that numerous and diverse "definitions" of voice often cluster around the key categories of style, tone, metaphorical orality (the "sound" of words on the page) and an action or behavior leading to the discovery of something in the writer or the in text or in both. However, true to voice's carnivalistic nature, order quickly becomes disordered. An analysis of the arguments and diction used in composition textbooks by the proponents of "authentic" voice demonstrates untheorized premises and an extreme reflexivity, rarely found elsewhere in English Studies, suggesting that a rhetoric of the rhetoric of voice-Compositionists might yield further insights into their conceptual worlds.

Academic Literature

This section of Chapter Two looks closely at three relatively recent efforts by Composition scholar/practitioners to assess the state of voice in writing and voice in Composition: Peter Elbow's "What Do We Mean When We Talk About Voice in Texts?", I. Hashimoto's "Voice as Juice: Some Reservations about Evangelic Composition," and Kathleen Blake Yancey's Introduction to Voice on Voice: Perspectives, Defintions, Inquiry.

A presentation, analysis, and assessment of I. Hashimoto's influential 1987 article, "Voice as Juice: Some Reservations About Evangelic

Composition" anchors the section, which includes a discussion of the history and sources of the Evangelical Protestantism I. Hashimoto seems to be referencing in his critique of "evangelical" Compositionism.

Two major conclusions about "Voice as Juice" are offered. The first is that the parallels Hashimoto observes between evangelistic composition and evangelistic Christianity are generated by secular and sacred historical and intellectual forces traceable through Romanticism and the Enlightenment to foundational ideas found in Christianity, Platonism, and Judaism. A feature common to all these sources is the force of the point beyond which reasoning cannot go, necessitating a "leap of faith" into Belief, which is shown to be the old and common ground on which evangelicals and Compositionists stand despite their vast differences.

The second conclusion is that the features of voice-composition encapsulated in the "voice as juice" trope may result partly from a cognitive dissonance generated by the facts of Composition's history. Hashimoto characterizes evangelical composition's methods as "anti-intellectual" (79) but softens the charge by suggesting that "anti-intellectual appeals [may be necessary] for motivational reasons" (79). Chapter Two points out that Composition was invented in the crucible of

the writing classroom. where motivation is indeed a major issue. Especially in the early years, Compositionists "did" Composition while they imagined, wrote, constructed, critiqued, promoted, defended, and motivated students to do it at the coordinate point of self (their own and students' selves) and language.

However, it is also important to remember that many of Composition's early practitioners came to Composition from two very different epistemological worlds -- some trained in the methods of scientific empiricism and others trained in Literature Studies' traditions of belles lettres and devotional aesthetics. The core concepts of Christian evangelism -- "inspiration, authority, sufficiency" (EB, 1009) and the "right and duty of private judgment" describe very well the values of high art and high criticism against the pragmatic, skeptical values of scientism, and indeed evangelistic composition may be partly understood as a principled stand against scientism's contaminants.

Kathleen Blake Yancey's assessment of voice in writing contains several prescient observations. Two of the most important for this Dissertation have to do with definitional problems and with English Studies. Regarding the former, she observes that definitions of voice typically "argue rather than explain" (viii); that they spawn new definitions out of

old ones; that they deny previous definitions; and that they are often "incomplete and ahistorical" (viii). Voice, she writes after Sharon Crowley, "is a floating signifier changing from one text to another" (viii). This last observation functions as a kind of mantra for this Dissertation, as it exactly describes what the student of voice finds.

5. To summarize the material presented, assess what it reveals about voice, Rhetoric and Composition, and English Studies, and to speculate about the lines of thinking that Chapter Two cues

Yancey's efforts to pin down voice, the floating signifier, result in a list of eleven formulations of voice arranged from self to writer to reader to discourse to the interrelationships of self and language (Yancey's terms, xiii). Seen this way, she argues, "[v]oice is thus paradigmatic of composition studies itself, of its recent history, and its current concerns" (xviii). I had not read Yancey before I wrote the following words: "[V]oice turns the inside of English Studies out, showing us something of where we have been, where we are, what we are, and what we might be" (4).

. That two studies completed within three years of each other should independently reach similar conclusions about the relationship between voice and the discipline that studies and uses it suggests at the

least that we are beginning to look around and beyond voice to its contexts for ways to understand it. It also increases, perhaps, the validity of Yancey's and my assertions that in voice we see manifest some of a discipline's history, issues, successes, and challenges.

Chapter Two concludes by pointing out that efforts to mediate differences between definitions of voice must inevitably end up foregrounding apparently irreconcilable differences. One of the most important of these is that voice as a subject-force that "composes" its object-writer (as Yancey suggests) cannot also be under normal circumstances be the point of reference for foundational subject-self, subject-truth, and subject-human presence.

This Dissertation proposes that one way out of the conundra of subject-object oppositors is to search for solutions outside the voice-formulations typically found in English Studies where characterizations of voice-as-infusing, voice-as-reference, voice-as-approximations, voice-as-synecdoche, and voice-as-myth may find dialectical resolution in Walter Ong's formulation of voice as the desire that abstract text convey a concrete human presence.

1.2.3. Chapter Three: Voice and Creative Writing: Background, Patterns, and Issues

After a brief sketch of Creative Writing's current state of affairs, which is mostly characterized by a secure sense of self and mission that reciprocally affects Creative Writing's ideas about voice in writing, Chapter Three poses three questions:

1. What portraits of voice and Creative Writing are sketched by collected abstracts of meta-writings?
2. What might we learn about voice in Creative Writing by comparing database information on Creative Writing with comparable data on Composition?
3. To what extent is Creative Writing's approach to voice linked to the dynamics of Creative Writing itself?

The answers to the first two questions are found in database information that shows, first, that in general Creative Writing enjoys an established, well-supported, position within the academy, comparable to Expository Writing's; and second, that Creative Writing's ideas about voice display none of the carnivalistic play evident in Rhetoric and Composition's database portraits. In sum, the first part of Chapter Three demonstrates that Creative Writing considers voice an important but familiar and obvious feature of writing for which definition is not an issue. This approach to voice is related to Creative Writing's overall self-defining

project: to write the literature that other branches of English Studies write about. It is also related to a sense of appropriate creative sites -- Creative Writing's is stories, novels, and poetry while Composition's is the disciplinary self it itself writes.

The answer to the third question takes us away from voice temporarily and into the dynamics of Creative Writing as a discipline. Information is gathered from the testimonies of Creative Writing's practitioners and theorists, as encountered first in the sketched portraits provided by databases and then as viewed in the full textual detail and context of the books and articles from which they were abstracted. What becomes evident as we look at the way Creative Writing writes itself on the topic of itself generally, as well as on voice in particular, is that Creative Writing considers both voice and itself as essentially unproblematic enterprises. We will hear a few dissident, persistent voices vigorously critiquing both the Workshop, Creative Writing's main pedagogical method, and Creative Writing's antipathy to critical theory, but we will also find that at present they speak from the margins of Creative Writing and that the paradigm shift for which they call seems unforthcoming. Creative Writing functions effectively within its current, traditional paradigm, having accrued no critical mass of inadequacies

related to the kinds of fundamental matters that typically animate a paradigm shift. To repeat a point made earlier, during a paradigm shift, "anomalies" and "crises" are "terminated"

not by deliberation and interpretation, but by a relatively sudden and unstructured event . . . Scientists then often speak of the 'scales falling from the eyes' or the of the 'lightning flash' that 'inundates' a previously obscure puzzle, enabling its components to be seen in a new way that for the first time permits its solution (Kuhn, 122).

There is no discipline-wide sign in Creative Writing of concern about "obscure puzzles" *of a major sort* that "need to be seen in a new way for the first time." While Creative Writing does critique itself and its endeavors, there is significant, discipline-wide concurrence that "obscure puzzles," such as what creativity is, are either old questions that may never be satisfactorily answered or that answers will be forthcoming eventually through the methods and dynamics of the current paradigm.

The reality described above carries over into Creative Writing's ideas about voice, which, as Chapter Three will show, cluster into three common categories that typically accompany voice wherever we find it -- gender, self, and authorization. It is also demonstrated in Creative

Writing's matter-of-fact approach to voice noted earlier: it is a useful, unremarkable term connoting certain commonplaces about writers and writing. This untheoretical approach to voice differs so strikingly from the rest of English Studies' that it will be necessary to clarify Creative Writing's position in English Studies before attempting to understand its position on voice. This will lead to the third part of Chapter Three, which will be guided by three questions:

- 1. What is Creative Writing's present position in English Studies relative to Literature Studies, as Creative Writing practitioners understand and describe it?**
- 2. What is Creative Writing's present position in English Studies relative to Rhetoric and Composition, as Creative Writing practitioners understand and describe it?**
- 3. What may be learned about voice in Creative Writing by posing the previous two questions?**

The third part of Chapter Three begins by observing that allocation of university resources indicates value presumed and added. This established, it will then show that numerical data on Creative Writing programs, courses, enrollment, and graduates across the United States indicate that Creative Writing's position in English Departments is robust

and more than occasionally dominant. It will further show that at one major research university where by design, definition, and necessity the lingua franca is expository writing, during Spring Quarter, 1997 Creative Writing courses constitute 42% of English Department writing courses. The conclusion drawn from the numerical data is that, seen from a nontheoretical point of view, "robust" aptly describes the state of Creative Writing programs in English Studies.

Turning next to the theoretical sides of the matters raised so far, Chapter Three considers analytical accounts of Creative Writing's history and present state of affairs, with special attention given to the rather widely acknowledged tension between Creative Writing and critical theory. By one practitioner's account, Creative Writing's history demonstrates that Creative Writing was and is a theory of literature but that relatively recent events have alienated it from its own theoretical premises, from Literature Studies, and from critical theory. Another analysis tries to account for such alienation by examining the differences between the way creative writers think of themselves and the way theory would have them think. Another looks to differences in the prestige the academy accords literary theory compared with Creative Writing. Another argues that the creative writing-critical theory split can be traced to the

rise of specialization (poet or a critic, not both), to the New Critics' apolitical view of literature as decontextualized artifact, and to a resultant, generalized separation of critical and writerly worlds.

Different accounts of the creative writing-critical theory split tend to converge on at least one point: that Creative Writing may eventually become the site that links Rhetoric and Composition and critical theory, but that this will happen only after Creative Writing abandons or radically revises the Workshop. The Workshop, its critics argue, prevents synthesis, affirms hierarchies, and suppresses identity; as long as the Workshop remains the standard expression and application of Creative Writing's theory, pedagogy, and praxis, genuine change will be impeded, confounded, and denied.

The information presented throughout Chapter Three suggests very strongly that Creative Writing is nowhere near discarding its Workshop paradigm, as it works very well for the majority of Creative Writing practitioners. What may be happening is that students trained in critical theory may be trying to revise the workshop from within as they bring to it premisses and practices learned elsewhere. However, the testimony of some practitioners also suggests that it would take very powerful arguments (which are not yet forthcoming) to persuade a majority of

creative writing practitioners to change the way they have successfully practiced their profession.

The database information and the critiques of Creative Writing included in Chapter Three sketch a portrait of a prosperous, robust enterprise not given, by the nature of its work, to reflecting very hard on itself as a discipline; in keeping with that ethos voice is used quite matter-of-factly, as Chapter Three demonstrates. What creative writers do reflect on is the self, and Chapter Three concludes that to that end voice functions for Creative Writing practitioners as a familiar and useful term connoting certain realities fundamental to a writer's life -- dialectical struggle affirming, transforming, and transcending self within the crucible of craft and art.

1.2.4. Chapter Four: Voice in Literature Studies: Background, Patterns, and Issues

This Dissertation has characterized voice as paradoxically both unbound and bound. Wayne Booth observes similar phenomena at work in the concept of genres, pointing out that while "... there seems to be no predictable limit to the number of possible genres (new ones are invented from time to time) [but]... at the same time a surprisingly large share of our literary experience falls into a small number of patterns" (1974, 100).

The matter of limits set, breached, and then narrowed again looms large in Literature Studies and voice. Boundary crashing, skirting, crossing, widening, and blurring is one of English Studies most important progressive strategies, but it is not without its problematical side, as commentators have observed.

Chapter Four puts forward the premise that in Literature Studies it will be necessary to study voice not as an isolated phenomenon but as a part of the larger tapestry woven by the discipline and its methods. To do this, three questions are posed, each of which is listed and discussed respectively below.

1. *What portrait of voice in Literature Studies (compared with Rhetoric and Composition's and Creative Writing's portraits) is sketched by ERIC and Modern Language Association (MLA) database information?*

A *Voice-Literature* Keyword-Subject Heading search of ERIC yields results very similar to the results of the ERIC *Voice-Rhetoric* search described in Chapter Two. As in Rhetoric and Composition, the general trend (of documents on the subject of voice indexed per year) is steeply upward, with the most activity occurring in 1994. Analyses of the diction and syntax of the document abstracts reveals characterizations of voice as unbound as in Rhetoric and Composition documents but tending toward

abstractions, such as **history, philosophy, concept, quality, and aspect**, compared with Rhetoric and Composition's adjectivals -- **authorial, Gothic, and polyphonic** -- and Creative Writing's measured, generic topics -- **own, literary, strong**.

An MLA database Keyword-Subject Heading search using *Voice-Literature* and *Metaphor-Literature* reveals an especially startling result: 2,996 documents are located by *Voice-Literature* and 3,091 by *Metaphor-Literature*, a difference of just 95 documents. Metaphor is a term with a history exceeding two millennia; voice has a history of less than sixty years, at most. Metaphor is precisely defined; voice is not. Nevertheless, the newer term has become as commonly used in the MLA database as the older. This researcher did not anticipate such a result; the findings indicate very clearly that while most of the overt activity surrounding voice has occurred in Rhetoric and Composition, Literature Studies has, in a quiet way, welcomed voice into its disciplinary vocabulary to an extent not observed elsewhere in English Studies.

2. *What portrait of voice is sketched by key examples from Literature Studies' academic literature?*

The first part of an answer to the question posed above relies on an overview of Literature Studies' main theories of voice compiled and

summarized in Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice: Speech and Writing in Faulkner by Stephen Ross. In addition to providing a cogent summary of complex ideas, Ross' approach to voice -- reviewing possible meanings and then selecting one most appropriate for his purposes -- differs markedly from several of the other approaches this section will examine. Specifically, Ross understands that voice denotes and connotes differing and conflicting concepts, but such an awareness (at least overtly stated) is not something we commonly find in Literature Studies' (or in English Studies') uses of voice. More commonly, as Chapter Four shows, Literature Studies practitioners either presume disciplinary-wide agreement about what voice means, define it idiosyncratically to suit their present purposes, or change the meaning as their purposes change. In Literature Studies, voice becomes not only the "floating signifier changing from one text to the next" (Yancey, viii) of Sharon Crowley's inspired characterization; it frequently becomes a "floating signifier" changing from one chapter to the next.

Chapter Four looks closely at the use of voice in the work of M. M. Bakhtin, commonly thought to be the premier voice-theorist, and then in the works of five prominent literary theorists -- Wayne Booth, Gerard Genette, Gabriel Josipovici, Anne Davidson Ferry, and Michael J. Toolan.

Tracing the appearance and use of the term voice through Bakhtin's The Dialogic Imagination produces three discoveries worth noting: first, that for Bakhtin, voice represents a relatively minor feature of a larger interest -- dialogism; second that at times in The Dialogic Imagination Bakhtin's apparent efforts to define voice range from world views to point of view to tone (324 - 329); and third that when he does directly attempt a definition of voice, it eventually amounts to style as one of several features of tone.

Essentially we see in Bakhtin what we typically find in nearly all other Literature Studies practitioners' approaches to voice: they define voice idiosyncratically to suit their particular, present purposes. Booth attempts a rhetorical definition but eventually settles on "style or tone" (176); for Genette voice names a category of textual phenomena generated by narration; for Josipovici it denotes an feature of the "asymmetrical" (136) relationship between reader and writer; for Ferry it denotes both tone of voice and qualities of sound in text that convey very specific concepts, such as "the inner life of every man" (181); and for Toolan, representing stylistics, it denotes style, passivity (grammatical), and accent. As none of Toolan's characteristics is overtly gathered under a single category, such as style, it appears that even in stylistics, a sub-

category of Literature Studies for which precise terminology is particularly important, voice slips the bounds of denotation.

3. To what extent is Literature Studies' approach to voice linked to the dynamics of Literature Studies itself?

It is in the nature of Literary Criticism, as in literature, to rely on the usefulness of "floating signifiers" for "commonsense reasoning and deliberation" (Dillon, e-mail, April, 1997). As we would not press a deliberately ambiguous poem too closely, neither is it this Dissertation's intent to press Literature Studies further than it chooses to go on the matter of voice. That it addresses the question of voice's definition is clear; that it answers definitional questions to its satisfaction is less clear; that as a discipline it is comfortable with voice as transparently denotative of certain useful, tacitly understood concepts is obvious. Overall, Chapter Four suggests that Literature Studies has indeed woven voice into the fabric of its enterprise and that "voice of the shuttle" captures but does not press nor suppress the mutually connotative dynamics of voice, of Literature Studies and of voice in Literature Studies.

1.2.5. Chapter Five: Voice as Desire: The Orality-Literacy Interaction and Its Implications for Voice in English Studies

The introduction to Chapter Five points out that the two sources of information used throughout this Dissertation -- English Studies' academic literature and databases -- paint two very different portraits of voice. The information found in recent studies of voice paints a sanguine portrait of progress made toward defining voice. The information found in databases paints a disorderly voice scene. The differences between the two portraits amount to something like the differences between a Renoir and a Rauschenberg. Essentially, voice in English Studies functions as a "floating signifier" (Crowley in Yancey, viii), and while this may suit many English Studies practitioners, it remains problematic for many others and needs addressing as such.

Chapter Five advances the premise that additional progress toward understanding voice (not just defining it) requires looking somewhat outside of English Studies' disciplinary boundaries to Walter Ong's work on literacy-orality interaction. It points out that there are precedents for such a move, most notably the usefulness of Thomas Kuhn's "paradigm shift" theories, and as a reverse example, the recent discovery throughout academia of the rhetorical nature of all academic enterprises. It also points out that Walter Ong influenced voice's genesis in Composition through his published work and through his early, personal association

with the Voice Project, the first systematic attempt to apply voice-theories to pedagogical contexts; that his work offers the most fully-developed theories of voice yet attempted, including insight into some of voice's most vexing issues; and that his theories point to ways voice in English Studies might be better understood and more effectively used than at present.

Ong's work probes features of speech, features of writing, and then the two together. Regarding sound, he observes that it time-bound and "discernibly active" (1967, 111) in the present; that it "signals the present use of power" (112); that spoken words are events; and that "... voice ... being the paradigm of all sound for man ... conveys presence as nothing else does" (114). Regarding writing, he points out that by appearing to represent words as objects in space, writing appears to radically disengage words from reality. His main premise, arrived at through a series of arguments based on several corollaries, is that the idea that cold, abstract, disaggregative writing conveys warm, concrete, aggregative sound through the phenomenon of voice represents a rebellion against denatured textworld and an embrace of "the old, mobile, warm, personally interactive lifeworld (1982, 81) of voice.

Ong's work on the exteriority of writing and the interiority of

speech is especially important to this Dissertation's assertion that voice reveals the interiority of English Studies. Arguing existentially, not scientifically, he points out that "*[s]ound is a special sensory key to interiority*" [Ong's emphasis] (1967, 117): through sound we perceive interiors without invading them; perception of human interiors through sound includes perceiving intelligence, emotions, history, and all other human qualities and conditions; sound exteriorizes and interiorizes words, interior to interior and exterior to exterior; "[v]oice is alive because sound is alive" (309).

The implications of Ong's ideas for English Studies are as follows: having in the last few decades theorized a world of radically relative signs, having rightly accepted and acted on such maxims as "all text is pretext" and the "writer's audience is always a fiction" (Ong, 1977, 54 - 81), English Studies has recently tried to soften and humanize theory without revising or reversing it. The result, as this Dissertation argues, is seen in voice's lively, persistent, peripatetic presence throughout English Studies' academic literature and database portraits.

The conclusion to Chapter Five and to the Dissertation is divided into two parts: the first is on voice and the second is on method. Regarding voice, the main conclusions are that definition, being unlikely

and perhaps undesirable and impossible given the nature of voice and English Studies, might be eventually replaced with assignation, leading to a new category of metaphorical, deliberately unbound technical terminology for which the first candidate would be voice.

Regarding method, this Dissertation contends that its premises, findings, and conclusions are possible largely through analyses of the textual characteristics of English Studies' database portraits. Voice has been studied through collections of fully-retrieved documents, through theorizing, and through critical analyses, but an awareness of the extent of its vast, carnivalistic presence throughout English Studies (and the significance of such) awaited the kind of database analysis this Dissertation uses. The method could be used to study any academic enterprise, but perhaps computer sciences and information sciences might be the first candidates since they inscribe themselves indelibly in and on the products and projects that make database research possible.

The larger matter of permitting the eye and the I to see differently might lead to studies of the portraits English Studies paints of itself in database collections of course descriptions, in web sites, and in such self-defining terms revealing interiority as "sight" and "write," the latter of which has come to mean far more than literal inscription. This

Dissertation has mainly analyzed the diction of database collections, but analyses of rhetoric, audience, intention, tropes, syntax, and grammar promise rich insights into English Studies as it voices/see/writes itself at the end of the second millennium.

NOTES
Chapter One

1 The "Cat Bill" prompted Adelai Stevenson's famous veto letter, reproduced here:

"To the honorable members of the 66th General Assembly:
I herewith return, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 93 entitled An Act to Provide Protection to Insectivorous Birds by Restraining Cats. This is the so-called 'Cat Bill.' I veto and withhold my approval from this bill for the following reasons:

It would impose fines on owners or keepers who permitted their cats to run at large off their premises. It would permit any person to capture, or call upon the police to pick up and imprison cats at large. It would permit the use of traps. The bill would have statewide application -- on farms, in villages and in metropolitan centers.

"This legislation has been introduced in the past several sessions of the legislature, and it has, over the years, been the source of much comment -- not all of which has been in a serious vein. It may be that the general assembly has now seen fit to refer it to one who can view it with a fresh outlook. Whatever the reasons for passage at this session, I cannot believe there is a widespread public demand for this law or that it could, as a practical matter, be enforced.

"Furthermore, I cannot agree that it should be the declared policy of Illinois that a cat visiting a neighbor's yard or crossing the highway is a public nuisance.

"It is in the nature of cats to do a certain amount of unescorted roaming. Many live with their owners in apartments or other restricted premises, and I doubt if we want to make their every brief foray an opportunity for a small game hunt by zealous citizens -- with traps or otherwise. I am afraid this bill could only create discord, recrimination, and enmity.

"Also, consider the owner's dilemma. To escort a cat abroad on a leash is against the nature of the cat and to permit it to venture forth for exercise unattended into a night of new dangers is against the nature of the owner. Moreover, cats perform useful service, particularly in rural areas, in combating rodents -- work they necessarily perform alone and without regard for property lines.

"We are all interested in protecting certain varieties of birds. That cats destroy some birds, I well know, but I believe this legislation would

further but little the worthy cause to which its proponents give such unselfish effort.

"The problem of cat versus bird is as old as time. If we attempt to resolve it by legislation who knows but what we may be called upon to take sides as well in the age-old problems of dog versus cat, bird versus bird, or even bird versus worm.

"In my opinion, the State of Illinois and its local governing bodies already have enough to do without trying to control feline delinquency.

"For these reasons, and not because I love birds the less or cats the more, I veto and withhold my approval from Senate Bill No. 93."

CHAPTER TWO

VOICE IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION: BACKGROUND, PATTERNS, AND ISSUES

2.1. Introduction: Voice as English Studies' Free Radical

I

This Dissertation approaches the topic of *voice* in written discourse from the view that whatever promises voice holds -- along with whatever problems it raises -- may best be understood in the context of the promises and problems of the academic discipline that birthed it, as voice is imprinted with the markers of its genesis. To a degree this could be said of any term in any discipline, given source, background, and context, but this Dissertation argues that voice as it is currently used in English Studies draws us beyond general matters of etymology, historicity, and contextuality toward the specific matter of ourselves; it turns the inside of English Studies out as no other term has done and perhaps can do.

The idea that a *term* can show us our innermost selves will need defending, as it is a rash and radical statement, and also because there is no other phenomenon in English Studies quite like voice. By *phenomenon* I mean more than voice itself. I mean that voice has been allowed, perhaps

encouraged, to act in English Studies as a kind of wandering, usually benignant (but sometimes malignant) free radical, attaching itself to the discipline's cells, to self, identity, subjectivity, situatedness, grammar, tone, persona, style, and energeia, and changing them in ways we are just beginning to recognize and study *while it also changes itself*. It is this last point, I will argue, that makes voice an unusually interesting topic and that leads us to necessarily mix our metaphors as we discuss it, as voice is itself *necessarily* a mixed metaphor, which leads us to one of the major hypotheses this Dissertation will advance.

Chapter One has illustrated the exceptionally wide array of metaphorical scrims English Studies attaches to voice, from **multiple** to **personal**, from **adult** to **developing**, from **institutional** to **Gothic**, from **necessary** to **polyphonic**, from **distorted** to **empowered**, and from **point of view** to **metaphor**. Being an exceptionally malleable and accommodating term, aggregative in the way speech is aggregative, voice is able to absorb such diverse characterizations. None of the examples listed above nor any of the many other characterizations from which these examples were rather randomly selected is likely to strain a reader's credibility. Voice may very well have a metaphorically Gothic quality, be empowered, suggest a point of view, and convey **simultaneously** these

and many other qualities because "[a]bove all," writes Walter Ong, "voice comes from inside the human organism which provides the voice's resonances" (72). The resonances to which he refers are not only those that may be described scientifically by computing the configurations of an air passage and the characteristics of a column of air moving through it. They also are the resonances of

"the consciousness of each human person [which] is totally interiorized, known to the person from the inside and inaccessible to any other person directly from the inside. Everyone who says 'I' means something different by it from what every other person means. What is 'I' to me is only 'you' to you. And this 'I' incorporates experience into itself by 'getting it all together'. Knowledge is ultimately not a fractioning but a unifying phenomenon, a striving for harmony . . . (1982, 72).

So too, Ong also argues, is sound: "Sight isolates, sound incorporates" (72). Thus, voice may be the harmonizing, incorporating, metaphorical sign of existential differences in a discipline tautologically wrapped in sign and sound. If this hypothesis sustains the weight of inquiry, then it might be possible to abandon fractious disputes over the definition of voice, which

are especially energetic in Rhetoric and Composition, and instead to turn our attention to more unifying and promising projects:

- To understand voice by following, observing, and reflecting on its appearance, growth, and flowering while guided by the premise that the disciplinary context that nurtured it is itself guided by purposeful, discernible (but not necessarily articulated) action influenced in turn by voice.
- To note, trace, observe, and reflect on the actions of a discipline that produced the context and dynamics of voice
- To link the two, discipline and term, by way of three additional premises:
 - That context above all else opens the way to voice;
 - That voice's context is English Studies;
 - And therefore, the only way to know voice is to know English Studies, which is knowable, in part through voice.

Thus, Chapter Two begins the first part of this Dissertation's project: to know voice by knowing its context in each of the three divisions of English Studies. It will

1. Describe voice in classical rhetoric by tracing voice and synonymous concepts through the pertinent writings of Aristotle, Plato,

Cicero, Quintilian, and St. Augustine and through pertinent passages of the Rhetorica ad Herennium. Such an effort has not yet been made, although Miriam Brody has followed the concept of *enargeia* over similar ground, and we will address her findings as they apply to our purposes. The reappearance of voice and related concepts after a long interregnum between the medieval period and the Enlightenment will also be described and discussed.

2. Summarize and evaluate recent findings on Twentieth Century influences on the development of voice, 1900 - 1995.
3. Describe the portrait of voice in Composition and Rhetoric that database information draws; discuss it in relation to database portraits of Creative Writing and Literature; and identify and discuss the issues most central to advancing our understanding of voice both in Composition and Rhetoric and across English Studies.
4. Describe the portrait of voice found in two other, major sources that construct and manifest a discipline's (and in voice's case, a term's) identity -- college textbooks and certain key selections from Rhetoric and Composition's academic literature, post-1965.
5. Summarize the material presented, assess what it reveals about voice, Rhetoric and Composition, and English Studies, and speculate about

the lines of thinking that Chapter Two cues.

II

As mentioned in Chapter One, Wayne Booth has identified in the rise of metaphor and irony a situation similar in some ways to that of voice.

In A Rhetoric of Irony, he explains that metaphor and irony have each ranged from a minute oratorical device, one among many, to an imperialistic world conqueror. Traditionally, the capacity to make original metaphors was generally given much higher status than the ability to use irony; in Aristotle, for example, it is the most important single gift of the poet. But like irony, the device was not content until it had become a concept, an Idea. And with romanticism, it began to expand its domain, until it finally became for some the whole of poetic art . . .

We thus have two curiously parallel projects of expansion in modern times. Two devices of indirection that once kept their place in a classically defined order, performing metaphoric or ironic functions in genres with larger or at least different demands, have expanded themselves -- in Symbolism and what might be called Ironism

-- to fill the whole world of the maker (177).

Like metaphor and irony, voice's origin, understood for the moment to mean *attention given to voice*, is located in classical rhetoric. Like metaphor and irony, voice, a "minute oratorical device", kept its "place in a classically defined order" for a very long time before it became "an imperialistic world conqueror," but unlike metaphor and irony, the concept of voice has metamorphosed so completely that anyone searching for a resemblance between, say, Quintilian's brief observation in Chapter X of Institutes of Oratory, 95.C.E., that "we ought surely to exert our voice (meaning spoken) in some degree to please the audience" (313) and Donald Murray's assertion in Write to Learn, 1993, that "voice" is "the most important, the most magical and powerful element in writing" (33) is likely to be disappointed if not confounded. The "voice" of Quintilian and his predecessors, Aristotle and Cicero, is not the "voice" of Donald Murray, a contemporary Compositionist, nor, as I will show, of many of Murray's colleagues. In this regard we find a situation similar to the one M. H. Abrams describes early in The Mirror and the Lamp as he contemplates the problems he faces in trying to chronicle changes in aesthetic theory:

The diversity of aesthetic theories, however, makes the

task of the historian a very difficult one. It is not only that answers to such questions as 'What is art?' or 'What is poetry?' disagree. The fact is that many theories of art cannot readily be compared at all, because they lack a common ground on which to meet and clash. They seem incommensurable because stated in diverse terms, or in identical terms with diverse signification, or because they are an integral part of larger systems of thought which differ in assumptions and procedure. As a result it is hard to find where they agree, where disagree, or even, what the points at issue are (5).

Problems with voice begin, as they do for Abrams and aesthetic theory, with definitions of terms. In the case of voice, as with aesthetic theory, we have "identical terms with diverse signification", making it hard to tell what each -- Quintilian representing classical tradition and Murray the contemporary divergence from that tradition -- means by voice. After taking due account of differences in audience, purpose, personal style, expectations, and culture, we still have the seeming incommensurability created by diverse tone and terminology. Murray's supremely confident, boldly reiterated and intensified tone -- "*most important, the most magical and powerful element in writing*" -- seems

to yield little common ground to Quintilian's pedantic, arch, and modulated tone: "we ought to *surely* exert our voice to *some* degree". As for terminology, what chain of events, what set of circumstances has made it possible and acceptable for a major figure in Composition writing a widely used textbook to describe a feature of inscribed text not just as "magical" (which would be remarkable enough) but as the "*most* magical and powerful element in writing"?

Granting the effects of change over nearly two millennia, we still find in voice a situation very different from that of other terms that seem otherwise comparable. Metaphor, a "minute oratorical device" become "world conqueror" remains, for all the attention paid it, all the time elapsed, and all the theoretical, epistemological, ontological, social, historical, and political changes over two millennia, still *metaphor*, but voice has become something very unlike what it used to be. Nevertheless, as I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, the markers of its genesis are simultaneously imprinted on it, imbedded in it, and are what it is. To pursue this further, and especially to consider its significance, we will need to look more closely at voice's origins in classical rhetoric.

2.2. Voice and Delivery in Classical Rhetoric

2.2.1. Aristotle: Delivery is a "vulgar matter when rightly understood."

When the classical rhetoricians wrote about voice, which was relatively rarely and briefly, they did so under the master topic of delivery or *elocutio*. To them *voice* denoted the spoken voice, the vocality produced by the physical apparatuses that make sounded speech possible, but it also connoted the troublesome matters characteristically and predictably raised at any juncture between rhetoric and the mimetic arts. These difficulties gather under the aegis of delivery of which voice is a subcategory, but they originate in fundamental differences between the world views of rhetoricians and performing artists or "poets," which in turn animate conflicts between ideas about theory and practice, right and wrong, and means and ends. For example, Aristotle writes that the "whole business of rhetoric is with opinion" (Bizzell, 219), while the business of poetry is with imitation both in the sense of "impersonation" (Grube, xviii) and sympathetic "emotional identification" or *sympatheia* (xviii). The whole business of rightly reasoned opinion is "true justice" and/or "to contend by means of the facts is (inherently) just" (218), but "just" is not a word applicable to poetry as far as means or ends are concerned, although epic poetry and tragedy are both an "imitation in verse of what is

morally worthy" (Poetics, 11). The ends of poetry are catharsis of emotions, often pity and fear, but in a degree related to the degree of the "perversion of their [the audiences'] souls" (Politics, 8.7.4 in Grube, xvi) while the end of rhetoric is persuasion to the "just." The means in rhetoric for achieving the just is demonstration by means of the facts themselves; the means in poetry for achieving the catharsis of emotions is whatever means suits the audience, as "[e]very man takes pleasure in what is naturally akin to him" (xvi).

Such matters unsettled Aristotle more than other rhetoricians. He is the most strident in his condemnation of the influence of acting on rhetoric, and he is the only one of the five major rhetoricians we will consider in this section who did not complete a theory of delivery. There may well be other explanations for this, but surely the fact that he considered delivery "a vulgar matter when rightly understood," outside and beneath and subversive of rhetoric, played at least some part in his apparent disinterest in it. His views on delivery influenced the Roman rhetoricians, although they eventually parted from his phlegmatic approach and went their own way on the subject.

Aristotle's judgment of delivery as a "vulgar matter when rightly understood" (Bizzell, 218) means that compared with *logos*, "what is said"

(216), delivery (*hypokrisis*) along with *lexis*, the "way of saying" something (216), seem necessary evils, secondary matters that a rhetorician must know about but that tend to corrupt the true intent of rhetoric:

... [S]ince the whole business of rhetoric is with opinion, one should pay attention to delivery, not because it is right but because it is necessary, since true justice seeks nothing more in a speech than neither to offend nor to entertain; for to contend by means of the facts themselves is just, with the result that everything except demonstration is incidental; but, nevertheless [delivery] has great power, as has been said, because of the corruption of the audience. 6. The subject of expression, however, has some small necessary place in all teaching; for to speak in one way rather than another does make some difference in regard to clarity, though not a great difference; but all these things are forms of outward show and intended to affect the audience. (219).

According delivery its "small necessary place," Aristotle does explain that delivery in rhetoric, like delivery in poetics, concerns itself with

how the voice should be used in expressing each emotion, sometimes loud and sometimes soft and [sometimes] intermediate, and how the pitch accents [*tonoi*] should be intoned, whether as acute, grave, or circumflex, and what rhythms should be expressed in each case; for [those who study delivery] consider three things, and these are volume, change of pitch [*harmonia*], and rhythm. Those [performers who give careful attention to these] are generally the ones who win poetic contests; and just as actors are more important than poets now in the poetic contests, so it is in political contests because of the sad state of governments (218). [Brackets throughout are the translator's.]

With this last statement we begin to see what is really at stake for Aristotle. The point of conflict is not just that logos must tolerate hypokrisis, but that hypokrisis denotes the corrupt and corruptive verbal mimetic arts of rhapsody and acting which threaten not only to distract, displace, and deter rhetoric but which remind us of other troubling matters: first the "sad state of government" which in the polis is mutually related to the sad state of audiences that prefer ornamented, imitative delivery over the substantive content of rightly reasoned opinion; and

second the unsettled and unsettling phenomenological matters that dog language, voice, and those who think about both -- questions about the nature of ideas, things, and words, the relation between the three, and the relation between speakers, audiences, and the idea-thing-word phenomenon.

2.2.2. Cicero: On Delivery: "... the whole subject, as I believe, deserves serious attention."

In Of Oratory, Cicero places several brief observations about voice within discussions of much larger and more important matters, including oratory's "demands on the student" (202), "the variety of gifts expected in the orator" (217), and the "rules for preparatory training" (221) of an orator. Of the "demands on the student" effected by delivery (which is also one of many demands made by oratory), he asks,

And why should I go on to describe the speaker's delivery?

That needs to be controlled by bodily carriage, gesture, play of features, and changing intonation of voice: and how important that is wholly by itself, the actor's trivial art and the stage proclaim; for there, although all are laboring to regulate the expression, the voice, and the movements of the body, everyone knows how few actors there are, or ever have been, whom we

could bear to watch (202)!

Later in a discussion of "gifts expected in the orator" his view of acting's contributions to effective delivery soften somewhat: "... [I]n an orator we must demand the subtlety of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, a diction almost poetic, a lawyer's memory, a tragedian's voice, and the bearing almost of the consummate actor" (217). And in a discussion of the preparation necessary for becoming an orator, he writes,

"To proceed, the control and training of the voice, breathing, gestures, and the tongue itself, call for exertion rather than art; and in these matters we most carefully consider whom we are to take as patterns, whom we should wish to be like. We have to study actors as well as orators, that bad practice may not lead us to some inelegant or ugly habit (221).

However, some three decades later a mature Cicero takes a rather different view of delivery in general and voice specifically. In De Oratore he writes that "because the mastery of delivery is a very important requisite for speaking, the whole subject, as I believe, deserves serious attention" (191). He addresses the topics of "Voice Quality" which he says has three "aspects: Volume, Stability, and Flexibility" (191). He discusses the characteristics of each and how "the discipline of declamation" (193)

might assist an orator in using each to the best advantage, in cultivating the possibilities and conserving the health of the vocal apparatuses, and in understanding how form, content, and means meld in "agreeableness" (195). About the latter, he provides this example:

At the end of the speech a sustained flow is beneficial to the voice. And does not this, too, most vigorously stir the hearer and the conclusion of the entire discourse? Since, then, the same means serve the stability of the voice and agreeableness of delivery, my present discussion will have dealt with both at once, offering as it does the observations that have seemed appropriate on stability, and the related observations on agreeableness" (195).

The section on Voice Quality, running some eleven paragraphs, covers numerous variations on the themes introduced in the passage cited above. One remarkable thing about all of this is the sanguine tone in which the treatise on delivery is written; Cicero does seem convinced that the topic of delivery "deserves serious consideration" (191). This contrasts sharply with the contentious tone of the voice-passages in De Inventione. The point of contention -- the undue and corruptive influence of acting on delivery -- seems for Cicero to have faded away or been

resolved in the intervening thirty-odd years.

Cicero's ideas about voice are characterized by two stages. The first follows Aristotle's ideas very closely, differing mostly in degrees of emphasis. For our present purposes, the significant coordinate between Aristotle and the first-stage Cicero, giving us what I will call the first two dimensions of a three dimensional view of voice, is their common dislike of actors and their craft (tempered by a pragmatic acceptance of the minor but regrettably necessary role of delivery) because acting is antithetical to rhetoric, oratory, *and* to art. Actors pander to willing (*i.e.*, corrupted) audiences who prefer the mimetic emotions of actors performing others' works to the rightly derived, centered, and "reasoned" ethos proposed to audiences by poets who perform the works they write.

The second stage of Cicero's thinking about voice significantly revises the first as he accepts delivery as "the dominant factor in oratory" (169) and asserts the necessity of giving it the sustained attention it deserves. But the issue of mimesis, personified by actors and acting, does not disappear. The difference is that it stirs the mature Cicero to action:

My reason for dwelling on these points [having to do with the elements of delivery -- 'glances,' 'tone of voice,' and 'gestures,'

(171)] is because the whole of this department has been abandoned by the orators, who are the players that act real life, and has been taken over by the actors, who only mimic reality (171).

The third line inserted into the coordinate point defined by the intersection of Aristotle's and Cicero's ideas about voice, creating a third dimension drawn via points determined by Platonic metaphysics, will be discussed in detail in 2.2.4.

2.2.3. Quintilian: "Delivery ought to conciliate, persuade, move, and thus delight, all of which can come somehow from voice and delivery..."

In Institutes of Oratory Quintilian writes (about speaking) from a rhetorical position onto which he intends to shine the searching, reflexive lights of ethical considerations, specifically that the best available definition of oratory as *the art of speaking well* (which is what rhetoric teaches) is an insufficient definition because it fails to address long-standing charges against rhetoric that it is, to use a modern term, an essentially amoral enterprise. It teaches speakers to manipulate audiences to their (the speakers') own ends; it searches out "whatever can persuade in speaking" (320) apart from any ethical considerations; and it

has no content or "function of art" or specific thing that it is "concerned with" in the sense that a shoemaker is concerned with shoemaking or a geometer with geometry or a physician with healing the sick (Gorgias, 61 - 62). Quintilian proposes to right such wrongs by arguing that a good orator must necessarily also be a good man; for the primacy of ethical considerations over rhetorical ones (should the need to choose arise); and for a redefinition of *orator* along the lines of Marcus Cato's definition of orator as "a good man skilled in speaking" (347).

For the most part voice maintains its place in the scheme of these things as a relatively "minute oratorical device, one among many", but Book Eleven does give it some "purchase" by addressing voice specifically under the heading of delivery and then under the thesis that "[w]ords count for much in themselves; when voice and gesture and motion add their force, something like perfection comes from these combined qualities" (294). Like Cicero, Quintilian goes on to consider the qualities voice, the care of the vocal apparatuses, and voice's proper use in concert with the orator's subject matter and audience, but he also raises two matters that set his discussion apart from Cicero's and that provide us with very early signs of the directions thinking about voice will eventually take.

At one point in Book Ten of Institutes of Oratory, Quintilian does

venture beyond discussing voice as simply a physical instrument to be exerted "in some degree to please the audience" to explain that

[d]eclamation. . . as it is an imitation of real pleadings and deliberations, ought closely to resemble reality, but, as it carries with it something of ostentation, to clothe itself in a certain degree of elegance. Such is the practice of actors, who do not pronounce exactly as we speak in common conversation, for such pronunciation would be devoid of art; nor do they depart far from nature, as by such a fault imitation would be destroyed; but they exalt the simplicity of familiar discourse with a certain scenic grace (313).

This may be one of the very earliest signs in classical rhetoric of what eventually became the rehabilitation of mimesis and the dominance of mimetic theories of aesthetics in rhetoric as well as in art for nearly two millennia. As M. H. Abrams explains in The Mirror and the Lamp,

'Imitation' continued to be a prominent item in the critical vocabulary for a long time after Aristotle -- all the way through the eighteenth century, in fact. The systematic importance given to the term [imitation] differed greatly from critic to critic; those objects in the universe that art imitates,

or should imitate, were variously conceived as either actual or in some sense ideal; and from the first, there was a tendency to replace Aristotle's 'action' as the principal object of imitation with such elements as human character, or thought, or even inanimate things. But particularly after the recovery of the Poetics and the great burst of aesthetic theory in sixteenth-century Italy, whenever a critic was moved to get down to fundamentals and frame a comprehensive definition of art, the predicate usually included the word 'imitation' or else one of those parallel terms which, whatever differences they might imply, all faced in the same direction: 'reflection,' 'representation,' 'counterfeiting,' 'feigning,' 'copy,' or 'image' (11).

It is not by chance that the topic of acting appears prominently in the comments on voice written by the three major rhetoricians of antiquity -- Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. After accounting for the most obvious reason -- that Cicero and Quintilian worked, thought, and wrote in the Aristotelian tradition -- we have other, more interesting possibilities to consider. The first is that acting, a mimetic endeavor, is linked inextricably, as Aristotle explains, to "voice, the most mimetic of all our parts" (Theory, 219); the second and far more important reason is

that, as Aristotle goes on to explain, "words are imitations" (219). George A. Kennedy points out in his translator's notes that this phrase "is consistent with some of Plato's Cratylus but not with Aristotle's own discussion of words in On Interpretation 1, where they are called 'symbols' and 'signs' (219). This difference notwithstanding, for our purposes the issue is not whether Aristotle's take on what words are is consistent with what he has written elsewhere but that imitation and its attendant issues -- reality and identity -- and the issues attendant on them -- persona and self -- shadow voice wherever we find it.

For Aristotle and Quintilian (and to a somewhat lesser degree for Cicero) another issue -- the ethical one -- also shadows voice. We have seen, as is quite evident in Book 3, 3 - 9 of On Rhetoric, that Aristotle disapproves of the current state of affairs concerning the increased and, in his view, corruptive influence of "acting." He says that actors, those who skillfully use the voice to manipulate audiences, are currently much in favor, that they have supplanted poets and unduly influence government not because they attend to opinion and "contend by means of the facts themselves" (218) but because they "speak sweet nothings" while seeming "to acquire their reputation through their lexis" (219), the result being that the "majority of the uneducated think such speakers speak most

beautifully" (219), prizing ornamented delivery more highly than plain delivery.

Questions about ethics sustain to this day lively debates within rhetoric. One of the most important modern contributions to the history of rhetoric's means-end question is found in Kenneth Burke's rhetorical analyses of Hitler's rhetoric ("The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle," 1941). Using rhetoric as a means of achieving the good and just end of exposing rhetorical evil and injustice, Burke provided a strong warrant for Aristotle's (and others') claims that ethics is a kind of third *antistrophos* -- counterpart, correlative, or coordinate -- of rhetoric.

This raises the question, of how, then, mimesis, classical rhetoric's antagonistic oppositor, assumed the role of protagonistic ally to voice which was, as we know, once a "minute oratorical device" but is now become "imperialistic world conqueror." And it leads to the companion question of how two sets of strong ethical judgments about voice, one made by the ancients and the other by contemporary compositionists, could be pronounced on the same phenomenon with such very different results. The ancients, at times, demonized voice, judging it as we have seen "vulgar", a "trivial art", but regrettably necessary. Modern compositionists often lionize it, asserting its authenticity, its power,

and its truth. This in turn raises the obvious question of whether each group, the ancients and the contemporaries, is judging the same phenomenon. The answer is that they are not; over the centuries, voice became *voice*, although what Miriam Brody calls, after Derrida, voice's *supplements* (Manly Writing, 27) remain remarkably synonymous and stable over the centuries:

Citing a supplement to good writing that rhetoricians will variously name, Quintilian named *enargeia* a force that compelled the reader's notice (8.3. 61-62). Adam Smith calls *enargeia* nativism, Campbell calls it vivacity, an American schooltext writer named it force, and twentieth century composition text writers have called this supplement voice . . . (27)

Additional evidence for Brody's position, and also foreshadowing the directions ideas about voice would take, is located in Book Eleven of Institutes of Oratory. This book is entirely devoted to the subject of delivery, which Quintilian defines as "produc[ing] the desired emotions by voice, look, bodily carriage" (Institutes, 294). Near the end, after a thorough consideration of voice quality, physical characteristics of the chest, throat, and nostrils, care of the voice, use of the voice, and similar

matters related to gesture and appearance, including, clothing, Quintilian writes what I consider a extremely telling sentence:

Delivery ought to conciliate, persuade, move, and thus delight, all of which can come **somehow** from voice and delivery; from the **power** of assertion, as Cicero says to Calidius; and from the **power** of representing or imitating the emotions" [my emphases] (302).

In this remarkable statement we find the germ of several major features of voice-theories: voice has the **power** to somehow convey or effect complex and abstract affects -- conciliation, persuasion, and delight. How this all **somehow** happens (along with how it all **somehow** means) is what we in English Studies continually come back to and is part of what we address throughout this Dissertation.

2.2.4. Plato: "[O]nce a thing is put in writing it rolls about all over the place..."

It is by way of certain ethical considerations raised naturally by rhetoric and language that we find in Plato an early source of ideas persisting first in rhetoricians' discussions of the speaking voice and presently in theories about voice as something far more than simple vocality. As we have seen, Greek and Roman rhetoricians occasionally

wrote about the voice as an instrument of sound, one of several facets of delivery, but these instances are very minor, as rhetoric is about much larger matters: how to effectively invent, organize, express, and remember what is delivered; how to accomplish all this effectively under different circumstances, for different audiences, and for different purposes; and the ethical questions that attend situations where speakers would "exhort or dissuade," "accuse or defend," "blame or commemorate" (Lanham, 106) using inartificial and artificial proofs.

Nevertheless, rhetoric's larger matters and the "minor" matter of voice were linked early on by three terms that commonly influence discussions of rhetoric and which eventually became a kind of definitional triad for voice -- mimesis or imitation or representation (centered much later on mimetic theories of the self); power (i.e. *enargeia* if we accept Miriam Brody's thesis, *juice* if we accept Peter Elbow's); and style or *elocutio* into which Cicero, Quintilian, the Rhetorica ad Herennium, and medieval and renaissance rhetoricians essentially include delivery and thereby voice.

Plato's contribution to the voice-tapestry woven over the centuries begins with what M. H. Abrams calls the "three-stage regress" (8) mimetic theory of art. Characteristically using three categories while other

mimetic theories relied on two -- what can be imitated and the imitation (8) -- Plato lays out the following scheme:

The first category is that of the eternal and unchanging ideas; the second, reflecting this, is the world of sense, natural or artificial; and the third category, in turn reflecting the second, comprises such things as shadows, images in water and mirrors, and the fine arts (8).

From this arrangement certain conclusions necessarily follow. Because the first category "is the ultimate locus not only of reality but of value, the determination that art is at second remove from the truth automatically establishes its equal remoteness from the beautiful and the good" (8). This has the effect, Abrams explains, of placing art in a rather lowly position. Judged by the single standard of its relation to Idea or Essence, a bed built by a carpenter represents a higher level than a picture of a bed painted by an artist. Further, this second order activity that imitates a first order representation is positioned outside the dialogues' main intent:

In the dialogues there is only one direction possible, and one issue, that is, the perfecting of the social state and the state of man; so that the question of art can never be separated from

questions of truth, justice, and virtue. 'For the great issue at state,' Socrates says in concluding his discussion of poetry in The Republic, 'greater than appears, [is] whether a man is to be good or bad' (9).

Compounding this is poetry's (art's) "effects on its auditors [which] are bad because poetry represents appearance rather than truth, and nourishes their feelings rather than their reason' (9). For all of these reasons and others, poets are denied admission to the Republic which is really the 'soul writ large' (Bloom, 412). As such, the stakes are very high, and if an imitation of an imitation is potentially corruptive, then acting, an imitation of an imitation of an imitation realizes that potential, and the voice broadcasts it.

The classical rhetoricians taught that there is an integral relationship between style and ethos, and as we will see, some of them folded elocutio, including delivery and voice, into style. Cicero and Quintilian emphasized the importance of projecting the ethos of "the good man speaking" (Institutes, 86); Augustine asked, "What . . . is it to speak not only wisely but also eloquently except to employ sufficient words . . . while the things spoken about are true and ought to be heard?" (166). We can track such linkage back Plato's distinctions between diegesis (poets'

speaking in their own voices) and mimesis (poets' imitating others' voices) and to Aristotle's rather different reading of all poetic discourse as mimetic and as differing by degrees of successful and unsuccessful imitation rather than by differences between imitative and authentic authorial voices (Ross, 5). We find it in Plato's scheme for distinguishing genres: tragedy and comedy, he argues, imitate voices other than the poet's while epic and lyric poetry are written in the voices of the poets themselves.

Behind all such theorizing speaks Plato's voice in Phaedrus observing/complaining that "[o]nce a thing is put in writing, it rolls about all over the place, falling into the hands of those who have no concern with it just as easily as under the notice of those who comprehend; it has no notion of whom to address and whom to avoid. And when it is ill-treated or abused as illegitimate, it always needs its father to help it, being quite unable to protect or help itself" (70). The history of voice is largely the history of contraries, and it is the contrary nature of language that Plato finds himself up against in Phaedrus as he complains in a written ostensibly "spoken" dialogue (that we know about only because it was written) that writing, once written, escapes its writer's control, his having chosen to write it, of course, rather than speak it, to paradoxically

insure control via a written record. The history of rhetoric and the history of voice could probably be written without too much distortion as the history of efforts to control language, to keep it from rolling about all over the place in order to protect the *self entwined in language*. This increasingly becomes the case as style and eventually self emerge as fundamental concerns of people who think and write about language.

Experience, reinforced by Platonic ideas, rhetorical theory and practice, and political and social changes, would account for Aristotle's Cicero's and the young Quintilian's acerbic condemnations of rhetoric's flirtation with rhapsodic and dramatic techniques. And all of this minus the Platonic influence as it waned in the face of political, social, and historical realities, would also account for major rhetoricians' rehabilitation of at least some dramatic techniques as tools useful in the service of rhetoric. This does not include dramatic excesses, as Quintilian cautions:

All of these faults ['some who spit and sputter and sprinkle on the bystanders'] I could endure in an orator better than that of chanting, the worst practice in our present day courts and schools, like a theatrical sing-song or the outburst of drunken revelers (Institutes, 297).

But it might well include this advice: "the orator's gesture must correspond to his thought rather than to his actual words, as the best actors used to do" (298). Quintilian's words echo Aristotle's written three centuries earlier. Just as in Quintilian's time there used to be actors who suit the word to the action, the action to the word, there used to be in Aristotle's time poetic contests where the poets were more important than actors and where governments did not used to be in a sad state. The times are changing, and in rhetoric those changes are reflected in pragmatic adjustments to the new realities of life under Christian Emperors.

2.2.5. Rhetorica ad Herennium: "... good delivery ensures that what the orator is saying seems to come from the heart."

The history of voice's modern rehabilitation and eventual positive alignment with Platonic thought begins during the late Classical Era with Rhetorica ad Herennium, a treatise of unknown authorship likely written around 84 B.C.E., about the same time as Cicero's De Inventione (Bizzell, 251). It is generally considered the work of a young man who has finished a course on rhetoric and who decides to write a handbook, drawing on lecture notes, his own ideas, and possibly on his reading of Cicero.

Book Three of Rhetorica is devoted to delivery, contains a relatively

extensive treatise on voice, and with one important exception mirrors for the most part Cicero and Quintilian's observations about voice as an element of delivery. At the end of the discussion of voice the author observes,

I am not unaware of how great a task I have undertaken in trying to express physical movements in words and portray vocal intonations in writing. True, I was not confident that it was possible to treat these matters adequately in writing. Yet neither did I suppose that, if such a treatment were impossible, it would follow that what I have done here would be useless, for it has been my purpose merely to suggest what ought to be done. The rest I shall leave to practice. This, nevertheless, one must remember: good delivery ensures that what the orator is saying seems to come from the heart (205).

The references to the difficulty of writing about the qualities of voice and to the heart as the source of the orator's words signal very important departures from previous approaches to voice. Now *psyche* has a role to play in the *techné* of voice delivery. *Psyche* will eventually supplant *techné*, a change we will discuss in the context of contemporary ideas about voice.

2.2.6: St. Augustine: "What profits correctness in a speech . . . if what is said is not understood by those on whose account we speak?"

Evidence that ideas about voice were changing continued to appear in subsequent writings on rhetoric over the next several centuries. The changes included a declining (and finally abandoned) interest in voice, mimesis, and attendant ethical issues, occurring within the context of changing ideas about rhetoric in general as Greek influences waned and then were lost in their original form, leaving rhetoric in the hands of the Greek-influenced Roman rhetoricians whose influence in turn waned as Christian rhetoricians rethought rhetoric in light of their own purposes, audiences, and ontologies.

St. Augustine, writing in the Fourth Century, provides us in On Christian Doctrine, with excellent examples of the changing voice of voice. The work is '[e]ssentially an introduction to the interpretation and explanation of the Bible' (Robertson, ix) in the course of which Augustine, using and promoting Hellenistic rhetorical theories and practices, attempts to also prepare early Christians to preach the Gospel effectively.

Book One of On Christian Doctrine opens thus: ". . . There are two things necessary to the treatment of the Scriptures: a way of discovering those things which are to be understood, and a way of teaching what we

have learned. We shall speak first of discovery and second of teaching"

(7). The classical influence -- *inventio* and the dialectic strategies of definition and oppositional pairing -- would seem to obvious for comment, except for its exceptional contextual circumstances. Augustine, a Hellenistically educated convert to Christianity, attempts to adapt in On Christian Doctrine the content and strategies of pagan rhetorical thought to the purposes of Christian evangelism.

At times walking a fine line between the immediate need to prepare untutored missionaries for the work ahead of them and the ecclesiastical imperative to avoid heretical influences, Augustine, the pragmatist, Christian, and Hellenistic humanist finds the way first by rejecting the "rules of rhetoric":

I must thwart the expectations of those readers who think that I shall give the rules of rhetoric here which I learned and taught in the secular schools. And I admonish them not to expect such rules from me, not that they have no utility, but because, if they have any, it should be sought elsewhere if perhaps some good man has the opportunity to learn them. But he should not expect these rules from me, either in this work or in any other" (118).

Then he performs a kind of rough cut on Ciceronian rhetoric, slicing out and applying to "delivery" of the Gospel what he needs to suit his purposes, which is two three-part schemes -- the "offices" of the orator and the styles. The offices are "... to teach, inform instruct (*docere*); ... to please (*delectare*); ... to move or 'bend' (*movere, flectere*)" Burke in Lanham, 114). The styles are the low plain, the middle, and the grand. As Kenneth Burke observes, Cicero intended the styles as a way of carrying out the offices -- "[T]he plain style is best for teaching, the tempered style for pleasing, and the ornate (grandiloquent) style for moving" (114) - and this is the kind of thing that Augustine also intends as he adapts these schemes to his own purposes.

Augustine does not directly address the matter of voice anywhere in On Christian Doctrine. The time for detailed theorizing about "minute rhetorical devices" by leisured citizen rhetors is long past; rhetoric is moving in different directions. As mentioned earlier, Augustine's immediate need is to prepare Christian missionaries to spread the Gospel, a task very different from the deliberative, judicial and epideictic rhetorical exigencies of Greek and Roman oratory. The first critical difference is that unlike Greek and Roman rhetoric, Christian rhetoric is text-based and the second (although Augustine might well reverse this

order) is that the text of Christian rhetoric is sacred Scripture. Augustine's students are preparing to speak (and speak about) the Gospel, and any rhetorical strategies they are taught must respect and advance that purpose. Early in Book Four which is really the second of the two main parts of On Christian Doctrine, Augustine makes one of his numerous attempts at explaining how this might be done:

Thus the expositor and teacher of the Divine Scripture, the defender of right faith and the enemy of error, should both teach the good and extirpate the evil. And in this labor of words, he should conciliate those who are opposed, arouse those who are remiss, and teach those ignorant of his subject what is occurring and what they should expect. But when he has either found his listeners to be benevolent, attentive, and docile, or has caused them to be so, other aims are to be carried out as the cause requires (121).

Once the audience is ready, Augustine continues, the "other aims" might be to teach or to move, and the methods to accomplish those aims might include effective arrangement so as to promote understanding of the subject, reason supported by evidence so as to persuade the doubtful, and with a "sluggish" audience, "... greater powers of speaking. Here

entreaties and reproofs, exhortations and rebukes, and whatever other devices are necessary to move minds must be used" (121). He closes by assuring his students that "almost all men who make use of eloquence do not cease to do all of those things which I have mentioned" (121).

Concerning voice, three important changes take place by way of Augustine rhetoric. He folds voice into delivery, delivery into elocutio, and elocutio into style where it had already converged with the Greek *lexis* which Lanham annotates as 'speech, diction, word' (63) and *phrasis*, 'way of speaking', also "sometimes used to mean 'diction' or 'idiom,' sometimes to mean *style*" (77). And indeed, Augustine's attention is often focused on *lexis* and *phrasis*, again anticipating the numerous problems facing "the expositor and teacher of the Divine Scripture, the defender of right faith and the enemy of error [who] should both teach the good and extirpate the evil" (134) in foreign lands and foreign tongues. He asks,

What profits correctness in a speech which is not followed by the listeners when there is no reason for speaking if what is said is not understood by those on whose account we speak?
He who teaches should thus avoid all words which do not teach. And if he can find other correct words which are

understood he should select those; but if he cannot find them, either because they do not occur to him or because they do not exist, he should use words less correct, provided that the thing taught is taught and learned without distortion when they are used (134).

His favored term for effective speaking in general is "eloquence", and eloquence subjected to any detailed analysis characteristically becomes an analysis of style, and style in Augustine rhetoric very often means attention to sentence-level figures, such as *gradatio*, *membra*, *caesa*, *ambitus*, and *circuitus*.

We find in Augustine, then, the beginnings of a natural, practical, and increasingly comfortable theoretical fit between style and whatever is meant by voice and eloquence, particularly in rhetorics that are text-anchored (as in Augustine's time) and text-based (as in our time). When I first proposed voice as a Dissertation topic, one of my professors responded with a comment to the effect of, "You'll want to look at elocutio." Elocutio or style do not, of course settle the question of what voice is. Neither do they suit nor "explain" voice, but since they did seem of sufficient significance to many people for a very long time, a study of the subject cannot fail to take account of their persistent and robust

presence in the world of voice-theories.

2.3. The Long Interregnum

A very long period of disinterest in voice as a significant rhetorical feature followed Augustine's cumulative gestures sweeping voice into delivery, delivery into elocutio, and elocutio into style. The medieval rhetorics, turning inward as they did toward elaborate, text-bound accretions, contributed nothing new to voice-theory or practice. Even the *ars praedicandi*, intended to encourage and advance competent preaching, is concerned almost entirely with theme, exordium, division, proof, and amplification and almost entirely unconcerned with effective delivery. Eloquence, addressed as a kind of afterthought in The Form of Preaching by Robert of Basevorn, (considered the most complete example of an *ars praedicandi*), is developed from Book IV of Augustine's On Christian Doctrine.

Miriam Brody's work on *enargeia*, which she interprets at times as a companion concept or supplement to voice, shows that in the interregnum between the late Classical and early Medieval periods and Romanticism, interest in voice all but disappeared from rhetorics and grammars. Neither did new the epistemologies -- the Scottish Enlightenment, Baconian Enlightenment, and Faculty Psychology

-- that produced ancillary ideas about writing take any interest in anything directly resembling voice, which as Chapter Two will show is a very modern expression for relatively modern ideas. However, as Brody also shows, Enlightenment rhetorics did develop rather elaborate ideas about the sublime and perspicuity, both of which they linked to writer's character. John Locke held that "perspicuity was a capacity in language to reflect not only things but the mind" (Brody, 48). Adam Smith's nativism advances ideas about the self "as emanating directly from character in native circumstances and language . . . [and as] a strong self who can imagine that his mirror image is on the other side of language, receiving and perfectly comprehending his messages" (53). Such ideas, Brody points out, "valorize some kind of prelinguistic center, an inclination that survives . . . in the contemporary advice that writing have voice" (82). Beyond this, however, it would not be until the beginning of the Twentieth Century that we find direct lines of influence leading to a few progressive English practitioners' using the term voice as we understand it today.

2.4. Voice and the Compositionists

Introduction

Voice is much-used and written about but poorly-understood and little-studied. Assertions about -- and even meditations on -- voice and

its importance in writing are plentiful and easy to find, but one must search diligently for the few scholarly studies on voice. A July, 1996 review of the ERIC database shows that the number of studies entirely or nearly entirely (as judged by the information provided by abstract writers) devoted to an inquiry into voice as an academic subject amounts to twelve articles and one collected edition of essays among 186 entries catalogued between 1996 and 1977 under the Identifier *Voice-Rhetoric* (the database goes back to 1966).

In Chapter One we saw how widely various are characterizations of voice in ERIC . With difference and scholarly inattention to definition as the norm for voice, it becomes unproductive to read voice's literature expecting closure on difference or definition, as persuasive cases have and continue to be made for voice as "self," "editor-within," "persona," "tone," and "resonance," to name some of the significations we in English Studies assign to voice. However, if we read voice-scholarship to learn something about how and why we have gotten to where we presently are with voice, as well as for what voice may mean, given a fully-sketched portrait of it, we may find our time well used. It is to this end that Section 2.4 sketches and critiques voice from the angles of chronological studies, database information, textbook presentations, and scholarly

essays.

Section 2.4.1 will review the two most comprehensive studies of voice to date -- Jeanne Jacoby Smith's The Origins of the Individual Voice in Writing from 1890 to 1990 and John Ward Amberg's Voice in Writing. With Smith's study, our purposes will be to examine, in light of her purposes, the rather encyclopedic collection of information she has gathered about academic, social, and cultural influences on the development of the concept of voice in this century and to let her research take us to the mid-1960's when voice began to emerge as an influential concept in Rhetoric and Composition. With Amberg's study, our purposes will be to review his study of the Voice Project and to assess its impact as the event that provided voice with its first academic authorization and that shaped academic thinking about voice for most of the succeeding decade and a half, 1965 to 1980.

In Section 2.4.2, we will turn to the ERIC database portrait of voice to present and analyze results of Keyword, Keyword-Subject Heading, Subject Heading, and Identifier searches. Because a subject's presentation in a database is linked directly to its position in its academic discipline, to the discipline's dynamics, and to the database's dynamics, a database portrait, analyzed carefully, may yield significant

details not available from other sources. This is particularly true for indeterminate features of a discipline, as voice in English Studies is, and indeed we will see that an ERIC analysis does demonstrate rather clearly the results of English Studies' reluctance to address directly the issues voice raises within it.

Following the database portrait and analysis, Section 2.4.3 will examine the way voice has been presented in Rhetoric and Composition's academic literature, beginning with the portrait of voice found in major textbooks and arguing that the special (and in many ways defining) relationship between Rhetoric and Composition and the writing classroom since 1965 accounts in part for some of the features now characteristic of voice in English Studies. We will then turn to Rhetoric and Composition's scholarly voice-literature since 1989, most of which aims to describe, sort out, and untie voice's vexing definitional knots. What we will show is that when one predicates a relatively orderly voice-world (Peter Elbow's five-part model or Kathleen Blake Yancey's three-part configuration), then voice-problems appear not only manageable but relatively minor (Elbow argues that only voice-as-resonance needs further theoretical work). However, we will also show that neat, bounded models of voice cannot sustain the weight of inquiry, being riven with

fissures, and that the only way out of voice's conundra is to acknowledge, accept, and be guided by voice's dialectical tensions, which, we hypothesize, may find resolution in Walter Ong's formulations of voice as the essential expression of essential desires.

2.4.1. Twentieth Century Influences on Voice: 1900 - 1965

I

It was not until the mid-1960's when Walter Ong's early work on literacy and orality began to attract the attention of educationalists that voice, the sleeper, awoke. As Jeanne Jacoby Smith points out in her 1991 Dissertation, The Origins of the Individual Voice in Writing From 1890 - 1990, voice's arousal was enabled in part by the **convergence** (and *convergence* must be emphasized, as no single factor accounts for the recent interest in voice nor for the characteristics the term has taken on) over the previous half century of numerous developments within American education, including

- The emergence at the turn-of-the century, and the expansion throughout the Twentieth Century, of college writing courses in response to a perceived need to improve literacy and to systematically initiate students into the practices and protocols of academic reading and writing.
- Very large increases in the number of students from illiterate or

semi-literate backgrounds or who were literate in a language other than English or who spoke and wrote a non-standard variety of English.

- **The pervasive influence of John Dewey's pedagogy of the individual and of Freudian and Rogerian psychologies of the self on educational pedagogy and methods.**
- **The democratization of pedagogies and methods at all levels of education in response to the general political, social, and cultural upheavals of the 1930's, which fostered progressive academic experiments, and of the 1960's, which encouraged radical revisions of academic premises and practices.**
- **The rise of creative writing with its democratized ideas about creativity, inspiration, and genius.**
- **The continuing influence of residual but still robust ideas derived from Romanticism about the nature of genius and inspiration and about "text as the reflection of the writer's personality" (Smith, 216) coupled with ideas formulated by the New Critics about the "literary voice" (218) of the author, also denoted as *persona*.**
- **The pervasive influence of post-modern ideas about the situatedness, constructedness, and plurality of all knowledge, including the concept of the self and knowledge about the self.**

- **Increased academic specialization, manifested in what has come to be known as English Studies; the creation of English as an academic discipline; the departure of rhetoric from English into Speech; the emergence of freshman writing courses, Creative Writing, Communications, and eventually Composition as an academic discipline; the emergence of discourse analysis; and literary theory's recent ascendancy and then domination of Literature Studies.¹**

Because Smith's study thoroughly covers the post-turn-of-the-century emergence of voice, we will let a review of her findings, discussed in light of the purposes of this Dissertation, take us to the mid-1960's when voice became a prominent feature of both the scene of English Studies and of Rhetoric and Composition's imminent paradigm shift. However, before we review the pertinent information in Smith's study, we must take into account the purposes of her Dissertation and the premises about voice to which they lead.

Smith's Dissertation, written for an Ed.D. degree, is pedagogy-oriented. Smith is interested in cultural, historical, and intellectual influences on pedagogies of voice, and to pursue this interest, she must and does presume a rather orderly voice-world consisting of "major theorists" (3), a "pedagogy of voice" (3), and the "possibility of "a

developmental continuum for the individual voice" (3). That she presumes voice-matters essentially settled despite persistent disagreements among some theorists (which she acknowledges and describes) is indicated by her rather comfortable relationship with the idea that there is a "modern theory of voice" (62) as well as with the term *individual voice* which, in her view denotes "personality." That she understands *personality* to be the essentially indisputable meaning of voice is signalled throughout her Dissertation, but I would point in particular to a passage in which she directly extrapolates *personality* from a writer's use of the term *self expression*. She first quotes progressive educator Essie Chamberlain on the importance of reading aloud:

There are eager and enthusiastic teachers of English who believe that the urge for self-expression lies in every young person if only the necessary stimulation and guidance are furnished. What composition class has not been surprised and delighted when some stolid or timid pupil, usually inarticulate before his reading companions, FINDS A VOICE? [Emphases are Chamberlain's.] Such students show unusual powers in the discussion of subjects on which they can speak with authority. The [sic] reveal their joy in expressing opinions, they expand

happily under the approval of the group (404 in Smith 137).

Smith's comment immediately following this citation reads as follows:

"Chamberlain mentioned voice as personality in her reference to 'self expression . . .' (137). Clearly Chamberlain neither uses the term personality nor "mentions" voice as personality, but Smith's conviction that voice *is* personality and that voice-as-personality has a theoretical grounding has taken over by this point and shapes much of what she writes thereafter.

It will also be important to remember that in contrast to Smith's approach, this Dissertation argues that at present the meaning of voice remains undetermined, that personality is but one of an array of concepts denoted and connoted by voice, and that voice exists at present in a pre-theoretical state, with *theory* defined as "a scheme or system of ideas or statements held as an explanation or account of a group of facts or phenomena . . . a state of what are held to be the general laws, principles, or causes of something known or observed" (OED, 3284).

Rather large differences between Smith's study and the present one notwithstanding, her research provides certain information worth noting for two reasons that apply directly to this Dissertation's purposes. First, Smith's work highlights the nature of some of the differences between

voice and other technical terms important to English Studies, such as metaphor, tone, and persona. As I point out elsewhere in this Dissertation (pages x - x), metaphor remains still, for all its distinguished background and accretions going back two and a half millennia, a term denoting a certain way of arranging words to accomplish certain purposes. Tone and persona, more recent additions to English Studies' store of technical terms, may be traced directly to certain sources: tone to I. A. Richards' Practical Criticism, 1929 and persona to Walker Gibson's "Authors, Speakers, Readers, and Mock Readers," 1959 and to Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction, 1961.

While the appearance, acceptance, and refinement of tone and persona in English Studies was and is situated -- as are all such phenomena -- in historical, cultural, social, and academic contexts, there is far less professional interest in tone and persona's situatedness than there is in voice's. There is also far less play in and with metaphor and tone than there is with voice, as (unlike voice) they denote **specific** phenomena about which there has been much discussion but little debate.

II

Going over ground well-documented in such histories of Composition and Rhetoric as Arthur Appleby's Tradition and Reform in the

Teaching of English: A History and James A. Berlin's Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900 - 1985, but not previously

connected specifically to voice, Smith traces a line of influence leading directly to the expression of self as the meaning of voice. She describes

- **Links between Scottish faculty psychology, Romanticism, and German transcendentalism via Thomas de Quincey, leading to the conclusion that through de Quincey "German transcendental thought combined with Romantic theory laid the theoretical foundations for voice theory in the twentieth century" (58).**

- **William James' influence on Fred Newton Scott who in turn profoundly influenced the direction American ideas about Composition instruction would eventually take and who, in Smith's estimation "foresaw Linda Flower's concept of recursiveness in writing and Vygotsky's workings of the inner mind" (59). She quotes Scott and his co-author, Joseph Villiers Denney, on the topic of the Platonic ethics as foreshadowing ideas central to modern epistemic rhetoric, which has nurtured and produced the most enthusiastic of the modern voice-advocates:**

... one who would write well must be deeply and sincerely interested in his subject. He must see things with his own

eyes, think them with his own mind, have his own sincere feelings about them, not pretend to the feelings of some one else. Then his words will have an honest ring (Scott in Smith, 60)

- **Strong connections between some of the characteristics voice eventually took on and a post-World War I "shift to a student-centered pedagogy with emphasis on psychological approaches and the creative arts" (Berlin in Smith, 103), led at the primary and secondary levels of schooling by John Dewey's pedagogy of individualism and at the university level by progressive rhetorician Fred Newton Scott, a colleague of Dewey's at Michigan.**

- **Dissatisfaction among progressive educators of the 1920's and 1930's with certain widely followed current-traditional pedagogies emphasizing correctness, standardized forms and content, and the rhetorical modes as pedagogical frameworks and rhetorical models. Smith locates "a meager beginning for the pedagogy of voice in writing" (113) in Fred A. Dudley's design for writing programs at Iowa State College, which emphasized the value of students' experiences and interests as topics for compositions and the importance of literature in writing curricula.**

- **Two simultaneous and pivotal developments during the 1920's and**

1930's -- the democratization of writing pedagogy and a widespread interest in creative writing. In Smith's view, the former is directly responsible for the development of contemporary ideas about voice.

She writes,

In a democratic society where freedom of expression is available to all regardless of race, creed, or ethnic origins, I believe the concept of voice in writing to be an inevitable evolutionary outgrowth of that society (113).

She also links democratic pedagogy to the creative writing movement, seeing the former directly responsible for the latter and for the eventual development of modern ideas about voice: "Perhaps more than any other phenomenon during the late twenties and thirties, the creative writing movement paved the way for a pedagogy of voice . . . [T]he creative writing course was an outward manifestation of the democratization of language in the college and university system" (124).²

- The first use of "voice in writing in the modern sense prior to 1960" (136). (Again, it must be noted that Smith settles on a rather settled "modern sense" of voice denoting identity or personality). As pointed out earlier (See page x), she finds this "first use" in a 1929 English Journal article by progressive educator Essie Chamberlain.

- The influence of semantics, linguistics, descriptive grammars, and the new criticism on developments in rhetoric and eventually on voice; the emergence of communications courses after World War II; the founding in 1949 of the Conference on Composition and Communication, which advanced the new rhetorics (New, Epistemic, and Social Constructivist) out of which voice emerged, beginning in the early to mid-1960's.

- The effect of key governmental studies and initiatives having as their common theme the democratization of education and the advancement of democracy through education. A 1947 presidential commission asserted that "[t]o liberate and perfect the intrinsic powers of every citizen is the central purpose of democracy, and its furtherance of individual self-realization is its greatest glory" (in Smith, 144). Smith sees in this study and in others like it the "increasing acceptance of personal goals as valid purposes of education in the English curriculum at the professional level" (145), a key feature of the idea that voice is the expression of the individual personality of the writer.

- The influence of ideas and methods from Freudian and Rogerian psychology on the emerging academic discipline eventually to be called Composition. Again the emphasis, as Smith describes it, is on the expression and understanding (by the self and others) of the individual

personality through writing.

- The increased attention during the late 1950's by some linguists, specifically Harry Warfel and Dwight L. Bollinger, to the ways the heard qualities of the voice in spoken language is communicated in written language.

The influences Smith describes clearly contributed to voice's assuming some of the characteristics it eventually took on. Accumulative, malleable, accommodating, and synergistic, voice served as English Studies' metaphor for a collection of ideas gathering force since the turn-of-the-century and then, from the mid-1960's on, animating academic changes in the form of new Platonism, constructivism, relativism, dialogism, and new rhetoricism. Positioned oppositionally against Classicism, Neoclassicism, and essentialism and nurtured in a skeptical, alienated, and rebellious social milieu, the synthesis of these ideas, combined with ideas advanced by multi-disciplinary linguists, led to voice's appearing in the mid-1960's for the first time as a concept authorized by formal academic apparatuses -- authoritative research and literature, symposia, a government panel convened to explore the applications of voice-theories to educational practices, and a research project at a major university headed by a distinguished professor and a

respected fiction writer.³

Smith's pursuit of voice's trace through sixty years of academic literature does produce a telling phrase here and there, identify a set or two of seminal ideas, raise collections of intriguing patterns, and locate a few prescient English instructors sensitive to writerly and readerly phenomena later called voice. However, it is important to remember that voice also arrived upon English Studies' scene by way of other sources and scenes -- ideas advanced since the early 1950's about the "psychodynamics of orality" (Ong, 1983, v) and literacy and about the importance of persona in literature, thrust into prominence by powerful political, social, and cultural forces that affected not only voice but eventually all of English Studies.

2.4.2. The Voice Project: 1965 - 1966

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The Soviet Union's 1957 Sputnik launch also launched a sense of crisis in American education leading first to national, government-sponsored efforts to improve the quality of math and science curriculum and instruction and later to similar efforts to improve humanities education. In English, one initiative, the Voice Project, attempted to apply to classroom instruction ideas about voice in writing advanced by

Walter Ong and Walker Gibson, as interpreted by noted fiction writer John Hawkes. John Ward Amberg's 1980 Dissertation, Voice in Writing, analyzes the Voice Project to identify its claims, test them in a classroom, and assess the results. To establish context and background, he reviews then-current lines of thinking about voice, beginning with a summary of key ideas from the work of cultural linguists studying the differences between oral and literate cultures and then turning to ideas about voice circulating at that time mainly among writing instructors.

Amberg points out that cultural linguists studying the differences between oral and literate cultures generally agree that in oral or preliterate cultures, the spoken "word was an event, not an object fixed on a page" (3); that records are held in the minds of old people serving the crucial function of cultural and historical repositories; that group identity rather than individual identity tends to dominate; that "learning tend[s] to be communal, slow-paced, and tradition bound" (6); and that an oral and therefore auditory world is fundamentally different from a visual and therefore spatial one. He quotes McLuhan and Carpenter on the characteristics of space as perceived in an oral, auditory world:

Not a pictorial space, boxed in, but dynamic, always in flux, creating its own dimensions moment by moment. It has no

fixed boundaries; it is indifferent to background. The eye focuses, pinpoints, abstracts, locating each object in physical space, against a background; the ear, however, favors sound from any direction (McLuhan and Carpenter, 67 in Amberg, 7).

This is a world of primary orality, to use Walter Ong's term, the world we inhabited before the invention of literacy. He argues in Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word, that our present, literate, deeply text-saturated culture is now entering a period of secondary orality created by pervasive electronic media:

This new orality has striking resemblances to the old in its participatory mystique, its fostering of a communal sense, its concentration on the present moment, and even its use of formulas . . . But it is essentially a more deliberate and self-conscious orality, based permanently on the use of writing and print, which are essential for the manufacture and operation of the equipment and for its use as well (136).

Amberg's thesis is that students raised in a culture characterized by secondary orality perceive the world differently, learn differently, and that understanding this may "may lead us to a broader understanding of the current 'crisis' concerning the teaching of writing" (7). Such an

understanding, he argues, may well require an understanding of voice in writing because, he hypothesizes, "it suggests a link between the written word and the spoken word, a bridge between the age of literacy and the electronic age we are now entering" (34).

Turning to voice as understood by writing instructors in 1980, he observes that "[t]oo often voice is given either a cursory definition or an elaborate but oblique definition that leaves it seemingly mystical" (36). Stephen Judy emphasizes the perceived "active participation of a unique person" (Amberg, 37). Ken Macrorie points to similar qualities: "... the students were speaking in their own voices about things that counted for them" (1970, 21 in Amberg, 38). Peter Elbow notes an 'aliveness' that allows him to 'hear' the writer (1968, 8 in Amberg, 38). A textbook definition by Thomas Kane and Leonard Peters reads as follows: "Voice means the illusion -- common in good prose -- of a unique personality speaking to the reader" (1976, 598 in Amberg, 42). Betty Shiflett of the Story Workshop, a teaching method used at Columbia College in Chicago, asserts that "the director [of a Story Workshop] must take full care not to violate or stand in the way of the student's most precious responsibility: the *discovery* of his own voice and perceptual powers" (1973, 149 in Amberg, 44. Italics are Shiflett's). Schultz's definition of voice reveals

why Shiflett considers its discovery a student's "most precious responsibility":

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 only what it needs. Voice is the articulation of all perceptions in verbal expression, written and oral (including the so-called nonverbal which we want to get into writing too) (1978, 151-2 in Amberg, 45).

Walker Gibson likens voice to style in the sense that style "is on the inside" (Sontag, 49 in Amberg, 49), to personality in the sense of persona as the "metaphorical mask a writer uses when he wants to speak to his audience, the readers" (Amberg, 51), and to attitude as the "relationship between a writer's voice and his subject" (51) and to tone as the "relationship between the writer's voice and his audience" (51). Walter Ong describes a schema representing voice as "a particular presence -- the writer-as-writer, a mask presented through which communication passes" (61 - 62) to a divided reader who reads and responds to a piece of

writing "as though he were two persons involved in a dialogue" (61).

Ong's ideas, Amberg argues, lead to a rational and useful definition of voice, which is that voice of the sensed, "heard" presence of a writer-as-editor at work. As he explains it, "This editor within, while metaphorical, is not mystical for it involves the writer in just one of the specific tasks that must be carried out if the writing is to evoke a response from the reader" (64). He derives additional theoretical grounding for the idea that voice is the metaphorically heard presence of writer-as-editor from L. S. Vygotsky's theories about "inner speech" as a linguistic phenomenon unlike either oral speech or writing and from the idea advanced by others following Vygotsky that successful writers have learned to "make the leap from inner speech to writing" (87) while "[t]he student, stumbling as Vygotsky says, over the abstract quality of writing, simply will not be capable of making the required leap" (87). Talk, Amberg and others speculate, may be essential to moving from inner speech to writing, and such experimental programs as the Story Workshop and the Voice Project are predicated on this premise, as Amberg explains:

Those who have used the concept of voice to teach writing have attempted to provide the missing link between

inner speech and writing by bringing students' talk back into the classroom" (87).

The Story Workshop method consists of a series of four-hour sessions of coached, choreographed talk or "telling" moving through four stages -- recall, oral reading, word exercises, and recall -- with the purpose being to help "move what one sees in one's imagination through inner speech out into oral speech, a medium in which an audience is actually present" (88). The Voice Project methods consisted of sessions of extensive and less patterned but more analytical talk (compared with the Story Workshop) in response to selected literary passages, with some use of tape recordings to supplement readings. For both the Story Workshop session he observed and the Voice Project transcript he analyzed, Amberg's comments center on three observations: that both methods do attempt to bridge the gap between inner speech and speech but generally fall short of bridging the gap between inner speech, speech, and writing, with the Voice Project being the least successful of the two. Nevertheless, Amberg points out that the Voice Project effort did produce some promising instructional materials and strategies in addition to supporting a year-long effort at Stanford University to "use the concept of voice as a basis for activities to teach writing" (101).

As mentioned earlier, the Voice Project also provided voice with many of the arrangements that often authorize an academic enterprise -- authoritative research and literature, symposia, panels of distinguished academics, significant levels of funding, and the support of major universities, experts, and noted individuals. The Voice Project developed out of discussions by members of a subgroup of the President's Science Advisory Committee about general problems in higher education, including writing instruction. Eventually "The Working Committee on English, Literature, and the Arts" was formed, headed by Walter Ong, and in the course of discussions at the Tufts Seminar to Initiate New Experiments in Undergraduate Education, John Hawkes raised the issue of voice in conjunction with Ong's 1962 essay "Voice as a Summons for Belief." Committee members agreed that "while not fully understood, [voice] was of 'crucial importance' to the teaching of writing" (102):

It was widely agreed that one of the problems of students (and others) in writing was finding their real selves, and that finding oneself was the obverse of finding others to whom one was really talking. This problem exists not only for creative writing but also, at the other pole, for objectively expository

or descriptive prose. The relationship of the speaking voice to the 'authorial' voice of the writer was discussed at some length: the two are most often quite different and yet intimately related (Voice Project, 1967, 5 in Amberg, 102).

A proposal for a "voice project" was appended to the Tufts Seminar final report, John Hawkes became its chief advocate, and the proposal was accepted for implementation at Stanford University during the 1966 - 1967 academic year. Project participants consisted of Hawkes, seven writer-teachers, nine teaching assistants, and one hundred students selected randomly from five hundred volunteers. Another thirty students at the College of San Mateo participated during a summer session, and students at high schools, an elementary school, and a day care center were included throughout out the year in line with the project's goal to apply the teaching methods and materials it developed to all levels of education. For the one hundred Stanford students, Voice Project materials, instructors, and methods replaced their regular freshman English class, and so there was the opportunity for a comparative, if not controlled, study although the results were never analyzed that way. A report was issued at the end of the project. With further funding unforthcoming, the Voice Project was concluded. The Personal Voice: A Contemporary Prose

Reader, edited by some of the Voice Project participants, was published in 1968.

Evaluations of the Voice Project by instructors who participated in it are enthusiastically favorable, but assessments by Bernice Zelditch, an instructor not associated with the project, and by John Ward Amberg after reviewing Voice Project records are quite critical. Zelditch points to the disjunctions between theory and practice, to the lack of standard measurement techniques, to the skewed selection of students, and to other items, such as the instructors' extremely light workload, as factors that not only would confound efforts to do a standard evaluation but that call into question the validity of the project itself. Amberg puts it this way, regarding the theory disjunction:

Zelditch's own comments . . . reflect the feelings that anyone reading the report would have: a frustration, a severe difficulty in understanding exactly what the theory behind the project was, a suspicion that the project writer-teachers had not thought carefully about voice in writing. The theory about voice in writing as explained by Ong, Gibson, and others cannot be taken lightly, but the theory as presented in the Voice Project report can, as Zelditch suggests, be discarded (147).

That theory, as Zelditch pieced it together, consisted of two ideas: that differences between students' written words and spoken words may interfere with their writing styles and their honesty and that students should "write in their most effective style and tell their own truths about their own experiences, their reading, or assigned analyses about the works of authors" (Voice Project, 275 in Amberg, 166).

Amberg points to numerous unsubstantiated assertions about voice made by project participants and officials, to the ever-present possibility of the Hawthorne effect, to the disorganized and impressionistic nature of the final report, and to the general sense of confusion common to observers trying to make sense of what was done as reasons for agreeing with Zelditch that Voice Project "theory" can be "discarded" (166).

However, he also observes that Voice Project activities, materials, and methods, while they may have had little effect on students' understanding voice better, very likely had the positive effect of drawing them into the recursive process of writing and in doing so emphasizing the "aliveness" of writing, which for Amberg is central to the definition of voice as the perceived "editor within" (174).

Amberg's study is quite disciplined in the sense that he examines the major claims made about voice, identifies their strengths and

weaknesses, and reasons dispassionately toward a definition of voice supported by evidence and argument, concluding that given what is known, voice most likely denotes the bridging of a gap between inner speech and writing made possible by the writer's ability to create a divided self, a persona or mask, that results from and leads to editorial decisions about distance, content, audience, and effect:

This editor within, while metaphorical, is not mystical, for it involves the writer in just the sort of specific tasks that must be carried out if the writing is to evoke a response from a reader (64).

In current terms, this is a rhetorical concept of voice and suggests a certain prescience on Amberg's part, as he seems to anticipate ontologically, if not consciously, the rhetorical turn that academic thinking would take within a few years. He is also already resisting the "mystical" or expressivist (sometimes called "evangelical") interpretation of voice that would preoccupy voice-advocates and their critics throughout the 1980's. The most influential of these "evangelical" interpretations -- Peter Elbow's Writing With Power -- was published the year following Amberg's dissertation, but as we have seen and as database records show, the conditions necessary to support both an explosion of

interest in voice and the characteristics voice eventually took on had been building for many decades. [Section 2.4.5 contains a discussion of voice-composition's evangelical turn.]

2.4.3. Voice in Rhetoric and Composition as Displayed in a Disciplinary Database, 1966 - 1996

As explained in Parts II, III, and IV of the Preface, a major methodological premise of this Dissertation is that databases are rhetorical and hermeneutical sites displaying the characteristics of such, including authorial purpose, intended audience, paratactic and hypotactic logical structures, formal structures, and signification. It follows, then, that databases may be read and analyzed as texts conveying far more than just information about which documents are available and where they may be found. To repeat four points made in the Preface, databases

- Convey the presence and progression of a concept within a discipline over time, including its earliest appearance in the discipline's literature; the dynamics of the discipline's interest in it (expanding, stable, declining, revisionist); its attitudes toward it (enthusiastic, expansive, cautious, reflective); its changing features; the degree of its influence on the discipline; and the nature and degree of its influence on other disciplines.

- Are amenable to established methods of textual analysis, including analyses of diction, tone, theme, syntax, audience, purpose, emphasis, and rhetorical strategies.
- Are accessible to data analyses showing frequency, proportion, and ratio, including comparisons of such.
- Tell a coherent, textured, layered, and complex "story" very different from the one we are used to letting it tell us, which is a very short story about what a document is, who wrote it, and when, and where it may be found.

Of the three divisions of English Studies, Rhetoric and Composition has shown the most interest in voice, developed the most complex set of ideas about what it is and why it matters, and produced the largest body of academic literature about it. To accommodate this complex scene, the database portrait of voice will be organized as follows:

- Presentation, comparative analysis, and discussion of data obtained through Keyword and Subject Heading searches.
- Textual analyses of the database voice-content.
- Conclusion

Keyword Search

As of August, 1996, *Voice* used as a Keyword raises 3,088

documents in the ERIC database. These include entries pertinent to our purposes, as in "Daring and Imagination: Unlocking Voices of Dissent and Possibility in Teaching" or "Voices We Want to Hear and Voices We Don't," as well as entries having to do with speech and communication, as in "Phonetic and Phonological Contrasts in the Acquisition of Voicing: Voice Onset Time Production in Hindi and English" and with electronic media and communication, as in "Harnessing Information Technology in the Twenty-First Century." For a comparison of total numbers, a Keyword search using *Metaphor* raises 1,172 entries (a ratio of 2.6:1 with the number of entries raised by voice), *Tone* raises 1,376 entries (2.2:1), (including those having to do with sound and color), and *Persona* raises 126 entries (24.5:1).

The numbers and ratios cited above do not surprise. They describe proportionate emphases remaining relatively stable from database to database and they reflect voice's overlapping role as a word denoting and connoting both "ordinary" phenomena and specialized academic concepts. However, it is important to remember that a Keyword search represents a very rough cut of a database, as it does not distinguish between any appearance of the word and those uses of the word intended to convey particular meanings or to accomplish particular purposes. What a Keyword search gives us, then, is voice's quickly-sketched profile, with

the ratios suggesting its relative database prominence. The details of its features as portrayed by the ERIC database must be viewed through the lens of Subject Headings.

Keyword-Subject Heading Search

An August, 1996 ERIC search using the Keyword *Voice* with each of three terms entered separately into a Subject Heading slot produces the following results:

Creative Writing: 66 documents.

Literature: 231 documents.

Writing: 583 documents.

The Creative Writing figure aligns with other findings discussed mainly in Chapter Three and anticipates what will become a confirmed result: that Creative Writing practitioners show the least interest in voice as a subject. However, when "Writing" as a Subject Heading is described more precisely, the *Literature* and *Writing* results prove more complex than they first seem: *Voice* as a Keyword and *Expository Writing* as a Subject Heading raise 22 documents, but *Voice-Composition* raise 259.

Regarding Literature Studies, the numbers cited above show a nearly 1:1 Composition-Literature ratio, suggesting an essentially equal interest

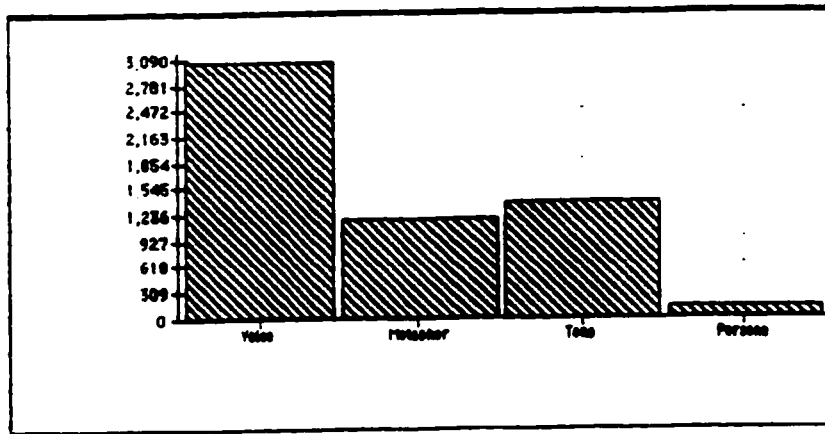


Figure 2.1: Results of an ERIC search using the descriptors *Voice*, *Metaphor*, *Tone*, and *Persona*.

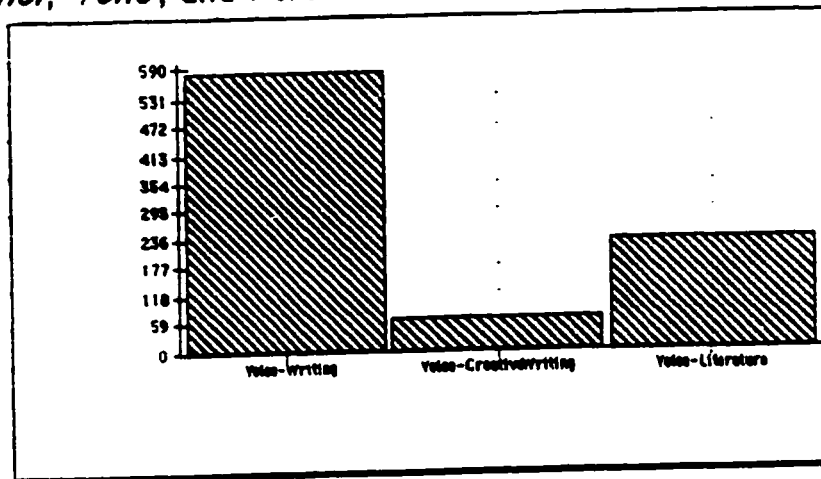


Figure 2.2: Results of an ERIC search using the descriptors *Voice-Writing*, *Voice-Creative Writing*, and *Voice-Literature*.

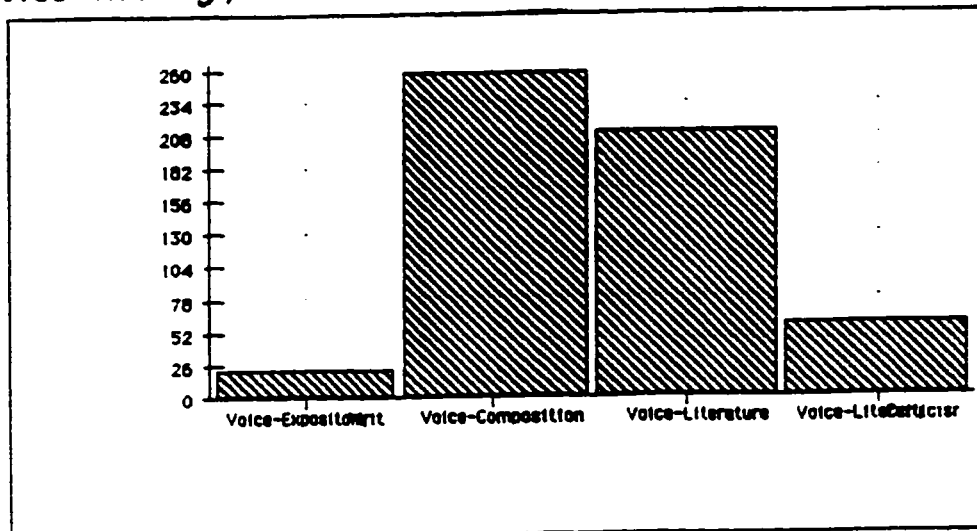


Figure 2.3: Results of an ERIC search using the descriptors *Voice-Expository Writing*, *Voice-Composition*, and *Voice-Literary Criticism*.

in voice within these two sub-disciplines of English Studies. There is reason to be skeptical about this data because such results are not borne out elsewhere in other databases or in textbooks, and indeed, the results change when the descriptor *Literature* is changed to *Literary Criticism*: 58 documents are raised (compared with Literature's 213), a number that aligns proportionately far better with other numbers to be discussed in Chapter Four.

[We should note here that refining the results produced by *Literature* depends on choosing the right terminology. Technically, this relates to differences between an ERIC Descriptor and Identifier, and if a Descriptor, then also to the word's function in the ERIC Hierarchical Display, as explained below in the section "Subject Heading Search."] Changing *Literature* to *Literature Studies* or *Literary Studies* produces no results.]

Clearly, different database portraits of the "same" subject are possible and depend in part on the angle from which we view the discipline (*Writing* or *Expository Writing*); from which the discipline views itself (*Literature Studies* or *Literary Criticism*); and from which information scientists view the discipline, as cued by the discipline's practitioners. They also depend upon other factors not directly related to the discipline itself and beyond the scope of this study but which would

bear looking into, such as the extent to which finite software, personnel, and capital resources influence decisions about how a discipline will be described.

Subject Heading Search: Issues

For composing a search, The ERIC database configuration available through the University of Washington Internet Navigator (UWIN) offers slots labeled "Keyword," "Subject Heading," "Title Words," and "Author." Entering *Voice-Rhetoric* into a Subject Heading slot raises the 186 documents mentioned earlier in Section 2.4. However, when one chooses "Browse the Subject Heading List" from the ERIC Main Menu and enters *Voice Rhetoric* at the Subject Heading prompt, only "Voice Disorders" is selected from the alphabetical list of "Subjects" provided by ERIC. Other Main Menu options, such as "Display information about database" offer no explanation for such a result. For an explanation, one must turn to the ERIC print publications Identifier Authority List (IAL) and Thesaurus of Eric Descriptors, 13th Edition (TED) or find them online.

What one discovers from the introductions to TED and IAL is that there is a difference between a Subject Heading, which prompts a search option in the ERIC Main Menu, and "Subjects," which are technically Descriptors or combinations of Descriptors and upon which is built the

ERIC Hierarchical Display.

The Hierarchical Display . . . provides so-called "generic trees" for each Descriptor. That is, a Descriptor may have both Broader and Narrower Terms. The Hierarchical Display, therefore, depicts entire families of Descriptors related by class membership, providing complete two-way visibility of the broader-narrower relationships of all main (indexable) terms in the Thesaurus . . . (Weller, xxx).

This is part of, but not the entire explanation, for why a search of a Subject Heading List locates neither Literature Studies nor Voice-Rhetoric. The rest of the explanation is connected to decisions made by people working within and for ERIC organizations about two related matters: the structures of hierarchical generic trees and the "worthiness" of a term, idea, concept, or theory. Regarding the former, the differences between Literary Criticism and Literature Studies as terms that effectively or ineffectively locate documents in ERIC have to do with their positions relative to the hierarchical categories ERIC sets up.

The first of 4,583 entries located by hyphenating literary and criticism (*Literary-Criticism*) entered into a Subject Heading prompt provided by the ERIC Main Menu selection "Browse the Subject Heading

List" shows Literature as a Subject Major or what TED considers a "Broader Term" (BT) and Literary-Criticism as a Subject Minor, the result of combining a variation of a BT (Literary from Literature with another BT (Criticism), also the result of a "Rotated Descriptor Display," one characteristic of which is to "group related terms when they may be separated in the main Alphabetical Display" (Thesaurus of Eric Descriptors, xxx), as is the case with Literature and Criticism. This is the "language of the [ERIC] system" (xxx) and must be used if a search is to be productive.

The second of the two matters mentioned above -- the "worthiness" of a term -- is directly related to voice's present position in English Studies. Using the "Browse the Subject List" option contained in the ERIC Main Menu, the word *Voice* entered as a Subject appears as a Broad Term under which such rotated terms as *Voice-Care* and *Voice-Care-and-hygiene* are listed alphabetically. Of the fifty-eight entries catalogued under *Voice*, only two, raising a total of four documents, denote voice as a feature of written language. They are *Voice-Fiction* and *Voice-In-literature*. However, *Voice-Rhetoric*, which raises 186 documents when entered at the Subject prompt, does not appear in the Subject list. This apparent anomaly is explained by existence of another set of terms, called

Identifiers. An Identifier is

usually the name of a specific entity, e.g., project, piece of legislation, person, place, organization, test, group, item of equipment . . .

An identifier may also be a new concept, under consideration for Descriptor status once its scope, definition, authoritativeness, and 'staying power' have been established (Weller, vi).

And, indeed, "Voice (Rhetoric)" is listed in the ERIC 1992 Identifier Authority List and appears as an "Identifier," not a "Subject Major" or "Minor" for the documents it raises.

The link that ERIC sets up between rhetoric, voice, and "scope, definition, authoritativeness, and 'staying power'" provides us with another angle from which to view voice in Rhetoric and Composition and in English Studies. It is a considered viewpoint and relatively objective in the sense that it comes neither from voice's advocates nor from its detractors but from a group of individuals -- education professionals -- who seek to hold all descriptors to a set of common standards. The argument can be made that few of English Studies' technical terms, being quite specialized, should be held to the same common standards as, say,

"Active Learning," "Administrator Behavior," and "Adoptive Parents," all descriptors recently added to the Thesaurus of Eric Descriptors. The counter argument (and in my view, the more persuasive) is that scope, definition, and authoritativeness happen to be precisely the right standards for voice, apart from their appropriateness for any other term or for any other reason, because they also happen to denote matters that have interested (and at times preoccupied) voice-proponents and opponents for the last thirty-five years. Indeed, the interest in them continues, as Peter Elbow's 1995 CCCC paper, "Voice as a Lightning Rod for Dangerous Thinking," shows. However, it is important to recognize that "happenstance" is not the only dynamic at work in the happy intersection between ERIC-expectations and voice-issues. Scope, definition, appropriateness and staying power are among the most common rubrics by which academic worthiness is judged in general; it so happens that they resonate exceedingly deeply in voice.

Later in this chapter we will consider the content of some of Rhetoric and Composition's most influential post-Voice Project voice-documents. There we will find the details behind the persistent disagreements about voice's scope, definition, and authoritativeness that we glimpsed as we scanned database presentations of those documents.

However, it seems safe to say at this point that the remarkable congruency between the database portraits, the document portraits, and the lexicographical portrait suggests that certain of voice's essential features are captured by them and that studying voice through these portraits may lead us to a fuller understanding of the features they display, of those not yet evident but cued by the known ones, and of contexts.

There is another way of thinking about the Identifier *Voice-Rhetoric* beyond the technical details of database design. As *Voice-Composition* does not appear in ERIC as a Subject or as an Identifier, the presumption a reader must make is that a decision was made to align voice lexicographically with rhetoric and its theories, methods, and the authority and status of its long tradition against composition's comparatively very short history and progressive inclinations (the New Rhetoric notwithstanding). This surely reflects persistent realities about the sometimes still uneasy relationship between Composition as a field of study and the academy and further signals voice's present position in English Studies as an unsettled, "new" topic and rogue phenomenon.

What we glimpse by perusing the dynamics of academic terminology as it constructs and is constructed by databases is a nested portrait of a

discipline written by those who wrote the content of the documents and by those who wrote a context into which those documents have been placed, the latter basing their work upon their reading and interpretation of the discipline's literature, upon the conclusions they draw from consultations with credentialed and experienced practitioners, and upon the weight they give to other considerations, such as software and hardware capabilities.

As one of our premises is that databases are rhetorical and hermeneutical sites, it is very important to remember as we work with database information that constructed intention leading to meaning is always already found everywhere -- in the databases themselves, in the data they raise, and in the **relationships** between the databases and the data they contain. Cataloguing and retrieving information is the intended, first purpose of a database, but like the medium which eventually also becomes the message, a database eventually also becomes a rhetorical/hermeneutical document in its own right, albeit of a very specialized type.

2.4.4. Voice in Rhetoric and Composition Textbooks and Academic Literature, 1966 - 1996

The third of Chapter Two's four purposes is to describe and discuss voice in Rhetoric and Composition, as portrayed in key examples of Rhetoric and Composition's textbooks and academic literature. Looking at voice through the lens of academic literature needs no defense, but because this is not a pedagogically-focused study, a rationale is needed for giving significant attention to voice as portrayed in textbooks.

The influences on voice described in sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, plus the data presented in section 2.4.3, clearly show that while many of voice's present characteristics are rooted in non-pedagogical sources, such as Romanticism, Freudian and Rogerian psychologies, New Criticism, and psycholinguistics, they were nurtured and then flowered mainly in the minds and classrooms of composition instructors. The reasons for this are complex, involving fundamental questions about language, self, and reality that composition instructors face daily and have been additionally complicated by Composition's own uncertainties *and optimism* as it constructs itself as an academic discipline and seeks academic respectability.

Stephen North argues that "Composition, with the capital C" (North,

13) dates from 1963 with Albert Kitzhaber's challenge to the Conference on College Composition and Communication "for the exertion of authority over knowledge about composition: what it is, how it is made, who gets to say so, and why" (15). While there are no apparent reasons to draw direct connections between Kitzhaber's address to the CCCC convention and ideas about voice in writing, 1963 or thereabouts does mark the conjunction of important changes in the way people in Composition think about written discourse, voice, and the academic discipline they were beginning to call Composition. Regarding voice, Walter Ong's "Voice as a Summons for Belief" was published in 1962, John Schultz's Story Workshops began in 1965, the Voice Project began in 1966, and Walker Gibson's "Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy" was published in 1966. All except "Voice as a Summons for Belief" are animated by an often exhilarated sense of the possibilities for advancing students' writing through the pedagogical application of ideas about voice.

The intersection of voice with the writing classroom, Composition's site, center, and *raison d'être*, helps explain some of what we find when we study voice. In particular, it suggests a way of thinking about some of the many issues related to the problem of definition. Virtually all voice commentators (as well as most writers who depend on the term, apart

from commentary on it) address the matter of definition. We have suggested that this exceptional attention to definition is related to several factors, among which are the imprecise, multiply connotative, denotative, and paradoxical nature of the word *voice* itself; the nature of English Studies which values, accommodates, and is in part defined by multiplicity and paradox; the carnivalistic, exuberant ethos of Composition, leading to a high tolerance for play in its multiple senses; and a phenomenon rather unique to voice, which is that until recently, as I pointed out earlier, voice has been largely excised from public scrutiny and debate within English Studies as an academic discipline (although it is a term used throughout the discipline) but incised into the relatively private life of the individual English Studies practitioner, making it possible to find numerous assertions about voice but few inquiries into it.

The Voice Project, which marked voice's first major appearance on the scene of the then-neophyte discipline, Composition, is an excellent example of the factors listed above -- multiple significations, a playful, permissive ethos, and personalized views of voice. Through the Voice Project, a relatively new *literary* term recently derived from relatively recent studies by cultural linguists, was rather quickly revised as a promising pedagogical tool, and then embraced as a term "of 'crucial

importance' (in Amberg, 102) to the teaching of writing for at least three major reasons stated in Voice Project documents. The first reason cites students in general:

It was widely agreed that one of the problems of students (and others) in writing was finding their real selves, and finding oneself was the obverse of finding others to whom one was really talking . . . The relationship of the speaking voice to the 'authorial voice' of the writer was discussed at some length [by the Working Committee on English, Literature, and Arts]. The two are most often quite different and yet intimately related (Voice Project, 5 in Amberg, 102).

The second reason, also the second of the three main objectives of the Voice Project, cites a particular group of students, "Negro students whose speech and writing -- with its special problems and special richness and energy -- would be particularly important to this experiment" (Voice Project xxxi in Amberg, 107). The third reason is related to John Hawkes' personal understanding of voice and to his personal teaching experiences, leading to his advocacy of voice as a way of teaching writing. In an appendix he attached to the Voice Project proposal, he writes,

. . . until recently it had not occurred to me to attempt to work

directly and diversely with the relationship between the 'visceral' speaking voice of a person and his writing voice as it emerges from the page. But it now seems to me essential to explore fully this many-sided relationship (Voice Project, 20 in Amberg, 104).

In sum, beginning in 1966, voice became *overtly* and *fundamentally* linked to the *experiences* of writing instructors, many of whom had begun to value the term *instructor* perhaps as much as the term *writing*. Anticipating, contributing to, and eventually working within Composition's emerging new paradigm (against traditional paradigm and later the current-traditional paradigm), they turned their attention to the connections between instruction and good writing (itself variously defined). They developed their ideas in a variety of academic venues, including symposia, conferences, and journals. But they also worked them out in the generally overlooked, but (for voice) significant venue of the textbook. Instructors who believed that voice was indeed of 'crucial importance' had to find a way to explain voice to students and this necessitated definition. It is my contention that a chronological overview of textbook definitions of, and assertions about, voice will help us understand the directions taken by voice in Rhetoric and Composition after

1966.

Before I proceed I must point out that I am aware of the risks of writing chronological accounts. They include constructing (or seeming to construct) either artificially orderly or false sequences. They include drawing lines too tightly and sequentially between publications over periods of time. In addition because I will chronologically cite **published examples that typify** ideas about voice, I will necessarily exclude at least two important contexts from which these examples emerged. The first is the formal, semi-formal, and informal academic contexts in which ideas are born, nurtured, debated, wax, and wane. These include articles, colloquia presentations, convention papers, seminars, conversations, letters, and books other than textbooks. The second is the formal, semi-formal, and informal contexts of publication in which ideas born mostly in academic contexts are reworked for the particular purposes of particular publications intended for particular audiences (not all of which are necessarily academic).

Taking textbooks as one example of a publication context, the existence of an interesting idea is no guarantee that it will ever appear in textbooks; if it does it may well show up in its declining years since textbooks typically lag by at least a decade behind a discipline's leading

edges; ideas in textbooks must be made accessible to students (and often to instructors); and ideas must be "practicalized" or simplified. Robert Miles is quite blunt about the degree to which he and his colleagues faced this latter reality:

our emphasis on pedagogy rather than scholarship has caused us to oversimplify . . . Apprentice writers, we believe need simple, clear-cut advice; but in matters of style, simplicity is won only at the cost of oversimplification. In order to be clear and useful, we have had to ignore innumerable complexities" (Viii).

Finally, although knowledge in a discipline is accumulative and academics are expected to build on the work that precedes theirs, they also are expected to challenge the status quo and to shape their professional identities through their original ideas. These several often energizing, sometimes conflicting, but always interesting realities intersect in textbooks.

Composition is so entwined with pedagogy that ideas found in its textbooks (unlike textbooks from disciplines in which pedagogy and content are separated) will likely contain more than a trace of the theorizing that preceded them, so that while textbooks do not tell the

whole story of Compositionists' ideas about voice, they do tell an important part of it.

Voice in Rhetoric and Composition's Textbooks

A chronological view of how ideas about voice have developed in Rhetoric and Composition shows that in just ten years major Composition instructors writing widely-used textbooks revised their definition of voice from grammatical construction to a metaphorically mimetic phenomenon, the "sound" of words in unsounded discourse. Within another ten years, they were writing about "authentic" voice and within another five years the author of one handbook in its fourth edition made the claim that voice is, among other things, "the most important, the most magical and powerful element in writing . . ." (Murray, 33).

As ideas about voice changed, the amount of space devoted to voice in textbooks and handbooks increased. Taken out of context, space is not a measure of anything in particular, but set into the particular context of voice in Rhetoric and Composition, it helps demonstrate the emerging pre-theoretical complexity about what voice in writing is and the heightened conviction that voice in writing matters. As an example of these changes, in 1958 a widely used 869-page college textbook devoted a total of one page of text to voice with just two indexed citations mentioning the topic.

In 1981 a popular 384-page college textbook listed under "voice" 21 indexed citations (including two full chapters) plus cross-references to "No voice" and "Real Voice" (Elbow, 382).

What follows is a sketch of documentation that traces voice's remarkable metamorphosis out of a grammatical cocoon and into "magical" flight.

In the 1958 Second Edition of Modern Rhetoric, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren define voice grammatically. They write, "There are two voices, the active and the passive" (756) and then proceed with an explanation of how "transitive verbs can be converted to the 'passive' voice" (756). But twelve years later, in the 1970 Third Edition of Modern Rhetoric they have folded voice into the literary concept of tone or author's attitude toward his or her subject matter, added the rhetorical feature of *audience*, and tried to synthesize tone with ideas about tone and voice as mimesis mediated by metaphor. Voice as a grammatical construction seems to have disappeared from their thinking:

Just as every discourse implies a situation in which the writer is related to his audience, so every discourse also implies a certain tone. This term tone is based frankly on a metaphor.

We all know how important in speech the tone of voice may be

in indicating the precise meaning of the words (466).

Anne Ruggles Gere's 1979 composition text Writing and Learning reflects what may have been a transitional stage between Brooks and Warren's two worlds of voice -- grammatical and metaphorical mimesis - - and a third voice-world yet to come. Her first discussion of voice appears in a chapter titled "Revising Style" under the subheading "What is Style?" (290). She writes,

"Words closely associated with style include tone, voice, and persona. . .

Voice in writing refers to the way the writing "sounds" and is influenced by pronoun usage and other word choice. For example, 'I think the book is lost' sounds different from 'It appears that the book has vanished' (291).

Then she moves into territory unmarked by Brooks and Warren but eventually claimed by Expressivist Compositionists. Gere cautions students thus:

You may encounter instructors who give you specific instructions about voice in writing. They may tell you to use an 'authentic' voice, or they may direct you to use an objective or disinterested voice. More commonly, instructors will give

you no direct advice about voice in writing, but you will need to consider it as you revise for style (291).

In using the term "authentic voice" Gere alludes to radical changes taking place in the way some Compositionists were thinking about voice. In locating voice in style she preserves traditional links to Rhetoric and Critical Theory (the latter connection will be discussed in Chapter Four). And in her brief explanation of voice as a grammatical construction (located in a single paragraph on next-to-the-last page of her book), she acknowledges the past but signals its demise.

The term *authentic voice* appears to have originated in a panel discussion at a 1969 Conference on College Composition and Communication. Jeanne Jacoby Smith cites a telephone interview with Donald Stewart in which he credits D. Gordon Rohman as using the term in response to a "heated debate" (Smith, 416) over ideas presented by panel participants. By Stewart's account, Rohman was asked "to give his overall impressions of the proceedings, at which time Rohman indicated his delight in the discussion, 'especially the concern for an authentic voice'" (Stewart in Smith, 416).

Correspondence, interviews, and published documents, as assessed by Smith, indicate that since at least 1968 Donald Stewart had been

interested in what he would eventually call "authentic voice," which was preceded and informed by an interest in Rohman and Welke's prewriting studies. Stewart's textbook, The Authentic Voice, was published in 1972, followed by The Versatile Writer in 1986, which retains the former's ideas about authentic voice but enhances them pedagogically and rhetorically "with Burke's pentad, tagmemic theory, a chapter on topics from classical rhetoric, plus additional chapters on style and editing skills" (Smith, 416).

In The Versatile Writer, Stewart's effort to define voice begins with *authorial voice*, defining it as "the manner of telling a story which differentiates one author from another" (8). He then defines authenticity as "quite literally, genuineness" (9) and then authentic voice as

"that authorial voice which sets you apart from every other living human being despite the number of common or shared experiences you have with others; it is not a copy of someone else's way of speaking or of perceiving the world. It is your way . . . 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" (9).

Smith correctly points out that Stewart was able to avoid the solipsistic

excesses, linked to personal writing, that characterized other voice-advocates by "calling for writing on a broad range of topics with existential relevance to the student, whether or not the subjects were personal in nature" (422).

By 1981 Peter Elbow indicates in Writing With Power that the term *authentic voice* does not suit him.

For the power I am seeking, some people use words like *authenticity* or *authority*. Many people call it sincerity, but I think that's misleading because this power can be present when the writing is not really sincere and absent when the writing is sincere. I like to call this power *juice*. The metaphor comes to me again and again, I suppose, because I'm trying to get at something mysterious and hard to define. 'Juice' combines the qualities of *magic potion*, *mother's milk*, and *electricity*. Sometimes I fear I will never be clear about what I mean by voice (286).

It is a fear the student of voice knows all too well. Nevertheless she pushes on. And so does Elbow who concludes, c. 1981, that voice may be used as a category for three kinds of writing. There is "writing *without voice*" (299) which is "wooden or dead because it lacks sound, rhythm,

energy, and individuality" (299). There is writing "*with voice*... into which someone has breathed" (299). Finally there is writing "with *real voice* [which] has the power to make you pay attention and understand -- the words go deep" (299).

Probing real voice a bit further, Elbow speculates that whatever it is might be connected to what he calls implicit and explicit messages from and about the writer:

... words contain not just an explicit message ('the sun glints down a pathway of ripples'), but also some kind of implicit message about the condition of the writer (e.g., 'I'm curious about that sight' or 'I have other things on my mind' or 'The sun on the water terrifies me' or 'There's no part of me that doesn't see those glints, even the part of me that hates light'). Perhaps when the implicit message reinforces the explicit one in some right way, we get resonance or power (299).

Such references to explicit and implicit messages suggest the shadow, if not the overt presence, of Speech Act theory as advanced by John Searle and H. Paul Grice. Grice holds that successful communication depends at least in part on intended (explicit) messages' conveying other intended but inexplicit or (implicit) messages, which besides content may include the

recognition that intention was intended. Searle theorizes that successful communication depends on certain "effects -- perlocutionary versus illocutionary -- that one may intend to produce in one's hearers" (Searle in Adams, 64). Perlocutionary effects are "what the sentence means in the language one is speaking" (65). In illocutionary acts,

the speaker intends to produce a certain effect by means of getting the hearer to recognize his intention to produce that effect, and furthermore, if he is using words literally, he intends this recognition to be achieved in virtue of the fact that the rules for using the expression he utters associate the expressions with the production of that effect. It is the combination of elements which we shall need to express in our analysis of the illocutionary act (65).

Patrick Hartwell's influential 1981 textbook Open to Language applies many of the most forward-thinking theories in Composition, Linguistics, Grammar, Rhetoric, and Critical Theory to the practical matter of teaching composition, but his ideas about voice reflect mixed thinking that looks both backward toward voice as style and forward not to voice-as-self but to the view that all communication is rhetorical.

Hartwell defines voice as "the way a writer presents himself to

reader" (83), then argues that "*tone*, the attitude a writer adopts to a subject-matter" together with voice "make up the writer's *stance*" (83). The table of contents of Open to Language lists a chapter entitled "Voice, Tone, and the Writer's Stance" which includes sections named "Trying On Some Voices," "Voices To Aim For," and "Final Writing Assignments" (which mainly focus on voice). Subheadings under "Trying On Some Voices" include "The Bubblegum Voice," "The Neutral Voice of Journalism," "The Voice of the New Journalism," and "The Bureaucratic Voice." Under "Voices to Aim For" Hartwell lists "The Detached Discursive Voice" and "The Committed Personal Voice." Under "Final Writing Assignments" he lists "An Identifiable Voice," "A First Person Voice," and "The Right Voice?"

I include the list above because it signals certain directions that ideas about voice would take. Locating voice under tone is a backward-looking move, given the directions ideas about voice had been taking. The impulse to categorize "voices" is a questionable move, given the degree to which particulate-theorizing in Composition was giving way by this time to process-theorizing. However, gathering voice and tone under stance (which Hartwell defines as "[the writer's] solution of adapting a message to an audience) is a forward-looking move, considering the resurgence of

rhetoric we have recently witnessed. Suggesting to students that there is a "right voice" reflects a line of thinking that has proved persistent but remains ambiguous and essentially unexamined, particularly by those Compositionists who most enthusiastically endorse it.

One of "right voice's" strongest proponents is Ken Macrorie. In his 1984 text writing to be read he tells students that "[n]othing will help you more as a writer than finding a voice right for you, your material, and your audience" (49). This is a thoroughly rhetorical statement in that it defines "right voice" as fluctuating with the exigencies of rhetorical situations -- the needs of an audience and the characteristics of a topic. By 1985, however, Macrorie's ideas about "right voice" had changed significantly. Ideas about connections between "right voice" and audience and material are backgrounded in favor of, literally, the right voice *for you*.

In the 1985 Fourth Edition of Telling Writing Macrorie tells students "Finding the right voice will help you writer better than you ever thought yourself capable of writing" (159) and "Before you write your next paper, sit still a moment and listen to yourself speaking inside. If you hear a voice that takes on a clear tone -- happy, calm, humble, arrogant, loving, irritated, enraged, soothing, or ironic, listen as you write and get it on

paper" (161) and "Finding a true voice gives a piece of writing unity. Everything seems to belong together and the whole speaks in one rhythm that can't easily be denied or forgotten" (162). His final piece of advice to students on the matter of voice is a good example of the confusion, flux, and uncertainty among even the most prominent Compositionists about this topic. After exhorting students to "learn to tap feelings" (159) and after reminding them that "finding a true voice gives a piece of writing unity" (161), he then cautions them also to remember that "[a] writer's tone [my emphasis] should be natural to him or her in the circumstances and above all it should be justified. Nothing is more ridiculous than a person who takes on the wrong tone unless as a joke" (161). In spite of the progressive talk about "finding a true voice," about "listening to yourself speaking inside," about "finding the right voice," and about "learn[ing] to tap feelings so they control actions and words," right and true voice turn out to be tone.

Macrorie doesn't say whether by tone he means author's attitude or tone of voice. His discussions of the examples he uses to illustrate his statement about "wrong tone" focus on several matters, but judging from his overall selection of material and the points he makes about it, his ideas about tone appear to be literary, by *tone* he means author's attitude,

and he believes tone or voice (terms he uses synonymously) may be described partly by a kind of simple style analysis, since he turns most often to diction as he guides students through excerpts intended to illustrate different voices or tone, either "true" or "arrogant" (162), "affected or arrogant" (163), or "borrowed" (165).

Macrorie leaves students with these words of advice on the matter of voice-tone: "Like everyone else who has ever spoken a word . . . you have at your command a number of different voices. Use them" (167). To his credit, Macrorie resists denying the ambiguity of language but to his discredit he is so ambiguous about that ambiguity that students who set out to find their "true voice" and then are told they have "a number of different" voices might well wonder about the truth of what they are being told. Nevertheless, the idea that there is such a thing as a writer's "true" voice persists, renamed as "authentic" voice. Harvey Daniels echoes such ideas when he writes in What Makes Writing Good, 1985, that

" . . . nothing is more central to all good writing than this authentic personal voice, this sound of a genuine, deeply engaged author at work finding out what she thinks" (261)

From voice-as-grammar to voice-as-genuineness, Compositionists had indeed come a very long way, but they had not exhausted the possibilities

for thinking about voice in written discourse, as Donald Murray's writings show.

Of the Compositionists, Donald Murray describes the widest range of possibilities for voice. In the 1993 Fourth Edition of his handbook Write to Learn he promotes what I will call an Expansive-Expressive theory of voice. In Murray's view, voice is

... style and tone and more. It is the human sound that rises from a written page. Voice is rhythm and beat, inflection and emphasis, volume and pause; it is the manner in which the author speaks; it is the flow of what is spoken; it is the emotional content of writing, its energy and force; it is the presence of an individual writer speaking to an individual reader.

Voice is the most important, the most *magical* [my emphasis] and powerful element in writing. During writing and revising the writer hears the voice of the draft and tunes it to the meaning being developed and made clear (32 - 33).

Murray's ideas are both narrow and wide, traditional and radical, intellectual and anti-intellectual. It is such characteristically paradoxical/contradictory mix of assertions about voice, collected in

statements such as Murray's and in sources such as databases, that is the focus of this Dissertation and one source of the difficulties voice presents English Studies, as the following example shows.

Robert Miles and his colleagues write in their 1991 textbook Prose Style: A Contemporary Guide, Second Edition, that voice is a function of two phenomena -- *persona* and *tone*. Looking at voice this way, they say, "makes it somewhat more manageable" (204). They define persona by trying to merge notions about a writers' personal identity's being discernible in the "voice" of his or her writing with more traditional ideas of persona as a mask. First they write that persona is "the writer's personal beliefs, allegiances, prejudices, education, reading, experiences, emotional makeup, possibly even physical traits" (204) and explain how such matters may be discovered in writing. Using Edmund Wilson as an example, they note that his exceptional intelligence is conveyed through his vocabulary, the structure of his sentences, and the "incisiveness of his ideas" (205). However, they also caution students against concluding that this is the only way they may learn, nor all that may be learned, about Edmund Wilson's persona. They explain that the more one reads Wilson's writings, the more one discovers about Wilson's persona, which might include learning that he became disenchanted with Marxism, that he was

multilingual, and that he became quite cynical in his later years -- in other words, beyond **approach** to content, one discovers content itself. Their next move is to qualify their first take on persona by reminding the students that persona does not denote *personality*, that persona means *mask* in Latin, that parts of the personality of the writer are masked in writing, and that often from

"the complexity of your actual personality you shape the persona best suited to your present task. If that task happens to be a scholarly study of Jane Austen, the persona will be scholarly -- no matter how passionate and anti-academic you may sometimes feel. You will ignore those features of your personality that don't fit, simply because your readers -- college students and professors most likely -- will distrust a writer who doesn't seem scholarly enough to have valuable ideas about Jane Austen" (206).

"The tone of a passage," Miles writes, "is the emotions reflected in it, and this emotion is usually regarded as the sum of two attitudes" (207). Those attitudes, he explains, are the writer's attitudes toward his or her subject matter and audience. This is a classically stylistic approach, consistent with the authors' conventional take on most matters

of "prose style" in their "guide" they call "contemporary". The table of contents lists such chapter and chapter sub-headings as Sentences (Subjects and Verbs, Conciseness, Coordination, Subordination, and Precision); The Sound of the Sentence (Long-Winded Sentences, Last Words, and Repetition and Variety); and Figures of Speech (Metaphor, the Dangers of Metaphor, and Further Possibilities).

So we find in two books written some thirty years after the first work cited in this account two very different approaches to voice in writing, with the differences signalled by each writer's telling diction: Murray asserts that voice is "magical" and "powerful" while Miles' asserts that voice is "manageable" and the "sum" of persona and tone. In Miles' arithmetical metaphor echoes another, earlier "summation" I have noted, that voice consists of two features -- active and passive constructions. Conceptually, persona and tone are clearly quite different from active and passive, but the conceptual impulse to enumerate, to add and subtract (and especially to tidy-up voice) has persisted in Compositionists' efforts to understand voice in written discourse.

Summary

Ideas about voice cited in the preceding section cluster around certain key categories on the map of possibilities for thinking about voice.

The first of these is what is commonly called *style* which M. H. Abrams defines in A Glossary of Literary Terms as "the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse -- it is *how* a speaker or writer says whatever he says" (165). He then says that "[t]he style of a work may be analyzed in terms of its diction or choice of words . . . ; the frequency and types of its figures of speech . . . ; its rhythmic patterns; the structure of its sentences; and its rhetorical devices and effects . . ." (94). If style is a feature of voice (or is what some Compositionists mean by voice) then certain possibilities for analysis become available to us: they are those by which we commonly analyze style, which include analyses of diction, syntax, figurative language, ordinary language versus literary language, and sentence construction and sequences.

As we have seen, many Compositionists' analyses of voice, as expressed in textbooks, turn out to be analyses of style. Anne Ruggles Gere discusses voice in a section entitled "Revising Style," advises students to "consider" voice as they "revise for **style**," and points out the effect on writing of "pronoun usage and other **word choice**." Patrick Hartwell writes of "the **way** a writer presents herself" and Donald Stewart of "the **manner** of telling a story which differentiates one author from another." Donald Murray uses the word *style* outright: voice is "...

style and tone and more." [Emphases throughout are mine.] Hartwell exhorts students to "try on" different voices which are necessarily differentiated partly by diction; Ken Macrorie explicates the diction of examples he has chosen to illustrate different "voices;" and Robert Miles, et al devote entire chapters essentially to diction. Other features of style analysis mentioned by some Compositionists include the analysis of rhythm, inflection, and emphasis (Murray), and sentence structure, grammar, and figures (Miles, et al).

Tone is the second of the key categories on the map of possibilities for thinking about voice among the Compositionists we have cited, and they have two rather different views of it. The first is literary after those theorists such as Abrams who defines tone "after the example of I. A. Richards, [as] the attitudes to the subject matter and to the audience implied in a discourse or literary piece" (98) and then cross-references tone with irony and style. For the most part Compositionists follow this literary lead in their treatment of tone as a feature of voice which usually turns out to be (as with Abrams) essentially a feature of style. Gere writes, "Words closely associated with style include tone, voice, and persona . . ." (291). Hartwell links style with voice and tone, then voice and tone with "writer's stance" (83). Macrorie uses traditional style

analyses to illustrate a blended concept of voice and tone, terms which he sometimes uses synonymously. Murray states outright that voice is "style and tone and more" (32).

Murray's "more" leads to the second way of looking at tone among Compositionists looking at voice, which is to link voice metaphorically to the tone or sound of the spoken word -- to orality. Murray says that the "more" is "the human sound that rises from a written page" (33). Gere writes that "[v]oice in writing refers to the way the writing 'sounds' (291); Elbow says that "[v]oice, in writing, implies words that capture the sound of an individual on the page" (287). Macrorie advises students to ". . . sit still a moment and listen to yourself speaking inside" (161).

Clearly any account of the history of voice among the Compositionists would have to take into account the deeply metaphorical turn their accounts of voice take, the kinds of metaphors they turn to, and voice as metaphor as they struggle to re-present and ground physical and representational phenomena -- "the human sound that rises from a written page."

Something beyond physical and metaphorical orality is intended in some Compositionists' ideas of voice, and this constitutes the third item on the map of possibilities, as they are expressed in textbooks. Daniels

is describing *action* or *behavior* in the sound of his "deeply engaged author at work finding out what she thinks." So is Macrorie when he instructs students to "sit still a moment and listen to yourself speaking inside." So is Murray when he writes that "during writing and revising the writer hears the *voice of the draft* and tunes it to the meaning being developed and made clear," although Murray takes the unusual step of personifying the draft. It is worth noting that he also shifts from active to passive constructions after he asserts that the draft has a voice, leaving ambiguous the matter of who or what is developing and making meaning clear -- the writer or the draft?

An interest in connections between voice in writing and behavior is most fully theorized and explored by Peter Elbow, leading to the fourth item on our map of possibilities for thinking about voice, -- real, resonant, or authentic voice. Elbow's ideas about implicit messages' reinforcing explicit ones resulting in power which results in "real voice" which is voice that "resonates" set him quite apart from the other Compositionists cited so far since none of them seems as self-consciously aware as Elbow of the theoretical framework their ideas generate and need and of the implications of their premises. Elbow states the case for himself when, referring to the resonance of real voice, he

writes that "the words go deep."

Elbow's approach to "real voice" is deliberately embedded in a framework that includes a clear qualification which he states thus:

I don't know the objective characteristics that distinguish writing with real voice from writing with mere voice. For me it is a matter of hearing resonance rather than being able to point to things on the page. I want to say that it has *nothing* to do with the words on the page, only with the relationship of the words to the writer -- and therefore that the same words could have real voice when written by one person and lack it when written by someone else. That highlights the mystery, but presumably it is going too far . . . (299).

Here Elbow abandons this line of thinking (yes, it may be going too far) and begins the discussion of explicit and implicit messages mentioned above.

Later in a chapter called "How to Get Power Through Voice" he sums up his ideas about real voice. He tells students, "Look for real voice and realize it is there in everyone waiting to be used. Yet remember, too, that you are looking for something mysterious and hidden"; he tells them,

If you seek real voice you should realize that you probably face a dilemma. You probably have only one real

voice -- at first anyway -- and it is likely to feel childish or distasteful or ugly to you. But you are stuck. You can either use voices you like or you can be heard. For a while you can't have it both ways.

But if you do have the courage to use and inhabit that real voice, you will get the knack of resonance, you will learn to expand its range and eventually make more voices real. This of course is the skill of great literary artists: the ability to give resonance to many voices.

It's important to stress, at the end, this fact of many voices (313).

Elbow's "fact" of many voices positioned next to some Compositionists' claims that every writer has in "fact" one "authentic" voice creates what I will call it Composition's Conundrum. It appears to have these major characteristics: except for Peter Elbow's efforts, it remains essentially untheorized; unlike other paradoxical features of language, it seems grafted onto language rather than systemic to it; and finally certain features of this possibility appear contradictory, not from phenomenological necessity but from faulty reasoning. Observers have commented on the religious metaphors that authentic-voice proponents

rely upon, and indeed a leap of faith does at times seem necessary.

As I pointed out earlier, by 1981 Peter Elbow was expressing dissatisfaction with *authentic* to name what he chose to call *real* voice which he linked to communication dynamics, but others pushed on toward the logically illogical ends to which *authentic* voice as described by some Compositionists leads. Authenticity in its common sense usage is positivistic and empirical: an authentic diamond is a **diamond**, not paste, and its authenticity can be demonstrated. Philosophically, authenticity is, at the least, propositional, predicable, and oppositional: "authentic" voice presupposes and predicates a contrasting, "inauthentic" voice, but the authentic voice proponents halt dialectical momentum by refusing to proceed further into, say, a definition of voice. Instead, they seem to have created a calcified version of the kind of texts-in-progress George Dillon describes as "moments in the process academic dialectics" (157), texts which in most academic contexts are "submissions . . . that are evaluated and selected through processes of scrutiny, challenge, debate, and critique" (157). The curious thing about voice in Composition is that, as a rigidified "moment" in "academic dialectics" it has been spared until quite recently the animating effect of "scrutiny, challenge, debate, and critique" (157). As an example, Ken Macrorie's ideas about authentic voice include

two main but untheorized assertions: that it is possible for writers to find "the right voice" while at the same time having at their "command" a "number of different" voices. In the earlier of the two books by Macrorie I cite in this paper his notion of authentic voice takes, as I have mentioned, a decidedly rhetorical turn. But in his later book, he all but abandons rhetorical context in favor of positivistic and reflexive ideas about voice of the kind that we also find in Donald Stewart's and Donald Murray's writings. A quick look at these Compositionists' diction and metaphors reveals their lines of thinking: Murray promotes a romantically-tinged doctrine of presence when he tells students to "tap" their "feelings"; to "find" a "true" voice so that their writing will have "unity"; to "find" the "right" voice so that they may "control actions and words"; and that there is such a thing as a "wrong tone" (voice). Stewart weighs matters in favor of a rather extreme individualism when he says that authorial voice which is characterized by "genuineness" "sets you apart" from everyone else; that it is "your way"; that "your rendering" of your perception of "your world" in "your words" will lead to finding "your authentic voice". A rhetoric of the rhetoric of the voice-activated Compositionists might yield insights into the conceptual worlds in which some of them live.

2.4.5. Voice in Rhetoric and Composition's Recent Scholarly Literature

In recent years several scholars, most notably Peter Elbow, I. Hashimoto, Frank Farmer, and Kathleen Blake Yancey, have attempted to review, describe, and assess the "state" of voice in English Studies. Elbow's efforts will be discussed first in this section, as he is the Compositionist most associated with efforts to develop a theory of voice in writing, who for the most part has set the terms of voice-debates, whose work has both probed voice and prompted others to do the same, and who continues to work on the voice-problem. I. Hashimoto's critique of Elbow's "voice as juice" metaphor and of voice-evangelism will be discussed next, followed by Yancey's transactional approach to voice. Frank Farmer's Bakhtinian-based approach to voice will be discussed in Chapter Four in the context of Literature Studies' approaches to voice.

Peter Elbow on Voice

In Voices on Voice, 1994, Peter Elbow asks, "What Do We Mean When We Talk about Voice in Texts?". The question, he explains, is prompted by three major concerns often voiced about voice. The first is that "students confuse writing . . . , speaking" (1), and voice, resulting in writing with "too much speech or orality in it" (1). The second is "the idea that voice underlies writing and that writing always implies the 'real presence' of a

person or a voice" (1), which is a position that denies or at least ignores anti-foundationalist arguments. The third is that the idea of voice "so often seems to imply a naive model of the self as unique, single, and unchanging" (1), against ideas that the self is a fluid, changing, constructed entity.

Elbow explains that the answer to the question his article poses is contained in a collection of five "related meanings" (6) for voice. The first is "audible voice" (6), our tendency (and perhaps our physiological imperative) to project imagined, heard qualities onto silent text. The second is "dramatic voice in writing" (10), derived from New Critical ideas about the implied author; Elbow's point is that "when we acknowledge that every text has an implied author, we are acknowledging that every text has a character or dramatic voice" (11). The third common use of voice is "recognizable or distinctive voice in writing" (13) or "characteristic style" (14), apart from issues (Elbow's term is "mystique") related to self. The fourth, "voice with authority" (15), is related to having influence but unrelated to and not requiring "any theory of identity or self" (15). The fifth concept is "resonant voice or presence" (16) and is the one Elbow calls "the swamp" (16).

Elbow argues that audible voice, dramatic voice, recognizable voice,

and voice as authority serve as useful critical terms that no longer trouble us definitionally. He also argues that resonant voice need not be a troublesome term if one understands that it links "discourse and the unconscious" (17); that it "opens the door to irony, fiction, lying, . . . games . . . , and other polyvalent or multivalent kinds of discourse" (18); and that it denies a simplistic concept of self "as neatly coherent or unchanging" (19). Selves, he reminds us,

tend to evolve, change, take on new voices, and assimilate them. The concept of resonant voice explains the intriguing power of so much speech and writing by children: they wear their unconscious on their sleeve; their defenses are often elaborate. Thus they often get more out of themselves into or behind their discourse" (19).

A companion issue to the matter of self is the question of how resonance in writing is perceived -- is it a function of the text or of the reader? Elbow points out that [t]his is an obvious problem, and it is enough to make some people insist that the only resonance we can talk about is between the text and the reader, not the text and the writer" (22).

Elbow's conclusions regarding the five definitions of voice he identifies are that first, while we cannot avoid the feeling that the words

we write seem like our words, "using and celebrating something we feel as our *own* [Elbow's emphasis] voice" (30), we must also develop the ability to perform "as though we are nothing but ventriloquists playfully using and adapting and working against an array of voices we find around us" (30); second, that while the five definitions of voice denote real differences, "more often than not they go together" (31); and third, that "surely the richly bundled connotations of the human voice are what hold them all together" (31).

In a paper presented at the 1995 Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Peter Elbow continues to argue that the first four meanings of voice -- audible, dramatic, distinctive, and authoritative, remain useful, non-controversial, and non-ideological critical terms because "they point to concrete, observable, and definable features in texts" ("Voice as a Lightning Rod," 4). Regarding the fifth meaning, resonant voice, he makes the following points: first, that the term "resonant" is preferable to "authentic" since the latter too strongly connotes 'sincerity' and 'personal' (4); second, that voice must be "rescued from "the widespread assumption that it is inherently permeated by a romantic expressivist ideology" (4); third, that social constructivist ideas about "multiple and shifting voices" [i.e., selves] (5) or about "only

subject positions" (5) conflict with other, strongly held ideas about the importance 'the real me' (5), especially among "people whose language has been ignored, not heard, or oppressed" (5); and fourth, that only within academic debates is the possibility taken seriously that inferences cannot be made between writers as real people and the texts they write. Echoing a matter we will address in Chapter Three, "Voice in Creative Writing," Elbow observes that "[i]t is striking, after all, that writers have mostly proved immune to this scholarly skepticism about the concept of voice" (10). On the whole, Elbow's most recent efforts seem intended to bring closure to those voice-matters that, after nearly thirty years, seem to need settling and to address the new questions (so typical of voice!) now being raised.

I. Hashimoto on "Evangelistic Voice"

I

We have seen that definitional issues are always associated with voice, but recent, sustained attention to defining voice and to addressing the implications of definition stems largely from a 1987 article by I. Hashimoto, "Voice as Juice: Some Reservations about Evangelic Composition" published in College Composition and Communication. It appeared toward the end of the second of three waves of three-fold

increases in the number of documents catalogued in ERIC under the identifier *Voice-Rhetoric*. Hashimoto's article ignited debate over the definition of voice by linking an especially resonant observation -- that voice enthusiasm resembles Christian evangelism -- with an aggressive, largely pathological appeal that charged academic compositionists with making hyperbolic claims and using anti-intellectual motivational techniques.

To make the charge against voice compositionists of a hyperbolic excess leading to evangelism and anti-intellectualism, Hashimoto collects, decontextualizes, and then recontextualizes *with each other* samples of the most excessive claims for voice. It is one thing for a writer in context to tell her students that "[w]riting without 'authentic voice' seems 'fake or canned or put together by a formula'" while "writing with 'authentic voice' is 'distinctive and original'" (Hairston in Hashimoto, 73). It is quite another for such a statement to be gathered into a collection of statements drawn from the literature on voice and set into a context that includes "Writing with no voice is dead, mechanical, faceless" (Elbow); "Voice separates writing that is not read from writing that is read" (Murray); "Good writers are honest, sincere, and human (Garrison); "bad writers are 'phony' and fall victims to the 'tides of phony,

posturing, pretentious, tired, imprecise, slovenly language, which both suffocate and corrupt the mind" (Coles and Vopat); "Bad prose sounds as though it had been ground out by a sausage machine or produced with labor pains; good prose" almost always contains (Hashimoto's phrase) a "personal voice" (Hamalian) [all cited in Hashimoto, 72]. Hashimoto's conclusion about compositionists' hyperbolically excessive ideas about voice is that for them

'[v]oice' makes people whole, allows them to be born again.

'Voice gives saved 'power' and returns them to their essential humanity. And, perhaps most importantly, 'voice' provides immediate salvation if sinners renounce complexity and the evils of over-intellectualizing, return to the simple black-and-white ideals, and embrace their primitive, emotive, human selves (73).

This opens the way to illustrating absurdity with absurdity by way of a parodic analogy -- that voice compositionists are like evangelical ministers.

Hashimoto develops the "evangelism" trope/charge by first likening certain assertions about voice to a fundamentally anti-intellectual Christian evangelism conveying a "simple . . . heaven or hell" (72) message.

Next he shows that voice, having "strong Biblical roots" (71) fits nicely into evangelical epistemology. Then he demonstrates that many voice enthusiasts, too, rely on an "evangelical" heaven or hell message, this one having to do with a choice between producing writing with voice which is "warm, outgoing, capable of enjoying fun in the sun and roses in the spring" (73) and writing without voice which is "coldly rational" and "calculating" (73). Hashimoto's conclusion about evangelic compositionists' ideas about voice is that for them

'[v]oice' makes people whole, allows them to be born again.

'Voice gives saved 'power' and returns them to their essential humanity. And, perhaps most importantly, 'voice' provides immediate salvation if sinners renounce complexity and the evils of over-intellectualizing, return to the simple black-and-white ideals, and embrace their primitive, emotive, human selves (73).

It is one thing to characterize voice-compositionists' assertions as excessive, hyperbolic, or unsubstantiated. It is quite another to characterize them as evangelical, which does the following: It devalues enlightened reason, skeptical inquiry, and the humanistic tradition out of which Composition, by way of rhetoric, evolved but valorizes revealed

truth, leaps of faith; and the deistic, irrational tradition Aristotelian rhetoric opposed. In other words, the evangelical analogy exposes in voice-compositionists the same doctrinal impulses they would recognize and presumably criticize in religious evangelicals. It also raises one of doctrine's necessary corollaries: that Truth -- being The Good that doctrine names and protects, being also by definition, demonstration, opinion, and belief both the *a priori* condition leading to salvation and salvation itself -- must be proselytized. And those who would proselytize are often the most vigorous in their affirmation of belief and in their opposition to disbelief. In *Composition*, as Hashimoto shows, this plays out as voice-dogma leading, at its extreme, to voice-despotism. He quotes David Bartholomy as telling students, 'If there's no personality in your writing, it's dead. If it's not your personality, you're dead. Bang, bang' (Hashimoto, 78).

Perhaps the most important point about Hashimoto's characterization of voice-compositionists as evangelical is that "evangelistic" may very well be a partially accurate characterization of some of what we find in some of the assertions voice-enthusiasts have made and continue to make about voice. One needs only to peruse a Protestant hymnal or a few pages from Genesis to sense how very well

"evangelic" *connotatively* illuminates something fundamental about expressivist composition: "the pulse of a writer churning over the facts the world presents" and "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" produce mutual echoes too eerie to ignore. But the usefulness of "evangelistic" as a *denotator* of any specific thing related to voice depends on how one defines evangelistic, and Hashimoto offers no definition. Instead, he works from a two-part characterization of evangelism accomplished in two ways: through statements that identify "characteristics" and actions of evangelism and by mixing assertions about "evangelic" composition with details that elaborate on evangelism.

In Hashimoto's view evangelism has "power" (a characteristic) that "comes from fear (a source): fear of death, fear of failure, fear of the unknown, fear of one's sinful thoughts" (70) and that conveys (an action) a "simple . . . message: heaven or hell" (72). He quotes from evangelist Paul Tournier: "Blessed indeed are those who hear God's voice or who can recognize his inspiration in some thought that comes into their minds, and who retain the human? prudence dictated by our always uncertain human condition" (73), observing that "The advantage of such vague, emotive description is that salvation becomes a very *personal* [Hashimoto's emphasis] affair" (73). He quotes Tournier again -- "What I am concerned

to point out is the vital need felt by every human being to express himself, to manifest his person to the outside world -- and in the most personal manner possible. And what a joy this is to him" (73) -- linking Tournier's allusions to personal expression to what he, Hashimoto, considers either parallel or complementary statements about voice by Donald Stewart, Donald Murray, and Peter Elbow. From Stewart: "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 (74); from Elbow: "everyone, however, inexperienced or unskilled, has real voice available; everyone can write with power" (74); and from Murray: "Voice is the quality, more than any other, that allows us to recognize excellent writing ... [T]he concept is 'sophisticated, abstract, and theoretical' [but] 'everyone already recognizes voice and makes use of it'" (74).

The evangelism Hashimoto seems to have in mind is the Evangelical Protestantism that evolved as a both reactive and "proactive" phenomenon -- reactive against the medieval mediated Catholicism of sacramental rites, a powerful, intrusive, and often corrupt clergy, and the doctrines of "merit or works of supererogation", sin, grace, and atonement (EB, 15, 108) but proactive in its establishment (perhaps reestablishment after a long hiatus going back to St. Paul and the early Christian church) of

certain doctrinal imperatives introduced (or reintroduced) by Martin Luther and elaborated and refined throughout the European Reformation, the Pietist movement, the English Methodist movement, and the American Great Awakening, eventually to be outlined in 1867 in the Nine Articles of the World's Evangelical Alliance which specified

the divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the Scriptures; the right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of them; the unity of the Godhead and the Trinity of Persons; the utter depravity of human nature; the incarnation of the Son of God and his atonement for the sins of all men; the justification of sinners by faith alone; the work of the Holy Spirit as sanctifier; the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the final judgment by Jesus Christ, and the divine institution of the Christian ministry (4:613).

One of the most interesting things about Hashimoto's voice-evangelism trope is that like the idea that writing has voice, there is a gut-level something that seems right about it even if the details are sketchy and the vehicle of the metaphor somewhat caricatured. However, one needn't spend much with the literature of voice-evangelism before

beginning to think, as Compositionist Randall K. Albers imagines his audience's thinking, that "[t]hese people can talk themselves hoarse, and we won't be any closer to knowing what voice is" (1). It also is possible to let metaphor take us where "thinking" might not, which is what Hashimoto's evangelic metaphor does. A second look at the Nine Articles of the World's Evangelical Alliance specify might show us why. Before we proceed, though, I want to emphasize I am not proposing any direct connections between evangelical voice-composition and the Nine Articles. I will propose that certain cultural, intellectual, and historical forces have a great deal of "purchase" for many Compositionist, resulting in certain parallels between a certain version of academic voice-composition studies and certain features of Christian Evangelism, leading to the evangelical voice-phenomena Hashimoto describes.

What we see in the apparent evangelization of certain branches of Composition Studies over the topic of voice may be a modern adaptation of ideas that come from both sacred and secular historical and cultural sources. Part of the power of the evangelism trope is that it bypasses detailed, particularized belief to highlight generalized, nonspecific Belief. If we remove overt references to the sacred (such as "divine," "Scriptures," "Trinity of Persons," and so on) from the summary of the Nine

Articles quoted earlier, we are left with such diction as this: "inspiration, authority, and sufficiency;" "right and duty of private judgment;" "human nature." If we had no other context to guide us, we might well conclude that in these phrases we have gathered a partial collection of core ideas from the Enlightenment and Romanticism. If we allow references to certain phenomena historically of interest to philosophers as well as theologians then we might include the phrase "immortality of the soul"; and finally if we wish to concede that certain phenomena have over the millennia been named by different names, then we might well agree that whatever is named by the phrase "work of the Holy Spirit as sanctifier" could also be what is named by "Sing Heav'nly Muse," by the classical Muses, by Urania, by "the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters," by "Understanding by which, together with Wisdom . . . rabbinical tradition said that the world was made" (Hughes in John Milton, 199), by Wordsworth's "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," by "power," or by "*magic potion, mother's milk, and electricity*." Clearly, despite their differences, Compositionists and evangelicals stand together on old and common ground.

II

As damning as *evangelical* may be, it is not the worst charge that

can be brought against an academic. That one is "anti-intellectual," and while Hashimoto does make it and it is the main charge his essay lodges against voice-compositionists, he is careful to separate when necessary the message of evangelical composition from its academic messengers. To do this he suggests that evangelical composition "may have *anti-intellectual consequences* [Hashimoto's emphasis] (76), and quotes evangelists to establish the anti-intellectual nature of evangelism:

The great 19th century evangelist Dwight L. Moody once said, 'I would rather have zeal without knowledge and there is a good deal of knowledge without zeal' (Hofstadter 108) In the early 20th Century, Billy Sunday told people, 'Thousands of college graduates are going as fast as they can straight to hell. . . Billy Graham tells worshippers, 'We are a nation of empty people. Our heads are crammed full of knowledge, but within our souls is a spiritual vacuum' (in Hashimoto, 76).

Next Hashimoto suggests that, like Billy Sunday or Billy Graham who as evangelicals

"can save three or four times as many sinners than more intellectual brethren -- and in a fraction of the time" (76), evangelical composition too sets out to efficiently save sinners, but these

sinner, are those "self-centered, passive students [who] can wait for revelation without the pain and frustration associated with intellectual pursuits and confusion or disorientation from unaccustomed methods of thought" (76).

Then Hashimoto points to deans as the source of some of composition's problems:

Certainly at a time when deans are worrying about the attrition rate from required courses and declining enrollments in the humanities, voice evangelists offer simple salvation to many: increased enrollments and happy, complacent students. Self-centered, passive students can wait for revelation without the pain and frustration associated with intellectual pursuits . . . To succeed, they can forego external research, shelve new ideas, and devalue facts . . . The problem, of course, is that writing is an intellectual endeavor and the more students are exhorted to pursue spiritual goals of zeal, "electricity" and personal salvation, the more "voice" appears to be short-sighted and inappropriate (77).

But after pursuing this "anti-intellectual" theme for an additional several paragraphs, Hashimoto inserts an important caveat:

I would emphasize that I am *not* arguing here that all those who advocate "voice" are necessarily anti-intellectual themselves. I *am*, however, suggesting that many advocates use such anti-intellectual appeals for motivational reasons -- and in doing so, they undercut their own intellectual enterprises and undermine the importance of teaching composition at all on the college level [Hashimoto's emphases throughout] (78).

Hashimoto's indictment of voice-composition academics as anti-intellectual is both broadly strategic and tactically selective. Caught in the broad dragnet are James E. Miller, Jr., Stephen Judy, Ken Macrorie, Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, Sheridan Baker, Robert Yarber, Leo Hamalian, Harvey Daniels, David Bartholomy, Roger Garrison, Maxine Hairston, William E. Coles, Jr., and James Vopat. The evidence cited is a selection of some of the words they have written and published: Peter Elbow's "*magic potion, mother's milk, and electricity*" (Hashimoto, 70); Ruskiewicz's "we 'feel the pulse' of a writer 'churning over the facts the world presents'" (70); and Murray's "energy, humor, individuality, music, rhythm, pace, flow, surprise, believability" (70). But because the compositionists Hashimoto names are also some of its leading figures and

also because the whole matter of voice-evangelism is far more complex than the term "anti-intellectual" allows, the position that compositionists who use anti-intellectual motivational techniques are not *necessarily* anti-intellectual themselves proves both important and necessary.

Hashimoto wishes to constructively, not destructively, critique voice-composition, but to do so he must free his critique from the logic of his powerful trope (voice-compositionists are like evangelists, evangelists are anti-intellectual, therefore . . .). Hence, the disclaimer on his own argument quoted earlier and which I will quote once again here because I think that in it we find one of the reasons Hashimoto's argument fails to illuminate voice-evangelism beyond shining a light on its characteristics and its practitioners' practices.

I would emphasize that I am *not* [Hashimoto's emphasis] arguing here that all those who advocate "voice" are necessarily anti-intellectual themselves. I am, however, suggesting that many advocates use such anti-intellectual appeals for motivational reasons -- and in doing so, they undercut their own intellectual enterprises and undermine the importance of teaching composition at all on the college level"

(79).

In the phrase "motivational reasons" Hashimoto may have identified, perhaps unintentionally, something important about Compositionists' own motivations in addition to conveying what he seems to have intended, which is a comment on what Compositionists must do in their classrooms -- motivate students. We have noted throughout Chapter Two the exceptionally close and unusual (within the academy) relationship between Composition and pedagogy. Especially in the early years, Compositionists "did" composition while they imagined it, wrote it, constructed it, critiqued it, promoted it, and defended it at the coordinate points of self (their own selves and students' selves) and language.

Most of the Compositionists Hashimoto cites are academics who came to composition before there was Composition (composition vs Composition is Stephen North's distinction) by way of their training in literature studies, rhetoric, and occasionally linguistics. Voice-evangelism in composition may be the ampliative mask through which voice-compositionists project the world that produced compositionists before there were composition historians, philosophers, critics, empiricists, clinicians, ethnographers, and discourse analysts, before indeed there was Composition. That pre-Composition world is the

world of belles lettres, of high literary art, a world of devotional aesthetics quite different from the "scientific" world of experimentalists, clinicians, and ethnographers. It is also a world, as M. H. Abrams has taught us, that aligns art in relation to the artist "rather than to external nature, or to the audience, or to the internal requirements of the work itself" (3). In fact, it may not be too much of a stretch to say that voice-evangelism attempts to recapture, preserve, extend, and promote the art/artist alignment against modern and contemporary rationalism, empiricism, and especially skepticism and that it may especially seek to preserve the romantic aesthetics that produced the ties that bind (ironically) by way of such core concepts as "inspiration, authority, sufficiency," "right and duty of private judgment," and "human nature" evangelistic preachers and "evangelistic" teachers.

What we find in evangelical voice-composition may not be an inability to define voice on intellectual terms but an unwillingness to infect not just voice, but the belles lettres intellectual and aesthetic romantic tradition and principles with the contaminants of modern scientism. Looking at it this way, we might argue that what Hashimoto's interprets as "anti-intellectual" motivation may actually represent a principled intellectualism motivated by the need to take a stand against

forces that threaten an academic world in which its practitioners have made a considerable intellectual and emotional -- and thereby, personal -- investment.

Don Bialostosky theorizes along the same lines in "Romantic Resonances", a response to a 1995 CCC installment of what is known as the "Bartholomy/Elbow debate" (Bartholomae, 62) over "personal and academic writing" (62). He characterizes Elbow's and Bartholomae's differences as "part of the two-hundred-year debate opened by romanticism over writing, education, selfhood, pleasure, power, and knowledge" (92) and as fueled by Elbow's romantic, sentimental realist, or expressive romantic orientation (whichever term one prefers) (92) against Bartholomae's probable but unstated influences, which would necessarily include some of the "opponents of romanticism over the last two centuries -- neoclassicist, romantic, Victorian, modernist, New Humanist, New Critical, [and] New Historicist" (93).

However one finesses the details, it seems evident that part of what Hashimoto critiques in "Voice as Juice" is a significant difference in world views necessitated by and played out as significantly different ideas about "writing, education, selfhood, pleasure, power, and knowledge" encapsulated in the voice-metaphor. Furthermore, both Elbow's and

Bartholomae's arguments detailing their respective positions on the importance of personal versus academic writing eventually arrive at a point where it becomes evident that in some fundamental ways, personal imperatives (the "I want's" of world views) inform their decisions about how they teach writing. Bartholomae writes,

I also **want** students to be able to negotiate the ways they are figured in relationship to the official forms of knowledge valued in the academy . . . I **want** them to be prepared to write themselves out of a rhetorical situation in which their roles are already prepared . . . I **want** my students to have a way to begin, to establish their power over the text (and the author); I **want** them to write essays that do more than summarize or reproduce the words of 'authorities' [my emphases] (86).

Elbow writes,

I **feel I must** leave students more control, let them make as many decisions as they can about their writing -- despite the power of the culture. I **must call on some faith** in the ability of students to make important choices, decisions, and perceptions of their own when I can clear a good space" (90).

And later,

... **my goal** is that students should keep writing by choice after the course is over -- because of **my faith** that the process itself, of engaging in writing, of trying to find words for one's thinking and experience and trying them out on others -- will ultimately lead to the kind of questing and self-contradiction that we both seek. But I **want** them to get there by a path where the student is steering, not me [my emphases] (92).

In following this matter this way, I do not mean to argue against subjectivity in favor of a transparent, denatured objectivism. Across English Studies, more perhaps than in any other field, the "wants" of instructors are legitimized partly by the radically subjective sources and nature of the literature and the (often) imaginative discourse they study. Bialostosky, coming at this from an angle directed at trying to "sort out the economy of pleasure on Elbow's and Bartholomae's arguments" (94) for and against the relative importance of imaginative and academic writing in first year composition courses, quotes Wordsworth on the differences between poets and academics. It might not be too much of a stretch to argue that Wordsworth's distinctions could also apply to the differences between academics who *study* poets, novelists, and dramatists and other

academics -- "the biographer, the historian, the natural philosopher, the mathematician, the chemist, the atomist, and . . . 'the man of science'"

(94). Wordsworth's view is that

. . . the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature with affections akin to those, which, through labour and length of time, the Man of Science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge of both the Poet and the Man of Science is pleasure, but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to use, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings (Lyrical Ballads, 259 in Bialostosky, 95).

Bialostosky characterizes these ideas as "uncritical pleasurable participation in a commonsense world taken as 'natural' by people who share (and trust) a common language for their experiences of it" (95).

Poets, he explains, are "first among equals, members of a community who voice its members' sentiments almost as if they had said them

themselves" (95). And if the parallels hold, then English Studies practitioners (especially evangelic compositionists) would be first among equals of those bound, so to speak, by literature's imperatives, the first of which are to honor the imperatives of a commonsense world named in part by the shared, commonsense language of desire (I want) and belief (I must call on some faith).

Kathleen Blake Yancey on the Territory of Voice

In the introduction to Voices on Voice: Perspectives, Definitions, Inquiry, 1994, Kathleen Blake Yancey describes the commonplace experience of students of voice:

When I first began exploring the topic of voice -- and as I sought to identify what voice is, or to determine what voice seemed to mean to various writers, or to outline what the metaphor of voice could mean -- I encountered the first of several paradoxes: the more I seemed to know about it, the less certain I became, and the less I actually knew (vii).

Yancey finds the source of the feeling that the more she knew the less she knew in definitional problems -- in contradictions: voice is inside the text, voice is outside the text; in definitions that "argue rather than explain" (viii); that spawn new definitions out of old ones; that deny

previous definitions; and in definitions that are "incomplete and ahistorical" (viii). Voice, she says, after Sharon Crowley, is "a floating signifier changing from one text to the next" (viii).

Nevertheless, Yancey also encounters, as does any student of voice, certain areas of agreement among those who otherwise disagree, and it is on these coordinate points that she begins to plot a map to "locate places of intersection and difference in the landscape of voice" (viii). The voice-coordinates include synonymously linking the spoken voice with the individual; personifying and humanizing text by "using the notion of the individual human voice to talk about writing" (Gilbert in Yancey, (ix); synonymously linking voice with a stable, "rhetorical" (x) self; and linking that individual, personal self or voice to authority in text.

Yancey sees authority as "a *key* [my emphasis] point of intersection among competing versions of voice" (xi), viewable from different angles, regardless of whether advocates of a particular version of voice value singular voice, a "one-to-one correspondence between an individual and his or her voice" (xi) or plural voice, "a fluid composite of cultural voices and individual selves within the writer" (xi). One of the angles from which authority may be understood -- regardless of singular-self or plural-self sources -- is resonant authority between reader and writer,

the "good fit between the words and my self [rather than] a good fit between the words and the writer's self (Elbow, 1981 in Yancey, xiii). Another angle is the dialogic resonance of words. In Bakhtinian terms, words are "inhabited' by other voices" (xiii) which appropriate words, which in turn must be reappropriated by the writer, which leads to a view of authority in writing as "knowing that" words must be appropriated and "knowing how" to do it (xiv). Other characterizations of appropriation focus on the influences of writers who have gone before and whose "voices" continue to appropriate language and on the power of culturally-specific appropriating forces, such as patriarchy. Yancey notes that characterizations of voice in non-Western cultures differ from Western ideas about voice in their emphasis on communality over individuality but intersect with Western notions on the matter of voice as authority. She quotes Andrew Wiget on Native American writers, asserting that his observations seem true of all non-Western approaches to voice:

to be is to be heard, to speak into the silence of ignorance or oblivion, or to anticipate, even interrupt the utterance of falsehood with a statement of personal truth that substitutes an act of self-naming for an act of other-labeling (in Yancey, xviii).

Rejecting arguments that voice does not exist, Yancey's attention throughout her introduction, subtitled "Definition, Intersection, and Difference," is on "how -- how . . . [voice] is developed and . . . how it is recreated" (xviii). To this end, she lists the various formulations of voice she has identified. Because her list leads to an assertion which also happens to be equivalent to a central premise of this Dissertation -- but made independently of her work -- I will reproduce the list here and then the premise to which it leads: there is voice

as infusing the process of writing;

as a reference for truth, for self;

as a reference for human presence in text;

as a reference for multiple, often conflicting selves;

as a source of resonance, for the writer, for the reader;

as a way of explaining the interaction of writer, reader, and text;

as the appropriations of others: writers, texts;

as the approximations of others;

as a synecdoche for discourse;

as points of critique;

as myth (xviii).

Collected and arranged this way -- from self to writer to reader to discourse to the interrelationships of self and language (Yancey's terms, xviii) -- Yancey concludes that "[v]oice is thus paradigmatic of composition studies itself, of its recent history and its current concerns" (xviii). Going beyond, but including, composition, this Dissertation holds that voice registers key interior structures of English Studies and the dynamics that produced them.

That two studies completed within three years of each other should independently reach similar conclusions about the relationship between voice and the discipline that studies and uses it at least suggests that we who value the term are beginning to look around and beyond it to (rhetorical) contexts for ways to understand it. This Dissertation, however, looks beyond discipline to a kind of super-rhetorical, intertextual context, as explained below.

Discussion

One major difference between Elbow's, Yancey's and my analyses of voice's current state is that both Elbow and Yancey predicate more orderly voice-worlds than do I. Elbow describes a five-part characterization of voice, of which only voice-as-resonance any longer seems problematic. Yancey describes voice as mirroring the three-part communication

triangle as occupying a common ground consisting of two "significant points of agreement. They are that (1) voice is a "means of expression, creation, and communication that lives according to the interaction of several variables" (xix), including writer, reader, and the language, knowledge, and culture of each and (2) that "[a]s a metaphor, voice also suggests an ability to define oneself and to locate oneself relative to other discourses, to write ourselves by appropriating and writing others" (xix). Other aspects of voice not yet gathered onto this common ground, such as the idea that voice is a fiction and that it is "choral" (xix) are gathered with the others into the culminating proposition that [p]erhaps . . . voice isn't so much authentic or nonfictional, but faithful -- to the current voices composing the writer" (xix).

Ironically, turning in this direction illustrates clearly the problems we face when we study voice, as we watch an effort to mediate differences end up, *as it must*, foregrounding certain apparently unreconcilable differences, the first of which is that voice, as the faithful (recursive) feature of itself, as a subject-force that "composes" its object-writer, cannot also be under normal circumstances the "reference" for foundational subject-self, -truth, and -human presence. One way out of such voice-conundra is to consider voice as either

paradigmatic of dialectic or as dialectic in its processes. Following this line of thinking, the intersection and attempted partial reconciliation of voice-theories at the coordinate of "current voices composing the writer" (including the "voices" of voice-theories) by rewriting author-subject into author-object foregrounds fundamental dialectical oppositors -- author-as-subject and author-as-object, a problem that such models of voice as "paradigmatic of the communication triangle" or as "paradigmatic of composition studies" either obscures or ignores.

It is this Dissertation's contention that one possible intersection of subject-object voice-oppositors may be found entirely outside the usual voice-formulations. Voice-as-infusing, voice-as-reference, voice-as approximations, voice-as synecdoche, and voice-as-myth (to quote from Yancey's characterizations) may find dialectical resolution in Ong's formulation of voice as desire (expressing the need) that abstract text convey a concrete human presence. Chapter Five argues for, and considers the implications of, such a way of thinking about voice in English Studies.

NOTES
Chapter Two

1 The first six of the preceding eight items rely on content gathered by Jeanne Jacoby Smith in her 1991 Dissertation The Origins of the Individual Voice in Writing From 1890 - 1990, Chapters II, III, IV, and V.

2 While Smith's assessment of the links between creative writing and later ideas about voice may be correct in a very broad way, Chapter Three of this Dissertation will show that in theory and practice creative writing shows very little interest in the ontology of voice, preferring to think of and use the term as a settled concept generally denoting identity. From the early days at Iowa in the late 1930's to the present, Creative Writing's interests and efforts were directed toward other matters and did not generally include debates about the definition and significance of terms. Such projects were (and for the most part still are) left to Literature Studies and Rhetoric and Composition.

3 Regarding the term *voice-theories*, while voice as presently used in English Studies remains untheorized in any systematic way, cultural linguists have advanced theories of voice derived from studies of preliterate and literate cultures. It was through these theories that some of English Studies' voice-ideas evolved.

CHAPTER THREE

VOICE IN CREATIVE WRITING:

BACKGROUND, PATTERNS, AND ISSUES

3.1. Aspects of Creative Writing and Voice

Unlike any comparable term, voice has served the previously unmet need to "voice" in a single term an array of otherwise "unvoiced" or "unvoiceable" features of key concepts in English Studies. Chapter Two illustrated one side of this phenomenon by likening voice to a free radical attaching itself to the cells of English Studies -- to self, identity, situatedness, grammar, style, persona, tone, subjectivity, and energeia -- and in the process changing itself and them.

We also know from Chapter Two that the cells to which voice, the free radical, attaches itself need not be specific to English Studies. Voice has been linked paradoxically to the conceptual world of evangelism wherein some academic compositionists find themselves not only proselytizing certain hospitable tenets of evangelic Protestantism now adapted to Composition (changed by voice) but using and advocating (cohered by voice) inhospitable religious evangelism's "anti-intellectual "motivational techniques" to further academic composition's intellectual ends (changed by voice).

In Creative Writing, however, voice sounds out a certain harmony and serenity that seems especially pronounced when compared with Composition and Literature Studies' contemporary dissonances. A few agitated voices speak from within the margins of Creative Writing, but so far their cries seem not to have mobilized anything resembling the forces that animated the paradigm shift we have recently witnessed in Composition. At present, Creative Writing seems most characterized by a kind of centeredness, a secure sense of self and mission, and this plays out reciprocally in the ways it deals with the idea that written text has voice.

We saw in Chapters One and Two that a close look at the diction found in ERIC database abstracts on voice reveals certain ways of thinking about voice. In the next section we will turn again to the ERIC database to inquire into the following matters regarding Creative Writing and voice:

- (1) What portrait of voice in Creative Writing is sketched by collected abstracts of meta-writings?**
- (2) What might we also learn about voice in Creative Writing by comparing data on Creative Writing gathered from ERIC with comparable data on Composition?**
- (3) To what extent is Creative Writing's approach to voice linked to**

the dynamics of Creative Writing itself?

Answers to these questions, having provided us with overview and context, will lead to us to a close examination of certain key documents on voice in Creative Writing so that we may, to reiterate earlier statements of purpose, reflect on where we are with voice, how we got there, where we are going, and what it might mean for Creative Writing and for English Studies.

3.2. Creative Writing and Voice as Displayed in a Disciplinary Database

3.2.1. Results of a Database Search: Part I

A December, 1995 search of the ERIC database using the Keyword *Creative Writing* raised 3,163 entries. For comparison, a December, 1995 search using the Keyword *Expository Writing* raised 1,238 documents, a 2.5:1 *Creative Writing-Expository Writing* ratio.

The addition of the Subject Heading *Higher Education* to the Keyword *Creative Writing* narrowed the initial search results to 465 entries or 15% of the 3,163 *Creative Writing* total. For a comparison, the addition of the Subject Heading *Higher Education* to the Keyword *Expository Writing* narrowed the initial 1,238 *Expository Writing* documents to 486. This gives a nearly exact match in raw numbers with the *Creative Writing-Higher Education* entries although proportionately, the *Creative*

writing-Higher Education entries amount to 14% of the total *Creative Writing* entries while the *Expository Writing-Higher Education* entries amount to 39% percent of the *Expository Writing* total. [See Figure 3.1.]

This data illustrate a matter worth noting: for many people, English practitioners and laypersons alike, Creative Writing seems commonsensically more accessible, friendlier, and more *natural* than expository writing. Spoken language and chronology (story-telling) seem innate to human abilities and purposes, genetic imperatives as powerful as walking and also as natural and necessary while writing and logic (argumentation) are apprehended as cultural artifacts -- unnatural, difficult to learn, and requiring a significant level of revision and erasure of some features of (natural) speech and chronological thinking.

The ideas sketched above, sensed or reasoned, accurate or inaccurate, motivate *in part* the paradoxical results we see displayed in the ERIC data cited above. They account partly for the strong professional interest in Creative Writing below the university level and also for the clustering at the university level of a professional interest in expository writing, which is often considered more difficult, advanced, arcane, and therefore more academic than creative writing. But they do not account for a difference of just twenty-one documents between the

number located by *Creative Writing-Higher Education* and that located by *Expository Writing-Higher Education*, which suggests an essentially even interest in the two kinds of writing at the university level.

When we place the numbers cited above into the context of an obvious reality of academic life -- that the business of the academy is conducted mainly through expository, not creative writing -- they suggest further that Creative Writing exerts a remarkably robust presence in the in the minds of English Studies practitioners, in the academic professional literature of English Studies, and thus in the life of English Studies. We will see this phenomenon again in data on writing courses offered at the University of Washington. The nature and dynamics of Creative Writing's presence in higher education, apart from any significance it may have for our study of voice and English Studies, takes us beyond the scope of this Dissertation, but it is an interesting matter that would bear looking into.

3.2.2. Results of a Database Search: Part II

The Subject Heading *Creative Writing* added to the Keyword *Voice* raised 73 documents during a May, 1997 search of ERIC. Their publication dates span the years 1969 to 1996 with an upward trend beginning in 1988 after several uneven years stretching back to 1969. [See Figure 3.2.]

These numbers reflect the same general trend we saw in the ERIC database numbers cited in Chapter One showing, as most English Studies practitioners know, that an interest in voice has surged over the past few decades. However, it is also important to remember that with Creative Writing we are looking at just 73 documents, compared with 204 documents located by the Descriptors *Voice-Rhetoric*, and at a high of just seven documents, compared with *Voice-Rhetoric's* high of 25. What we see in this database self-portrait, therefore, is Creative Writing's general lack of interest in voice as a technical term needing sustained, analytical attention, a phenomenon observable in other sources of information about Creative Writing, such as the content of its academic literature and the testimonies of its practitioners.

3.2.3. Results of a Database Search: Part III

The document-content portrait of voice in Creative Writing in higher education is sketched from three angles by the abstracts of documents raised by from ERIC by the Descriptors *Voice-Creative Writing*. Seen from the first angle, voice is a thing linked to a self. In one expression of the self-voice link, Abraham Maslow's theories are cited: "Maslow's concept of self is a unified entity central to the person's being, and its writing pedagogy emphasizes listening to the inner voice [my emphasis]

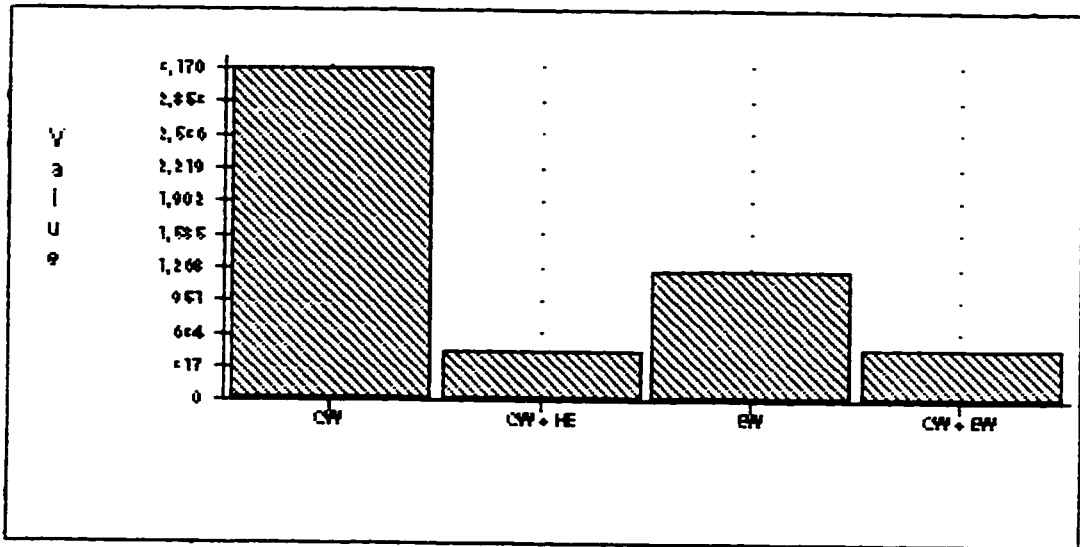


Figure 3.1: Results of an ERIC search using the descriptors *Creative Writing*, *Expository Writing*, *Creative Writing-Higher Education*, and *Expository Writing-Higher Education*.

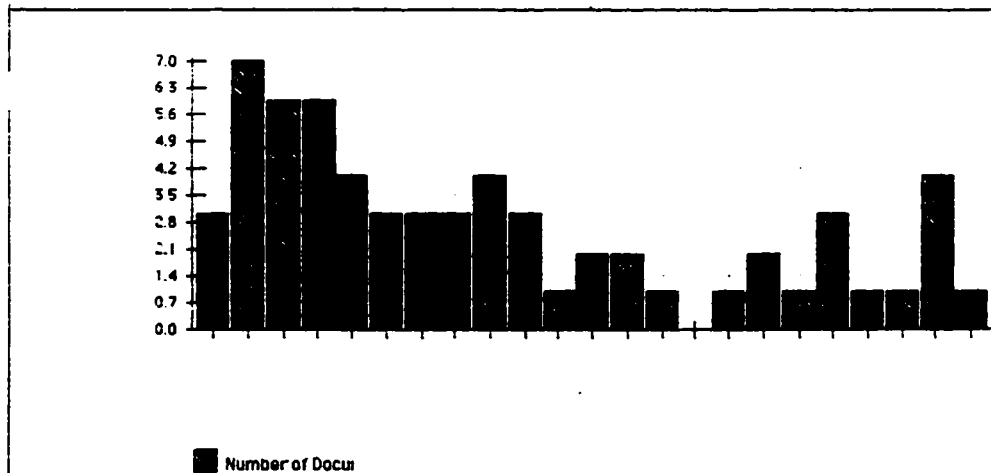


Figure 3.2: Results of an ERIC search using the descriptors *Voice-Creative Writing*.

this self projects" (ARH for ED292127). In other expressions of the voice-self link, voice is understood as something that is one's own but that often must be found, discovered, or apprehended and that is typically conflicted in some conflicted way [my emphases throughout]: "As she **struggled to find her own voice . . ." (SAM for ED358471); **Finding Your Own Voice** (title of a book by Donald Murray); ". . . the beginning writer is likely to **doubt her own voice . . .**" (TB for ED374423); "[the artistic process] is above all an internal journey that each student must make to **discover his or her own distinctive voice**" (HTH for ED270760); and ". . . writing from and about the **self** enables student writers to begin to **distinguish their voices** from those of other members of interpretive communities" (ARH for ED294178).**

Seen from the second angle, as subjective and complementary, voice may be **"empower[ed]"** and **"give[n]"** (TB for ED376510). Viewed from the third angle, voice may have characteristics or certain identities: for example, there is the **"the personal voice that is used for speaking with others on topics of mutual interest"** (DF for ED173851); there is **"the voice of reason that doubts and questions . . ."** (PRA in ED332189); there is a **"personal literary voice"** (AEA for ED178941); there is a **"less artificial and more independent voice"** (RL for ED193669); there is

the **"poetic voice"** (TS for ED108262); there is a **"writer's voice"** (Perrin/WR for ED085700); and there are **"varied and complex explorations written in a strong voice"** (RS for ED358846).

Discussion

Early in this chapter we posed three questions: What portrait of voice in Creative Writing is sketched by collected abstracts of meta-writings? What might we also learn about voice in Creative Writing by comparing data on Creative Writing gathered from ERIC with comparable data on Composition? To what extent is Creative Writing's approach to voice linked to the dynamics of Creative Writing itself?

In answer to the first two questions, it helps to note the following: The *Voice-Rhetoric* collections of documents discussed in Chapters One and Two contain over 26 different characterizations of voice ranging from **adult to Gothic to competing to polyphonic**. A *Voice-Creative Writing* collection of articles contains a total of sixteen different characterizations -- **feminine, authentic, self-conscious, of authority, personal, rightful, major, one's own, masculine, in power, visible, speaking, collective, writer's, individual, and warm and compelling**. An argument could be made that in this case numbers are significant -- there is a ratio of Rhetoric and Composition to

Creative Writing documents of 2.6:1 but a ratio of Creative Writing characterizations of voice to Rhetoric's of roughly 1.6:1. On the basis of the numbers alone, one might hypothesize for Creative Writing some stronger interest in characterizing voice than for Rhetoric and Composition. However, the choice of diction by which the characterizations are made precludes such an easy conclusion. Creative Writing practitioners may characterize voice more often, comparatively, than do Rhetoric and Composition practitioners, but it is the nature -- not the number -- of their characterizations that is significant for our purposes.

Creative Writing organizes its voice-characterizations into just three categories -- identity, self, and empowerment -- which can be further reduced to just the latter two. In dramatic contrast, Composition, it would seem, has given itself permission to play on and with voice, and in doing so has also given itself play, as in room to move - - as much room as it allows itself when characterizing human characteristics and qualities under any textual and disciplinary circumstances. Composition-voice, composing itself via its collected database, thus becomes a detailed human composite: it has gender (female); ages (children's, adult); occupations (storyteller's,

teacher's, advertising); characteristics (institutional, authoritative, committed, authorial, strong). It is social (public, group) and private; it is historical (Gothic); it is multiple (dialectical, polyphonic); it is in tension (conflicted, competing); it is necessary. [Bold-faced type indicates diction selected from ERIC abstracts. See Chapter One for an explanation of this citation method and for a rationale.] There are no ready answers for such differences between Creative Writing's and Composition's approaches to voice, but surely a part of an explanation has to do with each sub-discipline's self-concept and, by extension, the venues in which each expresses itself effectively. The site of Creative Writing's "creativity" is stories, novels, and poetry; the site of Composition's creativity is the ideas by which it composes itself, resulting with voice in a virtual absence of limits on, or boundaries around, how it may be characterized.

The answer to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter -- What portrait of voice in Creative Writing is sketched by collected abstracts of meta-writings? -- is that there is nothing in the face of voice presented by abstracts of Creative Writing's professional literature to suggest that voice for Creative Writing practitioners is anything other than an ordinary, useful term denoting and connoting

familiar realities unremarkably described. Nowhere do the voice-creative writing-higher education abstracts indicate that the term voice itself is at all problematic. (Problems with voice may be discussed in particular documents, but if they are not abstracted, we may assume they do not constitute a writer's main concerns.) A view through this (abstracted) window suggests as much tacit agreement about the meaning of voice as about the meaning of metaphor or tone.

Despite Rhetoric and Composition's disorderly and profuse characterizations of voice (if it can be Gothic, then it can also be Medieval, Enlightened, Classical, Germanic, Francophonic, Sudanese, et cetera), voice the sleeper did awake during a great, golden age of theory in English Studies. Unsatisfactory as some theorizing about voice may have been and may still be, voice in Composition usually derives from some systematic set of ideas (or attempt at such -- Peter Elbow's early efforts come to mind) aimed at establishing first principles. That Creative Writing has shied away from theorizing about voice says less about voice than it does about Creative Writing, which is why we must next take a closer look at Creative Writing in English Studies apart for a moment from voice. Of special interest will be these two matters:

1. What is Creative Writing's present position in English Studies

relative to Literature Studies and Rhetoric and Composition, as Creative Writing practitioners understand and describe it?

2. What may be learned by posing Question 1?

3.3. Creative Writing's Presence in English Studies

3.3.1. Creative Writing's Robust Presence in English Studies: A Non-Theoretical Point of View

My choice of the word "robust" above to describe Creative Writing's presence in English Studies was made after I had gathered the data I will outline below but before I read Hans Ostrom's article "Introduction: Of Radishes and Shadows, Theory and Pedagogy" in which he describes creative writing as "this oft-maligned, strangely defined, but ironically robust subject . . ." (xxi). That we would both independently choose "robust" to describe Creative Writing comes as no surprise. Much of the data on Creative Writing's courses, graduates, professional literature, and general appeal to people of all ages and circumstances conveys an unambiguous impression of health, strength, and vigor. It is true that the content of some of the professional literature suggests a fair amount of discontent on the part of Creative Writing practitioners, but this is not evident in data seen from the points of view outlined below.

R. M. Berry opens his article "Theory, Creative Writing, and the

Impertinence of History" this way:

One could persuasively argue that in America the most influential theory of literature since World War II has been Creative Writing. John Barth has estimated that by 1984 Creative Writing programs had turned out over 75,000 literary practitioners (Churchman 42), and Liam Rector, former director of Associated Writing Programs, estimated in 1990 that around 3,000 poets and fiction writers were graduating from Creative Writing programs each year . . .(For comparison, doctoral programs in English average around 800 graduates yearly (Huber 121 - 21) . . . Although doctoral programs are the principal locus for the formal study of literary theory, the institutional home of Creative Writing is in the far more numerous colleges and universities not awarding English Ph. D's . . . At present, four fifths of all American undergraduate English programs offer courses in Creative Writing, almost half offer specializations in Creative Writing, and nearly two thirds of all Creative Writing programs are located in English departments where no doctoral programs are available (Huber, 139, 141, 173) . . . (57).

With such numbers, Berry argues, we can hardly avoid concluding that it is Creative Writing -- not Literature Studies -- that "exert[s] a more direct influence than any other part of the American academy on the nonacademic production, distribution, and consumption of literature (57). Berry's article also advances the premise that "[d]espite a generation of critical theories insisting on the historical situatedness of all literary practice, literary criticism still treats the institution for forming American writers as a world apart" (58). This may be true, but if allocation of resources is any indication of treatment, at least one major research university treats Creative Writing as a legitimate world, apart or not from the world of critical theory.

As of April, 1997, the Keyword *Writing* locates 203 courses in the University of Washington's Spring Quarter online course catalogue. Twenty-six are offered through the English Department, and of these, 11 appear to be mainly creative writing courses, judging by course title, course description, or both. The 11 creative writing courses represent 42% percent of the total number of English Department writing courses, this in a department and a university where the lingua franca is expository writing.

The data outlined above was gathered as a kind of check on the

information gathered from ERIC indicating creative writing's vigorous presence in higher education relative to expository writing's. It confirms the ERIC data to this extent: if a discipline's professional literature sketches a portrait of that discipline, then we would expect a reasonably similar image to be reflected in related data, which in my view is what we find in our the information gathered from the University of Washington's online course catalogue. Taken together -- our data, ERIC's and R.M. Berry's -- there is no denying that a strong case is being made for robust support of a robust enterprise, Creative Writing.

3.3.2. Creative Writing's Problematic Presence in English Studies: A Theoretical Point of View

We have seen that R. M. Berry begins an article entitled "Theory, Creative Writing, and the Impertinence of History" with the statement that "[o]ne could persuasively argue that the most influential theory of literature since World War II has been Creative Writing" (57). He later explains that the idea that Creative Writing is a theory of literature "might seem less peculiar" (58) when it is understood in context which is "the literary apprenticeship it [Creative Writing] replaced (57). That apprenticeship "was "[p]rior to the nineteenth century the most widespread European model [and] tended to de-emphasize individual

creativity and to foreground the deliberate imitation of other poets (58). This European-style apprenticeship dating to Classical times had these characteristics: (1) the aspiring poet worked under the direction of a master; (2) the pedagogy of the apprenticeship emphasized imitation of, and detailed familiarity with, the works of canonical greats; (3) and in its Greek and Roman forms, the "apprentice gleaned from models . . . not technique only, but plots, themes, scenes, vocabulary, and even the topics of characters' speeches, as though becoming a poet involved both learning a skill and acquiring a repertory of stories of lore" (58).

Berry compares the classical apprenticeship through imitation with modern jazz or blues improvisation, arguing that both -- imitation and improvisation -- are endeavors in which "praiseworthy performance depends less on creativity and experience than on the bard's [or performer's] interpretation of what he has heard others say" (59). He observes that this model of creativity -- which we moderns generally regard as inimical to creativity -- demonstrates, along with other evidence, that the ancients did not consider creativity and imitation to be significantly opposed. What they did note and were interested in was "the sharp difference between a master's transformation of a model and a novice's copying of one" (59).

One of Berry's corollaries leading eventually to the conclusion of his demonstration that Creative Writing is a theory of literature (and to identifying the features of that theory) is that Creative Writing has rejected the "impertinent" historical past. It is a past in which this idea had powerful purchase: "Given all else in sufficient measure . . . imitation can make any voice, style, and subject the writer's own" (60); [Berry's matter-of-fact use of the term *voice* and his distinguishing it from *style* and *subject* will be of interest to us later.] It is a past that also leads into the modern present not by way of Creative Writing but by way of the literary theories of M. M. Bakhtin. We will consider Bakhtin's ideas in detail later in this Dissertation, but for our present purposes it will be sufficient to note that the connection Berry makes between Bakhtin and the European model of apprenticeship-through-imitation has to do with what imitation signifies for Bakhtin. It is that

. . . imitation is the inescapable condition of speaking because language is no abstract form or tool to be picked up and laid back down . . . it usually involves getting embroiled in a fight - - someone else's over questions one only partially understands, a squabble which predisposes speakers -- perhaps through no fault of their own -- to certain blindnesses or brutalities or

places upon them burdens they never undertook . . .

Consequently, the earlier distinction between mastery and doing things correctly . . . becomes within the horizon of Bakhtin's poetics, the difference between merely repeating another's words and actually becoming answerable for them . . . (61)

These are the implications, in modern terms, of a part of the "impertinent" history against which Creative Writing has, in Berry's view, positioned itself.

Why Creative Writing rejected the imitative model and aligned itself with the modern "creative" model leads to the premises behind the theory of literature that Creative Writing is. By Berry's account, they are that there are "two grounds of literary practice: 1) the writer's imagination and 2) experience" (62) which leads to the "writer's language [amounting to a kind of] unoccupied territory" (72) empty of historical, dialogic, or social forces, including voice in the Bakhtinian sense. These premises have the general effect of turning Creative Writing away from the significant, problematic (but in a dialectical sense, promising) past and the specific effect of aligning it against criticism, its Other.

Berry explains that early in its past, Creative Writing positioned

itself very differently in regards to criticism, language, history, and its own theoretical authorizations, claiming a third ground in addition to imagination and experience:

Creative writing established itself in the academy during the 1930's by claiming . . . universal grounds for its practice, e.g., artistic form, the constants of taste, the principles of good writing, poetic technique, humanist values, etc. -- but the erosion of such claims after World War II has transformed them (63).

They were transformed into "authorizations" (63) for writer's imagination, experience, and also for what Berry calls the "literary marketplace" (63). De-theorized (the old New Humanistic universalism largely discarded) and re-theorized (pragmatically and mainly along expressivist lines when the need arose), writer's imagination and experience have become an *a priori* justification for Creative Writing's institutional arrangements, pedagogy, and for resistance to critical theory, with which it used to be aligned. This has happened, Berry explains, at some considerable risk:

[F]or poets, both in the Renaissance and today -- whose relation to tradition is what modernity has rendered

problematic, making one's writing answerable to and for some past may be precisely what's needed for that writing to count. This task can seem overwhelming, for it demands nothing less than the full acknowledgment of the nightmare that history threatens to become. To the extent that Creative Writing protects present poets from this nightmare, it obscures obstacles to practice and lulls poetry into continued sleeping. A political task of literary study today, of its theory and practice, its creation and criticism, its teaching and writing, is to wake up (73).

So to return to the first of the three questions we posed in 3.1, "What is Creative Writing's present position in English Studies relative to Literature Studies and Rhetoric and Composition, as Creative Writing practitioners understand and describe it?", we might say that for those writers of articles collected in a book called Colors of a Different Horse: Rethinking Creative Writing Theory and Pedagogy, Creative Writing relative to literary theory or Literature Studies is unnecessarily and dangerously alienated. Bishop's co-editor Hans Ostrom observes that creative writing instructors disproportionately avoid theory because they think of themselves "as writers first and teachers second" (xii); because

they rely on "validation through performance ('I write poetry successfully') and testimony ('Here's how I wrote the stories I've had published'); and because of a self-perception as "aggrieved" (xvi) individuals in a dicey and contradictory "publishing world" (xvi) that tells them to "[w]rite something original, but make sure it's marketable" (xiv). In Francois Camoin's view, metaphysical differences separate literary theorists and creative writers, with theorists favoring reason and creative writers "the uncanny" (5). Gayle Elliott observes that like Composition, Creative Writing's secondary status relative to Literature Studies is evidenced by unreciprocal Ph.D. program admissions standards. Creative Writing candidates, she says, must prove their analytical abilities but no proof of creativity is required of Literature Studies candidates.

Finally, Jay Parini's views on these matters need to be considered, as his article "Literary Theory and the Writer" helps both to illuminate creative writing-literary theory oppositions and to suggest the grounds on which they might be resolved. He points out that on some campuses the hostility between creative writers and literary theorists amounts to "open warfare" (127), which he traces to the rise of professional critics who were not themselves poets, citing F. R. Leavis and Cleanth Brooks as

examples, and to the professional New Critics' apolitical view of literature as decontextualized artifact. This eventually led, he explains, to a "loss of contact between theory and practice [which] has . . . been destructive for both sides" (128):

The relative ignorance of most poets and novelists with regard to theory has damaged the quality of their poems, stories, and novels. In the realm of fiction, for instance, even our best writers in American seem hopelessly convention-bound, repeating the empty formal experiments of yesteryear in France or naively reproducing realistic novels that neither challenge the assumptions of society at large nor push -- even tug slightly at -- the limits of discursivity (128).

While reasonable people might disagree about whether "challenging the assumptions of society at large" and "push[ing] the limits of discursivity" should be the main standards by which novels are judged, Parini's larger points merit attention. They are, first, that the day of the writer-critic who "defined the terms in which their works might be understood and judged" (127) is past (He cites Ben Jonson, John Dryden, Samuel Johnson, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold, and T.S. Eliot as examples of such); second, that the days of close association between

critics and writers are past (He cites the "Bohemian culture of the twenties . . . when clusters of poets, novelists, critics, and thinkers of all stripes gathered in the street cafes of Paris, Greenwich Village, Prague, Berlin, Frankfurt, and Vienna) (129); third, that modern critics' contentious, abstruse, and separatist attitudes and methods have shut them out of writerly worlds, citing the tendency of writers to rely on other writers (rather than on critics) for reviews of their works (129); and fourth, that these oppositions may find resolution in a kind of "general discourse theory [that] cuts across disciplines and [that] has much in common with classical rhetoric" (130):

It is, I think, at this junction -- rhetoric -- where literary theory and creative writing should and can meet. Why did people study rhetoric in the first place? They worked for a particular kind of knowledge: knowledge of the most productive ways of 'making' language, of creating meaning and eliciting responses within the bounds of predictability.

Likewise, critics today labor in the vineyard of theory to find out what is there, to 'deconstruct' how it works or works against itself to complicate meaning, to see how meaning itself is produced, to gauge the effects (as well as the

affects) on the reader (130).

Parini is one of many writers/practitioners/theorists who argue that in Rhetoric, Composition or both we may find English Studies' junctures. What follows is a sampling of the arguments other creative writing practitioners offered in support of the emerging theory that Creative Writing already has a "theory", but one specific to writing in general and not to any kind of writing in particular.

3.3.3. Creative Writing and Rhetoric and Composition

The academic literature of Creative Writing portrays Creative Writing's position in English Studies relative to Rhetoric and Composition far more optimistically than its position relative to Literature Studies and literary theory. Practitioners who write about the links between Creative Writing and Rhetoric and Composition commonly argue these points: that the workshop, the standard expression and application of Creative Writing theory and pedagogy, has atrophied; that its demise resembles the demise of Composition's current-traditional paradigm, with the caveat that unlike Composition, Creative Writing has not produced a new paradigm to replace the old; that perhaps the new paradigm that Creative Writing needs may be constructed from/cued by the work of Compositionists; and that a blending of the writerly worlds of

Composition and Creative Writing may augur possibilities for these sister-disciplines.

The most prominent critic of the current-traditional Creative Writing paradigm is Wendy Bishop whose thirty-seven publications catalogued in ERIC, all published between 1986 and 1995, make her the most prolific (and likely one of the most influential) critics of the Creative Writing current-traditional paradigm now working in the field. As she has led the critique of Creative Writing's pedagogies and practices, we will rely upon her views (supplemented by the views of others) to orient us to the main lines of thought regarding what some Creative Writing practitioners think should be changed and how it should be done.

Two of Bishop's major premises are that the "[w]e need to be crossing the line between composition and creative writing far more often than we do . . . [and that] we may want to eliminate the line entirely" (181). Her argument goes as follows: The old-style creative writing workshop in which students critique their work in the presence of a Master Writer who generally says and does little must be understood for what it is -- a way of thinking about writing, writers, and language -- and must be rejected on that basis because it describes and constructs a

writerly world everywhere hierarchical in its broad structures, fine details, price of admission, and terms of residence. In Wendy Bishop's experience this hierarchical model played out negatively as graduate workshops presided over by a remote, unresponsive Master Poet disdainful of the creative writing classes he "had" to teach; as canonical standards that neither she nor any of her fellow workshop students would or could likely meet; as failure to become a "name" poet; and as doubt about how and when one could both teach and write.

But for Bishop the hierarchical model also played the positive role of defining and displaying the differences between how Creative Writing had been taught and how it could be taught. Pressed to teach both Composition and Creative Writing courses, she began to discard rigid ideas about genres and methods and to use whatever worked -- multiple drafts and conferencing in poetry workshops, workshop grading and portfolios in composition courses. Bishop turns to Robert Scholes for a succinct statement of the ideas that characterize the way she teaches writing:

[w]e must help them [students] to see that every poem, play, and story is a text related to others, both verbal pre-texts and social sub-texts, and all manner of post-texts including their own responses, whether in speech, writing, or action. The

response to a text is itself always a text (Scholes in Bishop, 287).

Bishop combines this now-classic feature of discourse theory with a pragmatic social constructivism/populism/neo-democratism. The result as she envisions it makes language and students' empowerment through language the center of writing instructors' concerns.

Overall, Bishop argues for the dialogic, inter-textual, and *inter-dependent* nature of all languaged enterprises, which for Creative Writing and English Studies plays out, in part, as 'the poetics of possibility' (Johnson in Ostrom, xiii). As Hans Ostrom puts it, ... connecting with a broader 'family of thought' in English Studies is like participating in a productive discussion, as in those best late-night conversations with friends, the ones that spark ideas and help us remember the extent to which our enterprise is mutual: the conversations that brought ... most of us into English Studies in the first place (xix).

Something like one of those late-night conversations is published in Colors of a Different Horse under the title of "Reflections on the Teaching of Creative Writing: A Correspondence." It is a series of letters exchanged between Eugene Garber and Jan Ramjerdi in which they discuss how and

why writing workshops have changed and explore the myriad related matters such a discussion raises. Their "conversation" offers a synchronic view of the relation between critical theory, discourse theory, Creative Writing, and the creative writing workshop. They demonstrate (although it is not their main intention to do so) that theory is indeed making its way into Creative Writing but through the back door by way of students who use theory to think about, respond to, and talk about writing. This, they contend, is changing the workshop, which is the theoretical and pedagogical soul of Creative Writing.

Garber and Ramjerdi do not agree on characterizations, interpretations, and implications of workshop changes but they do agree on two points. The first is that the effect of change has been transformational -- it's unlikely that workshops will ever again rely mainly a "gentle formalism" (Garber in Bishop, 9) with its emphasis on "judgments based essentially on intrinsic properties" (9) of "conventions and genres" (9) and its projection of a literary theory, thereby. The second is that the "new" workshops are shot through with the effects, if not always the actual content, of theory, resulting in a heightened but uneven interest in thematics, rhetoric, and ideological and reader-response criticisms, at least on the part of many students and some instructors.

3.4. Conclusion: Creative Writing and Voice

The common theme linking Bishop's, Ostrom's, Garber's, and Ramjerdi' assessments of the present state of Creative Writing relative to Critical Theory is their agreement on this one point: that cross-fertilization breeds vigor, and vigor is what the Creative Writing workshop most needs. Much of this Dissertation demonstrates that having given itself both room to play and permission to play, Rhetoric and Composition has explored, expanded, invigorated, re-seen, and reinvented *voice*, a term that just thirty years ago denoted little more than the grammatical constructs called active and passive. In the carnivalistic atmosphere of post-modernism, the early voice-advocates seemed to be staging their own sideshow, as Chapter One has shown. Then a period of sober reflection helped to winnow the grotesque, foolish, and inane from the radical, experimental, speculative, and promising. To push the carnival metaphor just a bit further, voice began its modern career as Rhetoric and Composition's sideshow event, evolved into an avant-garde theater act, and then matured into a kind of progressive drama that now anticipates canonical status

Something like the category-crashing exuberance of carnival, leading to a "contentious enterprise" with "enormous consequences," may

need to happen to the Creative Writing workshop before there can be any significant change in the way Creative Writing practitioners view and use voice, assuming change is desirable (and whether it is remains undetermined). That workshops are changing -- and in different ways and at different rates and for different reasons -- is undeniable. Wendy Bishop's account of the persuasive force of a practitioner's experiences leading to a reflective cross-fertilization of ideas between her Composition classes and Creative Writing workshops connects with, but also differs markedly from, Eugene Garber's account of theory's "differential" invasion of the workshop, leading to "inchoate" and "contentious" situations. And Bishop's and Garber's quizzical probing of theory's influence on Creative Writing differs in turn from Francois Camoin's contention that

[i]t's become fashionable to say that, after all, there's no difference, really, between criticism and fiction or poetry . . . but no, it's not the same enterprise, and though it's possible to talk about it as if it were, it's probably not a good idea. Critical texts exist in the world in a manner different from poetry and fiction. A critical text presents itself as *about* something [Camoin's emphasis]. It inscribes itself as a

passion to communicate, an obsession to be understood. Poets and critics share a common language, but put it to different uses (7).

These reflections on Creative Writing and theory, excerpted as they are from a book intended to advance progressive thinking about the connections between Creative Writing, pedagogy, theory, and Literature Studies, emphasize that the contentious atmosphere within Creative Writing surrounding these topics fosters dis-connection more often than con-nection. "Open warfare" is how Jay Parini characterizes the hostility between creative writers and literary theorists on some campuses.

Nevertheless, some practitioners take a more optimistic view. Wendy Bishop points to Associated Writing Programs' recent interest in pedagogy; to a creative writing undergraduate instruction special interest group within the Conference on College Composition and Communication; to increased numbers of titles on Creative Writing from such houses and organizations as Boynton/Cook Heinemann, Poets and Teachers' Collaborative, and the National Council of Teachers of English (291); and to "discussions of new undergraduate and graduate course listings that explore and feature the intersection of creative writing, composition, theory, and pedagogy" (291). The kind of change Bishop envisions and is

working to advance is a "a deep revision of what it means to teach and learn creative writing, a reprioritization of products and processes, a curriculum that investigates itself, that denounces old premises, topples old myths, renames, and reaffirms" (291).

Somewhere at some time some combination of social, institutional, pedagogical, political, civic, and academic forces may lead to increased attention to theoretical and practical considerations regarding voice as Creative Writing understands it. But for now, voice in Creative Writing reflects and projects the face of Creative Writing seen from a distance, as in the portrait that database information sketches of a prosperous, robust enterprise, of English Studies' burgher, if that is not a too judgmental or burlesqued metaphor. And in keeping with with that ethos, voice is used quite matter-of-factly. The Creative Writer reflects upon the self but Creative Writing does not, as a rule, reflect *intensely* upon itself in the manner of Rhetoric and Composition or Literature Studies nor upon voice nor upon most of the other details of itself as an enterprise. As a result, to repeat an assertion made earlier in this chapter, voice remains for Creative Writing practitioners a familiar, useful, and sensible term connoting no more than certain realities fundamental to a writer's life, the first of which is that voice is an

obvious, commonsensical aspect of writing. In Creative Writing, what voice is matters far less than using it well.

CHAPTER FOUR

VOICE IN LITERATURE STUDIES:

BACKGROUND, PATTERNS, AND ISSUES

4.1. Voice and the Grooves of Genre

In A Rhetoric of Irony, Wayne Booth notes that sometimes the "grooves of genre are plainly laid out almost from the opening word" (103), as they are in the example he offers of an "epistolary-praise-through-pretended-blame" (101-103) sent in 1730 by Lord Bathurst to Jonathan Swift (Knox in Booth, 103). Other times the "grooves of genre" are worn over, crossed over, or only lightly incised. Whichever the case,

[w]e need only recognize that there seems to be no predictable limit to the number of possible genres (new ones are invented from time to time) and that at the same time a surprisingly large share of our literary experience falls into a small number of patterns (Booth, 100).

As this Dissertation has shown, it seems accurate to say, appropriating Booth's observation quoted above, that while there may be no predictable limits to the number of possible characterizations of voice, a surprisingly large share of those characterizations falls into a small number of categories. In Chapter One we saw that Composition's

large collection of sixty-plus voice-characterizations may be grouped into no more than twelve assertions: that

- Voice is, can, or must be found;
- There are multiple voices;
- There is a written voice and a personal voice;
- There are kinds of voices;
- Voice can be affected and can have an effect;
- Voice can act;
- Voice can be defined;
- Voice is a metaphor.

In Chapter Two we saw that Kathleen Blake Yancey, editor of a book on voice, reduces eleven voice-formulations to a three-part self-writer-discourse model and that Peter Elbow, eminent voice theorist, argues for a "family of five related meanings that people imply when they talk about voice in writing: audible voice, dramatic voice, recognizable voice or distinctive voice; voice with authority; and resonant voice or presence" ("What Do We Mean . . . ?", 6). In Chapter Three we saw that Creative Writing characterizes voice much less profusely and boldly than does Composition, essentially claiming by way of the face it puts forward on the ERIC database three triangulated master categories that commonly

accompany voice wherever it is found -- gender, self, and authorization or empowerment.

The topic of "grooves," "boundaries," and categories is embedded deep in English Studies and therefore in voice. As an example, my General Examination asked me to "outline major literary theories of voice," relate them to "the methods and practices of rhetoricians," and then to "differentiate" voice from such terms as "self," "tone," "style," and "point of view." The charge seems straightforward, but complications arise immediately: by 'rhetoricians' do we mean classical, current-traditional, or epistemic, since rhetoricians' "methods and practices" are determined largely by their epistemological stance? Is Wayne Booth, whom his publisher describes on the jacket blurb as writing with "a clear *rhetorical* intent" about matters "that have obsessed *criticism* since the Romantic period" [my italics] more a rhetorician than a literary theorist or vice versa or does it matter? To what degree might we agree that Gerard Genette's ideas about voice, drawing on linguistic (the study of *spoken* language) structuralism, might help us understand voice as a phenomenon of *written* language? Within 'literary' theories of voice do we include linguistic and philosophical approaches not necessarily literary but applicable and perhaps even essential to an understanding of voice?

Where do Compositionists, who have made the largest and most enthusiastic claims for voice, fit into these matters? And finally, suppose voice cannot or should not or must not be differentiated from self, tone, style, or point of view? Or suppose these choices so severely limit discussion of voice as to disable it?

It is no news to anyone that the way a question is asked has much to do with the results one gets, but with voice this truism about question-asking gets promoted into a first principle. I must emphasize that my purpose here is not to critique the question put forward by my General Examination Committee -- it is a perfectly legitimate question about voice and its relation to literary theory, rhetoric, and to a critical vocabulary common to both. But it also brings into play issues that crop up as a matter of course in post-modern era English Studies and of which we must be mindful because while boundary crashing, skirting, crossing, widening, and blurring has become one of English Studies' most important progressive strategies, it can also be a source of some consternation, as Hazard Adams explains in his introduction to Critical Theory Since 1965. He points out that the term "critical theory" contains the "hidden, implied" presence of the term "literary" which he considers "problematical" but which he will allow to remain nevertheless because

boundaries must be set, "rough as they may be" (1). As Professor Dillon reminds me, setting boundaries, however provisional and uncertainly grounded they may be, is a move essential to scholarship in the humanities.

Similarly, the questions I am asking and attempting to answer throughout this Dissertation incise "problematical," "rough" grooves or boundaries that paradoxically may need ignoring, revising, or crossing because one of the main points I argue is that voice itself is a relatively unbounded phenomenon set within "rough," "problematic," boundaries that need crossing when necessary. This is not to say we cannot differentiate voice from other textual phenomena nor that we cannot identify related (and differing) approaches to voice. It is to say that to understand voice we must study the tapestry more than the shuttle. Taking that approach, this Chapter will examine the threads that Literature Studies weaves into the voice-tapestry, demonstrate how these woven threads both define and blur the boundaries of voice in Literature Studies, and consider the implications of what we find for Literature Studies specifically and for English Studies generally.

Following this Dissertation's established methods, these questions will be addressed:

(1) What portrait of voice in Literature Studies is sketched by collected abstracts of meta-writings found in ERIC and Modern Language Association (MLA) databases?

(2) What might we learn about voice in Literature Studies by comparing database information on Literature Studies with comparable information on Composition?

(3) What portrait of voice is sketched by key examples from Literature Studies' academic literature?

(4) To what extent is Literature Studies' approach to voice linked to the dynamics of Literature Studies itself?

4.2. Aspects of Voice in Literature Studies as Displayed in the ERIC Database

An October, 1996 search of the ERIC database using *Voice* as a Keyword and *Literature* as a Subject Heading yielded 232 documents. An analysis of their distribution by total number of articles published per year, 1995 - 1954 [See Figure 4.1], shows a pattern very similar to patterns found in Rhetoric and Composition and Creative Writing: a dramatic overall upward trend peaking in 1994, just two years before the Bakhtinian centenary. Voice-Literature documents form four clusters by years similar to Rhetoric and Composition's three-cluster pattern

illustrated in Figure 1.2: [Numbers in Figure 4.1 are rounded throughout.]

- 1995 to 1989, 127 documents or 54% of T, with an average of eighteen, and a high of twenty-four in 1994 and a low of twelve in 1990;
- 1988 - 1984, 41 documents or 18% of T, with an average of eight and a high of eleven in 1988 and 1984 and a low of three in 1985;
- 1983 - 1971, 53 documents or 23% of T, with an average of four and a high of seven documents in 1973 and a low of one document each in 1982, 1971, and 1970.

In addition, one document is listed for each of 1969 and 1954.

The content of ERIC *Voice-Literature* characterizations shows that Literature Studies tends to assert an array of premises about voice without necessarily making either them or voice the focus of the documents, as both the premises and voice-as-their-agent appear to be presumed in advance. This conclusion is based on two premises: the first is that if attention to voice-as-itself were a major feature of a document, the abstract would indicate such. The second is that even if the abstract ignores such a major feature, the primary phenomenon we address in studying database "portraits" of voice is not accuracy but rendering. For example, a book subtitled The Voice of the Ojibway is described as a "book on the history, philosophy, and teachings of the

Ojibway people" (MH for ED238826); an article called "The Added Dimension of Voice: Creating Interpersonal Involvement in the SLA Classroom" is abstracted as being "[a] discussion of the use of voice as an effective tool . . . " (MSE for ED289358); an abstract of Peter Elbow's "The Pleasures of Voices in the Literary Essay . . . " describes voice as a useful critical concept for studying texts" (MM for ED292128); a conference paper asserts that "the ability to infuse language with qualities of the human voice in the act of speaking is what distinguishes autobiography as a genre" (ARH for ED294178); another abstract of a conference paper asserts that "lyric voice" and "persona" are dual aspects of a single personality" (PRA for ED336761); another links "multiple narrative voices" with a "complex" point of view (RS for 359533); another describes a "unit" entitled "The Personal Voice" as one that "focuses on the many choices a writer must make in writing meaningfully about his own experience" (DL for ED15914); a book "[c]harts the evolution of the black voice in American literature into a self-sufficient, independent literary language" (GW for EJ171475). Voice is rendered in these abstracts as **history, philosophy, teachings, tool, concept, quality, aspect, point of view, choices, and literary language**. Seen this way, which is what the database user sees before retrieving the

documents, voice in Literature Studies, via the ERIC database, would seem as unbounded as it seems in Rhetoric and Composition's ERIC database portrait.

Moving beyond the examples cited above, clustered diction drawn from ERIC abstracts shows that Literature Studies' documents catalogued in ERIC link voice to **social, cultural, and ethnic mores; to values, writing stance, person-ideas, and experiences of diverse groups; to breaking down defenses, shifting perspective, and to quickened pace in a novel; to previously unknown or unrecognized Russian writers; to autobiographical testimonies, peer appreciation of dialect and language diversity, bond between audience and writer, and to writing identities.** When Literature Studies' technically-angled, nominal voice-characterizations -- **stance, testimonies, dialect, perspective, pace, identities** -- are compared with examples from Rhetoric and Composition's cornucopia of specific, adjectival characterizations -- **authorial, committed, strong, Gothic, polyphonic, silenced** -- and with Creative Writing's measured, generic characterizations -- **own, writer's, literary, poetic, personal, strong** -- we can see the degree to which each branch of English Studies characterizes voice in ways that reflect its own premises, identity,

interests, and project.

In Rhetoric and Composition, voice seems mainly synonymous with either of two premises about self: like self, voice is constructed, multiple, and malleable or like self, voice is foundational, concealed, but discoverable. Regardless of which premise a Compositionist prefers, voice, being self's apprehensible manifestation, is presumed to be as richly varied as any human self. Thus, whatever self can be, voice can be (female, complex, Gothic, institutional, lyric); whatever self can do, voice can do (oppress, shift, evolve); whatever can be done to self can be done to voice (delivered, silenced, created, heard, empowered). (As we have seen, Rhetoric and Composition advances other premises about what voice is -- presence, tone, authority -- but I am arguing that self, being Rhetoric and Compositions's dominant characterization of voice, is also the one that most typifies Rhetoric and Composition's approach to voice.)

In Creative Writing, whose practitioners tend to reflect upon experience *through* their writing but not necessarily *in* their writing (in the sense of theorizing about their art, the self, and the technicalities of both), voice settles into its natural and appropriate role as a useful, uncomplicated term connoting certain unremarkable realities about the written word tacitly understood and accepted by those who write

creatively.

Literature Studies emphasizes, through the way it uses voice, its interest in the analytical apprehension and exploration of literary aesthetic experience. This is strongly suggested in ERIC's portraits of voice-in-Literature Studies, but to see it most clearly we must turn to voice as portrayed in the Modern Language Association database.

4.3. Aspects of Voice in Literature Studies as Displayed in the Modern Language Association Database

On the Main Menu Database Information screen of the University of Washington Information Navigator (UWIN), The Modern Language Association describes its database, in copyrighted text, as "[t]he most important source of indexing information for the fields of literature, languages, linguistics, and folklore. It provides citations from over 4,000 journals and series, as well as books, essays, collections, proceedings, dissertations, bibliographies, etc." (The Modern Language Association of America, 1994). In contrast, the ERIC database is described on the University of Washington Information Navigator Main Menu Database Information screen as "index[ing] articles and reports in over 830 journals and documents in the field of education including educational psychology, library science, early childhood education, K-12 and higher education."

Such self-portraits are important to note because studying voice in Literature Studies requires that we work comparatively with two databases characterized by different epistemologies, premises, and purposes. As we will see, *Voice* and *Literature* may be used as descriptors entered into identical search grids on UWIN to locate documents in both MLA and ERIC databases, and apart from the total number of documents located, the results may seem quite similar in that they produce documents relating to literature and containing the word voice. However, a closer look at these documents' total numbers and their proportions, compared with similar data gathered for a second term, metaphor, will show that voice in Literature Studies has acquired an identity and position quite unlike those we have observed in Rhetoric and Composition and Creative Writing.

Voice-Literature in MLA

A November, 1996 search of the Modern Language Association (MLA) database using the Keyword *Voice* and the Subject Heading *Literature* raised 2,996 documents. (Normally, a search locating nearly three thousand documents would be considered poorly defined, but for our purposes such a large number offers the opportunity to observe certain dynamics of voice in Literature Studies that are less evident in smaller

collections of documents.) The MLA results contrast dramatically with the 232 documents raised by the same descriptors in ERIC, as described in 4.2 above, giving a ratio of MLA to ERIC documents raised by the "same" descriptors of 12.9:1. Thus proportionately, *Voice* and *Literature* are cited significantly more in Literature Studies than in Composition. For a reverse example, the Keyword *Voice* and the Subject Heading *Rhetoric* entered into the MLA database as of late November, 1996 raise 42 documents, compared with 161 raised by the same words in ERIC, giving an ERIC-MLA ratio of 3.8:1. [See Figure 4.2.] MLA is a database *for* Literature Studies, ERIC is a database *for* Education (with which Composition is closely allied), and therefore we likely see what we think we get: a reflection in the data of the interests and purposes of each database, plus something less evident but likely influential: descriptors overtly the "same" denoting important differences determined by their respective contexts. Such data also show us, at the least, that disproportionate numbers are not necessarily the sole result of larger data *bases* and that we must look beyond numbers to the reflexive dynamics of databases, disciplines, and terminology to understand something of what happens when each division of English Studies uses the same term to advance its own particular premises, purposes, and ideas.

Metaphor-Literature in MLA

Comparing the MLA voice-literature results with the results raised in MLA by the Keyword *Metaphor* and the Subject Heading *Literature* suggests something of what has happened to voice in Literature Studies. This Dissertation has argued so far that voice differs radically from other, apparently similar technical terms used in English Studies, such as metaphor, and that such differences tend to be expressed in disproportionate database numbers, among other ways. Working only in ERIC, a database for education, that would seem to be true. As we have seen, in ERIC, the Keyword *Metaphor* and the Subject Heading *Literature* raise 232 documents while the Keyword *Voice* and the Subject Heading *Rhetoric* raise 161 documents. This would seem to support the argument that metaphor, a traditional, relatively precisely-defined term exerts the stronger presence over the discipline for which it is a fundamental concept, compared with voice, regardless of the attention recently given it. However, a difference in the MLA database of just 95 documents between 3,091 *Metaphor-Literature* documents and 2,996 *Voice-Literature* documents calls the primacy-of-metaphor assumption into question. [See Figure 4.2.] We have observed earlier in this Dissertation that metaphor, for all its complexity, remains a relatively precisely

defined textual and interpretive phenomenon when compared with carnivalistic, plastic, malleable, and adaptive voice. Nevertheless, judging from numbers as a starting point, voice seems to be at present as commonly used in Literature Studies as metaphor; how and why are the next matters to be considered.

Discussion of MLA Data

As noted above, the MLA database lists a total of 2,996 entries (or extant documents) located by the Keyword-Subject Heading *Voice-Literature*. However, only 1,123 of those documents were retrievable from MLA as of December, 1996, making it impossible to trace and discuss these numbers beyond the first third of T. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to hypothesize, based on patterns in Composition, Creative Writing, and on the 1,123 retrievable MLA citations, that the bulk of the remaining *Voice-Literature* documents were published after the mid-1980's, which is when interest in voice gained significant momentum. It certainly is the case with the retrievable 1,020 MLA *Voice-Literature* entries: only thirty-two (3%) were published before 1990, and ten of those were published in 1989.

As noted above, MLA lists a total of 3,091 *Metaphor-Literature* documents, as of November, 1996. Of the first 1,020 documents, 859 or

84% were published between 1990 and 1996, a figure not as dramatic as *Voice-Literature's* 97% but substantial, nevertheless. [See the discussion of these figures at the end of this paragraph.] Beginning with documents numbered between 929 and 1,010, depending on the date of the search, the trend is toward publication in the 1980's and by document 929 in a February, 1997 search, all documents from thereon have 1980's publication dates. A heightened interest in voice does account largely for the *Voice-Literature* figure, but the *Voice -Metaphor* figure reminds us that other factors affect database numbers, such as the increased emphasis on academic publishing, the proliferation of journals to meet the resultant need, and the rise of specialties within English Studies, such as discourse analysis, that tend to cross intradisciplinary boundaries and take a new interest from new perspectives in well-studied phenomena, such as metaphor. Neither can we discount metaphor's centrality to all of English Studies' enterprises.

Clearly, voice exerts a different influence over those literature scholars whose work is catalogued in MLA than over those whose work is catalogued in ERIC. The difference is partly explained by each database's stated identity: What remains unexplained, among other matters, is why, given MLA's far wider resources, there is such an extreme difference

between the total number of articles on voice by scholars working in essentially the same field. Part of the answer is that proportionality of numbers is irrelevant in this context because neither "field," along with its content and methods, is the "same" as the other; the descriptors *Voice-Literature* and *Voice-Literary Criticism* encapsulate the very real epistemological, hermeneutical, and theoretical differences between the academic focuses they overtly describe (*literature* is not *literary criticism*) and the databases they serve ("field of education" versus "fields of literature, languages, linguistics, and folklore").

Another part of the answer, however, leads us back to voice and its role in Literature Studies. "Something" has happened. It is one thing for a "new" term to assert itself aggressively in the literature of a discipline; it is quite another for that new term to match the presence of a term with a history exceeding two millennia and for a third of the new term's citations to appear in less than a single decade. To understand what happened, it is necessary to look closely at the content of some of the documents we have so far considered only as numerical quantities in a database.

The third of Chapter Four's four goals is to address the question, "What portrait of voice is sketched by key examples from Literature

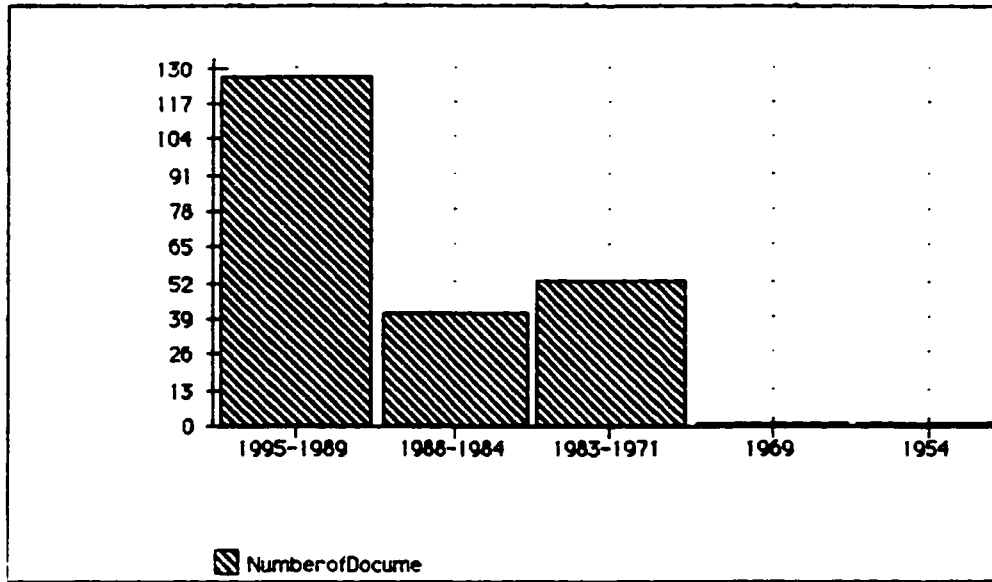


Figure 4.1: Results of an ERIC Search using the descriptors *Voice-Literature*. Data are graphed by clusters of years.

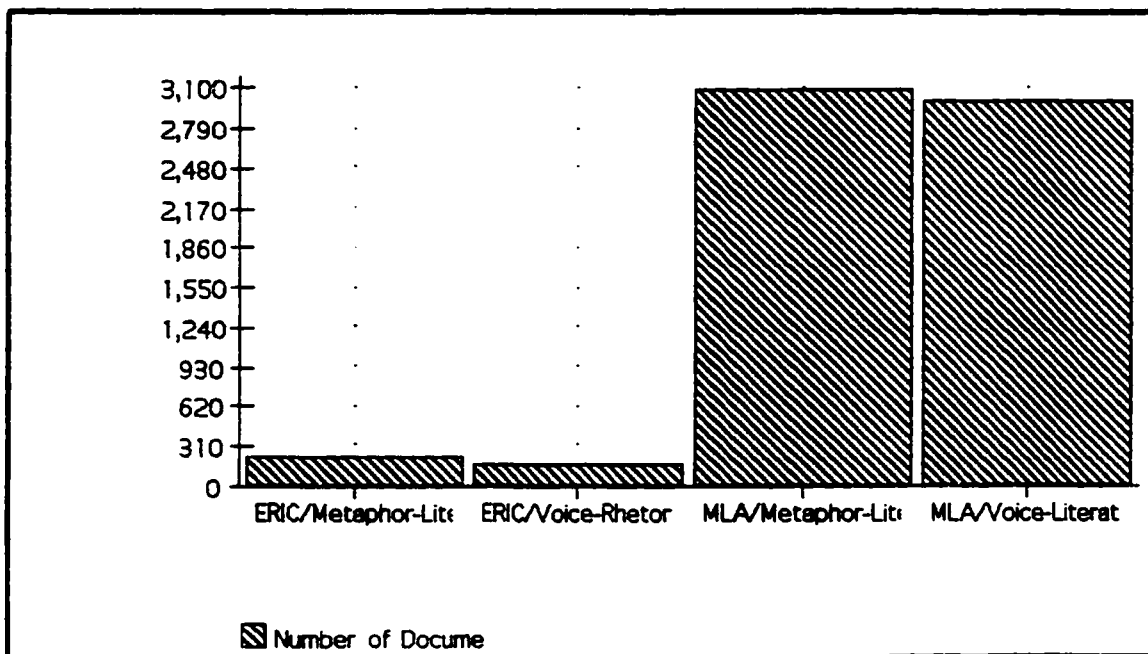


Figure 4.2: Comparative results of ERIC and MLA searches using the descriptors *Metaphor-Literature* and *Voice-Rhetoric* for ERIC and *Metaphor-Literature* and *Voice-Literature* for MLA.

Studies' academic literature?". In Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice: Speech and Writing in Faulkner, Stephen M., Ross has compiled, described, and assessed Literature Studies' main theories of voice. Section 4.4.1 will summarize Ross' account of Literature Studies' major theoretical characterizations of voice, following the procedure used in Section 2.4.1, which relied on Jeanne Jacoby Smith's research for an overview of Twentieth Century influences on voice. Section 4.4.2 will trace and discuss voice-theory as it appears over the course of the four essays by M. M. Bakhtin as edited by Michael Holmquist in The Dialogic Imagination. Section 4.4.3 will explore the voice-theories of five Literature Studies' practitioners, each of whom also represents major but differing approaches to literary criticism -- Gerard Genette, Wayne Booth, Gabriel Josipovici, Anne Davidson Ferry, and Michael J. Toolan.

Section 4.5 of will bring together the two bodies of information presented and analyzed throughout Chapter Four -- database texts and some of the texts listed in databases -- for an assessment of the ways Literature Studies understands and uses voice. It will also compare and contrast those ways in light of the conclusions drawn in Chapters Two and Three regarding Composition and Rhetoric's and Creative Writing's approaches to voice.

4.4. An Overview of Literary Theories of Voice

4.4.1. Stephen Ross on Literary Theories of Voice

Ross opens Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice: Speech and Writing in Faulkner by explaining that he is aware of voice's conundra, two of which are that "[a]s readers we can only read, of course, and we must thus keep under erasure terms like 'listen' and 'hear,' which are necessarily figures of speech in reference to written fiction" (3) and that "to speak of voice in written fiction is to speak from within the riddle of representation" (3). Nevertheless, he continues, he "would not abandon the figural and representational implications of *hearing* [Ross' emphasis] voice in fictional texts" (3) because "[a]s a critical concept 'voice' can help us to straddle that gap between the represented world and the textual discourse that narrative analysis often falls into" (3).

Ross points out that as other "phenomena" (4) -- "vision," the gaze," "play," and "tension,"¹ -- are "studied as aspects of both the represented world and the fictional discourse" in Faulkner (4), "so too does 'voice' identify a range of concerns that bridges the gap between the text per se and its imagined events and characters" (4). In Faulkner, Ross argues, the importance of voice is borne out by both abundant biographical, anecdotal,

and testimonial evidence and by the commonsensical experiences of ordinary readers, himself included:

"[M]y thinking about Faulkner has never disentangled itself from the assumption that voice is in some way deeply implicated in the experience of Faulkner . . . I am convinced that a careful consideration of voice in his works touches upon a fundamental source of his fiction's power" (xi).

Working from this position, he proposes to address two questions -- "What is 'voice' in Faulkner's fiction? and How does it function?" (xi) -- but before he can proceed he must address the vexed question of what voice is, for as he observes in understated terms, "[t]he word 'voice' has a varied and inconsistent usage" (4), including

- "[M]etonymic designation for the human presence we hear or imagine whenever we read a poem or story" (4). In readerly terms, this is the phenomenon of "hearing" differences between literary works (The Sun Also Rises and Humboldt's Gift sound different) and between the characters in them (no one could mistake Jake Barnes for von Humboldt Fleisher). In writerly terms, this is the crafting of that difference, the phenomenon Robert Frost termed 'sentence sounds' (4), that Yeats described as the 'living . . . choir of voices" (4), and that Bakhtin described

as "the speaking consciousness" (Holmquist, 434).

- An analogical relationship between literature and speech, based on the presumption that "literature . . . is an imitation of speech or . . . a recording of a presumed (even if imaginary) oral discourse" (4).

- A Socratic poetical category denoting either *mimesis*, a poet's imitation of others' speech or *diegesis*, the direct representation of a poet's own speech. Ross points out that the mimesis/diegesis distinctions were amended by Aristotle to convey "degrees of imitation, not merely the name for the illusion of speech" (5). [See Section 2.2.2. of this Dissertation for a discussion of mimesis in classical rhetoric.]

- Critical schema that describe various sources, configurations, and hierarchies of authorial presence in literature, such as T. S. Eliot's assertion that there are "three voices of poetry": "the poet talking to himself -- or to nobody . . . the poet addressing an audience . . . the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking" (Eliot, 96 in Ross, 5 - 6).

- An "authorial distinctiveness or personality" (6), as exemplified by ideas such as those advanced by John Fowles that voice in fiction denotes a writer's "humors, his private opinions, his nature (Fowles, 113 in Ross, 6) and by Albert Guerard that voice expresses a writer's

"temperament and unborrowed personality", the "structures and rhythms of the way [a writer's] mind moves," and "the particular needs and resistances of his spirit" (Guerard, 136 in Ross, 6).

- **A phenomenon distinct from the consciousness of the individual writer but perceived by readers as a conscious, writerly presence as a result of "the linguistic and textual play of the discourse" (7), characterized by "fields of discourse that cross and recross within each other" (7).**

- **Diegesis, a "grammatical relationship between the subject of an utterance and the action indicated by the verb" (7), a concept Gerard Genette expands to denote "a set of relationships among time of narration, implied or actual narrators, and diegetic levels of the fiction's discourse" (8) and to "define a series of narrative levels, such as 'meta-diegetic' (stories told by a character inside the fictional world) or 'extra-diegetic' (the author's writing of the book) (8).**

- **A phenomenon related to a "disparity between the fiction's discourse and presumed truth, when an author like Chaucer seeks to dissociate himself from any claim to truth his fictions might imply, when a discrepancy opens up between the content of what is told and the tone" (9).**

- An "ideological phenomenon gathering to itself all the historical, cultural, and discursive currents that flow through the individual" (10).

Ross argues that through its varied identities, voice brings together varied critical theories, making it impossible for them to "escape each other when they employ 'voice' (11):

Voice regarded as a personal expressive gesture of a consciousness, whether a character's or an author's, must confront the inevitable absence, in all writing but especially in fiction, of its own origin. Attempts to inject personal origin from the theater of voice's performance must likewise confront the inevitable practice of readers to read 'back' from voice to person: even the use of voice (to quote Paul DeMan) 'in grammatical terminology . . . is [still] a metaphor inferring by analogy the intent of the subject from the structure of the predicate' (139 in Ross, 11) (11).

However, Ross also explains that his purposes are not to reconcile critical theories nor to "define" voice but to "explore" voice as a feature of Faulkner's writing. To do this, he must do what every writer who uses voice -- as opposed to studying voice -- must do, which is settle on a concept of voice that will allow him to proceed toward his goal. His

method is to use a kind of Hegelian dialectic by joining on their common ground of "nonrepresentation" three "contradictory" views of voice:

Any use of 'voice' raises essential issues concerning a fiction's discourse and its implied human origin. Any use calls us to account for the private internal voice that resonates in the act of reading *and* the expressive speech acts we hear engendered in the fiction's world *and* the rules governing multiple features of the narrative text and its discourse . . .

'Voice' always retains its noncontradictory references to phenomena *in* the created world and to phenomena *of* the discourse [Emphases throughout are Ross'.] (11 - 12).

In a move that sharply separates Ross the critical reader of literature from his English Studies colleagues working in Expressivist Composition, Ross rejects what he calls the "psychobiographical" theory of voice, the representational idea that voice reveals a writer's "innermost being, as an expressive stream that can be traced back to the composing author's psyche" (12). The basis for this decision is a set of premises that establish epistemologies for texts in general and for voice in particular, leading to a working definition of voice:

Nonrepresentational critical theory has taught us, correctly,

that writing should not be regarded as merely subjected to the world it embodies. We should not seek the real speaker behind the written discourse; rather we should seek the original speech that the text itself generates. As a literary term, voice names the intangible relationship among quite tangible phenomena of reading -- the speech we hear, the writing we see, the origins we discover. As the potential for sounded discourse embedded in the written text, voice is the expressive quality of the perceivable text that the cognitive (and internally vocal) act of reading must accommodate . . . (12).

Using this definition, Ross then proceeds to "explore" four voices in Faulkner's writing -- "phenomenal," "mimetic," "psychic," and "oratorical" -- concluding with a chapter on "the writer's voice" in which he reiterates the premises that ground his definition of voice and extends them by observing that in Faulkner [and I suspect in all "voiced" writing] "voice and writing are in constant tension" (236) and that the "tools of writing can be used to generate voice" (236), leading to his cumulative point, that as "voice is fundamental to Faulkner's writing . . . writing is fundamental to Faulkner's voice" (236):

Faulkner's strategies of voice themselves never abandon the written. His success, indeed, is the fusion -- a forced, paradoxical fusion -- of speech and writing. The four vocal registers [phenomenal, mimetic, psychic, and oratorical] that pervade Faulkner's work are not naive strategies that try to hide the written behind illusions of speech; rather they are provisional strategies that exploit fiction's textual nature in order to invigorate the written with living voice (236).

Ross' approach to voice -- his careful review of theories of voice and his selection of the one that seems most persuasive -- differs substantially from the approaches of most other Literature Studies' practitioners. It is true that Ross is a critic, not a voice-theorist, but judging from the database information we observed earlier in this chapter, not being a theorist rarely hinders writers who use the term voice from implying, though rarely stating, theory: voice may be stance, mores, values, ideas, experiences, perspective, and pace, to name just a few examples raised by the descriptors *Voice-Literature*. It is to Ross' credit that he avoids convenient characterizations, choosing instead to anchor his work in the strongest theoretical ground available for voice. Where such ground comes from is what we will address next as we

observe the Literature Studies' efforts to develop a theory of voice in writing.

4.4.2. M. M. Bakhtin on Voice

M. M. Bakhtin, premier theorist of genre, is also commonly considered *the* major theorist of voice. As I have suggested earlier in this chapter, there appear to be rather clear connections between the increased dissemination of, and interest in, Bakhtin's writings and the increased interest in voice throughout English Studies. However, regardless of his reputation as an important voice theorist, it is clear from reading Bakhtin with an eye toward voice that his ideas about voice derive from larger interests in which voice *per se* plays a relatively small part.

Bakhtin argues that "[d]iscourse lives . . . beyond itself, in a living impulse toward the object" (1981, 292). This approach necessarily places intentionality (in the rhetorical sense of purposeful action) at the heart of all discourse, which he divides into two categories -- rhetorical and artistic -- and the latter into two additional types -- poetic and novelistic. Some of Bakhtin's key observations about intentionality in discourse are found in the following passage from "Discourse in the Novel":

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. . . the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language . . . rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word and make it one's own (294).

From such a formulation of discourse, ideas about voice follow. Bakhtin considers voice to be the "*speaking* personality, the *speaking* [emphases mine] consciousness" that "always has a will or desire behind it, its own timbre and overtones" (Holmquist, 434). As voice may be the consciousness of the unspecified *speaking* personality, it may therefore be associated with whichever of the heteroglot, dialoguing "voices" the text happens to valorize at any particular moment -- the voice of the author or of a character -- which are positioned, as are all text-voices, "in a zone of potential . . . conversation, in a zone of *dialogical contact*

[Bakhtin's emphases] (45). Discourse may be single-voiced (poetry) or double-voiced (novelistic), but the characteristics of each and the differences between them are generated, in part, by "language units" -- such as tropes -- operating on either the "plane of prose" or the "plane of poetry" (434).

Bakhtin's ideas about voice recall stylistics' approach, which understands voice as the effect of linguistic strategies and devices. They recall certain aspects of both speech act theory and of Elbow's voice as "power" formulations. Voice as "voice of the author" recalls both Booth's work on authorial identities and arguments made by epistemic rhetoricians about the groundedness of voice in the foundational self. I must point out here that I use the verb "recall" in the non-chronological sense of "calling up" or "reminding." I deliberately make no effort to determine which came first, (although Booth did "discover" Bakhtin) as at this point, following Bakhtin, we are in a zone of swirling "dialogical contact" (45) set off more by "style" than by content (adapting Bakhtin, 46, rather freely).]

Much of the preceding suggests that we find in Bakhtin a theory of voice, and it is true that he does, at times, turn his attention to the phenomenon of voice in text. However, it is also clear from a reading of

Bakhtin searching for **any** mention of voice, that when voice interests him, it is as a subsidiary feature of the relationships between textual phenomena but not as a major characteristic of such. I have found approximately ten brief references to voice in the 422 pages of The Dialogic Imagination, each of which is discussed below in the sub-section "Voice in the Dialogic Imagination."

That Bakhtin would acquire a reputation as a voice-theorist should not surprise us. First, his writings (whether they are directly concerned with voice or not) are saturated with the (translated) diction of speech and therefore with the *connotations* of voice: **dialogue** and its forms: **dialogizing, dialogized, 'dialogization'** (Holmquist 427), and **dialogism; heteroglossia** with its root in the Greek word for **tongue** (QUOD, 802), and in the French *gloser*, "to comment upon, to interpret" (QUOD, 803); character **speech**, direct **speech**, and quasi-direct **speech**; **single-voiced** discourse and **double-voiced** discourse, and **speech zones**. Second, Bakhtin uses the term *voice* so matter-of-factly when he does occasionally use it -- and settles it so comfortably into what appears to be a larger theory of voiced discourse -- that its relatively subordinated status is often lost on the reader less focused on voice than I. Third, the term *voice* does play a relatively brief but important role in a key

section of his influential essay, "Discourse in the Novel." It would be instructive, then, to look closely at voice's presence throughout The Dialogic Imagination to determine, as far as possible, what Bakhtin means by voice and how that meaning relates to voice as it is used in Literature Studies and across English Studies. However, before proceeding it is important to know that Michael Holmquist, editor of The Dialogic Imagination, tells us nothing about the publication history of the four essays in it other than that they "originally appeared in *Voprosy literatury i estetiki* [Moscow, 1975]" (xiii), so we will presume intended textual coherence in the arrangement that culminates with "Discourse in the Novel" following, respectively, "Epic and the Novel," "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse," and "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel." Arrangement will be of some significance because Section 4.4.3, repeating methods used elsewhere in this Dissertation, will trace the appearance of the term voice throughout The Dialogic Imagination. One finding will be that voice makes its most prominent appearance, along with Bakhtin's first, relatively extended efforts to define it, in the last (and also the most well-known and widely-read) of the four essays. Chronology will not be an issue here, as we cannot presume a chronological sequence for the essays, but textual

coherence does lead to certain ways of reading the way voice plays out in The Dialogic Imagination, which include conclusions about its relative unimportance in the earlier essays; its increasingly prominent role as the volume progresses toward the cumulative essay; and the relative but necessary attention to voice when the topic becomes "discourse."

Voice in The Dialogic Imagination

Bakhtin's first use of voice in the four essays collected by Michael Holmquist under the title The Dialogic Imagination is found on page twenty-five without comment or definition: "From this vantage point, from this contemporary reality with its diversity of speech and voice, there comes about a new orientation in the world and in time . . .". The next use of voice is found twenty-one pages later, again without comment but linked to the concept of "zones" and indirectly to a definition of voice as a stylistic phenomenon: "Considerable sections of the novel [Onegin] are presented in Tatiana's voice-zone (this zone, as is the case with zones of all other characters, is not set off from authorial speech in any formally compositional or syntactic way; *it is a zone demarcated purely in terms of style*) [Italics mine.]" (46). Voice appears next on page sixty in the course of a discussion of "parodic-travesty" literature: "I imagine this whole [the whole of parodic literature] to be something like an immense novel,

multi-generic, multi-styled, mercilessly critical, soberly mocking, reflecting in all its fullness the heteroglossia and multiple voices of a given culture, people and epoch" (60). In all these instances the term voice is used without comment or definition, the presumption apparently being that reader and writer agree on its meaning.

Bakhtin's fullest treatment of voice is found in the essay "Discourse in the Novel." In a section titled "Modern Stylistics and the Novel," Bakhtin first offers these uses -- but not definitions nor explanations -- of the term *voice*:

- "The novel as a whole is a phenomenon multiform in style and variform in speech and voice" (261).
- "Each separate element of a novel's language is determined first of all by one such subordinated stylistic unity into which it enters directly -- be it the stylistically individualized speech of a character, the down-to-earth voice of a narrator in *skaz* [Holmquist's italics], a letter or whatever" (262).
- "The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized" (262).
- "Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the

speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices . . . " (263).

- "For the prose writer, the object is a focal point for heteroglot voices among which his own voice must also sound; these voices create the background necessary for his own voice, outside of which his artistic prose nuances cannot be perceived, and without which they 'do not sound'" (278).

- Sometimes, resulting in certain effects, "... the author completely merges his own voice with the common view" (302).

About half way through "Discourse in the Novel" Bakhtin begins attempting what appear to be definitions of voice. They occur in the form of nominal phrases following the use of *voice* and function as absolute sentential modifiers, as in "[Double-voiced discourse] serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. A potential dialogue is embedded in them, one as yet unfolded, a concentrated dialogue of *two voices, two world views, two languages*" [italics mine] (324 - 325); "As soon as another's voice, *another's accent, the possibility of another's point of view* [italics mine]

breaks through . . . " (329); and "a *fresh tone* [italics mine] , a fresh voice amid the multiple voices of literary language . . . " (329).

If voice for Bakhtin indeed denotes **world views, languages, accent, point of view, and tone**, we may be justified in asking yet again, "What, then, is voice, other than a metonymic substitution for perfectly ordinary concepts?" The answer -- that voice is more than metonymic substitution -- is found in his theory of speech zones. As Michael Holmquist explains,

Zones are both a territory and a sphere of influence.

Intentions must pass through 'zones' dominated by other characters, and are therefore refracted. A character's zone need not begin with his directly quoted speech but can begin far back in the text; the author can prepare the way for an *autonomous* [italics mine] voice [world view, language, accent, point of view, or tone] by manipulating words ostensibly belong[ing] to 'neutral' authorial speech . . .

A zone is the locus for hearing a voice; it is brought about *by* [Holmquist's emphasis] the voice (434).

And voice, as Holmquist further explains in the glossary to The Dialogic Imagination is "the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness"

[that] "always has a will or desire behind it, its own timbre and overtones" (434). What extends this definition which essentially is a restatement of Bakhtin's terms -- point of view and tone -- is that voice is heard in a zone. A zone, as we have seen above, "is a locus for hearing a voice [and] is brought about *by* the voice" 434). So the essential difference between Bakhtin and most other voice-theorists is that voice, a metaphor, denotes a world entirely encompassed by, invented by, bound and unbound by discourse or the word, and not a world attributable to, nor mimetic of, a world outside discourse, such as the world of an individual human self. As it is the interaction of language's worlds, planes, and zones (of which language is both the source and site) that interests Bakhtin more than that source and site's particulates (voice is one of them), it seems reasonable to leave matters where Bakhtin seems to have intended them to be left. As Holmquist explains,

Implicit . . . is the notion that all transcription systems -
 - including the speaking voice in a living utterance -- are
 inadequate to the multiplicity of meanings they seek to convey.
 My voice gives the illusion of unity to what I say; I am, in fact,
 constantly expressing a plenitude of meanings, some intended,
 others of which I am unaware . . . (xx).

This is a theory of relationships, of di (two)-dia (through)-log (word)-ism, and it predicates Bakhtin's entire critical world. For example, he defines style as "the fundamental and creative . . . relationship of discourse to its object, to the speaker himself and to another's discourse; style strives organically to assimilate material into language and language into material" (378); he refers to the "angle of refraction' of authorial discourse as it passes through various other voices, or voice- and character-zones"; and (as pointed out earlier), referring to the voice-zones in Onegin, he writes, "Considerable sections of the novel are presented in Tatiana's voice-zone (this zone, as the case with zones of all other characters, is not set off from authorial speech in any formally compositional or syntactic way; *it is a zone demarcated purely in terms of style*) [Italics mine.]" (46). Style, as we have seen above, is an "organic" relationship that "assimilates material." And if style is one of several features of tone (as the New Critics assert it is), and if tone is one of several options for defining voice (as Bakhtin seems to assert it is), then we have probably taken our project as far as it can go, for defining voice as tone, of which style is a subset, takes us back to the earliest days of pre-theoretical thinking about voice and would seem to enclose us once again in the voice-conundra, save for the fact that for

Bakhtin, style takes on such distinctly rhetorical characteristics of action, relationships, and contexts that neither it nor tone can be precisely the concepts the New Critics conceived of (but then Bakhtin's use of most literary terminology is always idiosyncratic to his idiosyncratic dialogic theories).

Coming back to tone reminds us that just as there is some danger in pressuring an intentionally ambiguous poem too closely, there is some danger in expecting Bakhtin to be any more precise about voice than suits his project, which is not to define and describe voice but to understand the "dialogic imagination." For him voice is and remains a relatively small and obvious part of a much larger, theoretical, and original enterprise. As such, it is defined and used idiosyncratically. However, Bakhtin's idiosyncratic approach to voice is not idiosyncratic of Bakhtin. It is, in fact, so typical of Literature Studies' approach to voice that I have come to understand the habit of defining voice idiosyncratically as Literature Studies' voice-archetype, and will discuss it as such in Section 4.4.4.

4.4.3. A Sampling of Literary Theorists' Approaches to Voice

Wayne Booth

To understand Wayne Booth's contributions to voice-theory it is necessary to trace their development over time, beginning with The

Rhetoric of Fiction and then moving into A Rhetoric of Irony. In The Rhetoric of Fiction, First Edition, 1961, Second Edition, 1983, the term *voice* is first used in a section titled, "The Author's Voice in Fiction" (viii). However, except for its use in the section's title, voice does not appear again until four pages later in a brief reference to "a reliable narrator's voice independent of the character's subjective vision" (172); twenty-six pages later it appears in the observation that "[n]o narrator's voice extends the significance of The Sun Also Rises -- except, of course, to provide the generalizing titles and epigraphs" (198); and on page 213 there is reference to "giving open voice to the narrator." This pattern of occasional uses of a useful term to further much larger aims (a rhetoric of fiction) continues into the 1983 epilogue written for The Rhetoric of Fiction's second edition: there is brief mention nine pages into the epilogue of "a voice that we shall never discover" (410) and then on the same page an example of what Booth calls "double-voicing" -- the nearly simultaneous expression of a character's views and of the author's views of them.

Booth devotes an entire chapter in A Rhetoric of Irony, 1974, to a discussion of "The Ironist's Voice," but it takes him just two pages to convert ideas about voice as a rhetorical force that "assigns tasks,"

"provides qualities," and "becomes part of . . . the controlling context" into (176) ideas about voice as a "style or tone" (176). This is not to say that he abandons a rhetorical approach, but it is to note the importance -- indeed the persistence -- of the style-and-tone approach to voice among many literary critics. Booth's segue into voice as style or tone introduces a discussion of metaphor in which he makes the observation about metaphor that I have reapplied to voice throughout this Dissertation: that "[t]he history of metaphor would in fact make an interesting parallel with that of irony, since metaphor also has ranged from a minute oratorical device, one among many, to an imperialistic world conqueror" (177).

By 1984 Wayne Booth had begun to take a very different view of the significance of the term *voice*. He remarks in his introduction to Bakhtin's Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, that

"[i]f I had not been ignorant, like almost everyone else, of the work of Bakhtin and his circle, I might have grappled with a much more sophisticated attack on the 'author's voice' in fiction, one that would have forced me to reformulate, if not fundamentally to modify, my claim that 'the author's judgment is always present, always evident to anyone who knows how to look for it. . . The author cannot choose whether to use

rhetorical heightening [in the service of his authority and of the reader's effective re-telling of the story]. His only choice is of the kind of rhetoric he will use" (xix).

Booth goes on to explain that Bakhtin probes far beyond the "question of authorial discourse on the superficial level of composition" (xx) involving such devices as first person narration or narrator's introductions, or other strategies aimed at reducing the author's authority and presence. Rather, Bakhtin, he says, posits a kind of sublime consciousness of a "chorus of languages" (xxi) creating a 'centrifugal' force dispersing us outward into an ever greater variety of 'voices,' outward into a seeming chaos that presumably only a God could encompass" (xx).

Booth's reading of Bakhtin's premises seems quite accurate, but I think he underrates his own contributions to ideas about voice, despite the paucity of extended theorizing about voice. Working on a smaller canvas with mixed media and a finer technique, he paints a portrait of voice as rhetorical action performed cooperatively on the text by someone (the author or implied author) together with the reader and by something -- the text on the text. Performed reliably, action leads among other things to a concept of voice that falls outside ideas about voice that would limit it to such matters as style, diction, and figures of

speech considered apart from the effect of rhetorical context. As with Bakhtin, voice itself (probing it, theorizing about it, defining it) interests Booth less than the fact that voice is fundamentally a metaphor for those elusive phenomena generated by the fundamentally rhetorical context created by writer, reader, and text.

Gerard Genette

Squinting one's eyes blurs details but heightens shapes, as does Genette's approach to voice; for him the term names, broadly, certain phenomena generated by "the narrating instance" (212), specifically of fiction. One of these is the temporal phenomenon "inscribed in the very structures of (or at the very least of the main 'languages of civilization' of Western culture)" (215), which makes it impossible, as Genette explains, to "to tell a story without specifying the place where it happens and whether this place is more or less distant from the place where I am telling it; . . . [I]t is almost impossible not . . . to locate [a] story in time with respect to [the] narrating act. This, Genette points out is true of any statement, fictive or factual, that requires interpretation "only with respect to the person who utters it and the situation in which he utters it" (212). He cites as examples the fictive sentence 'For a long time I used to go to bed early' and the factual sentence 'Napoleon died at Saint Helena'

(212), pointing out that the former

is identifiable only with respect to the person who utters it and the situation in which he utters it is identifiable only with reference to that person, and the completed past of the 'action' told is completed only in relation to the moment of utterance.

To use Benveniste's well-known terms again, the *story* here is not without a share of *discourse*, and it is not too difficult to show that this is practically always the case [Genette's italics throughout] (212).

He points out that the latter of the two examples "implies in its preterite that the story precedes the narrating" (212) and then observes that apparently unnarrated, present tense utterances, such as 'Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius' (212), also "impl[y] in [their] preterite that the story precedes the narrating" (212). These are matters concerned with "relations between statements and their generating instances" (213), what linguists call "subjectivity in language" (Benveniste in Genette, 213) and what Genette names using the "parallel terms" (213) *enunciating* and *narrating*. Poetics, he explains, is having trouble with the analysis of the "narrating instance"; there is

a sort of hesitation, no doubt an unconscious one, to recognize

and respect the autonomy of that instance, or even simply its specificity. On the one hand . . . critics restrict questions of narrative enunciating to questions of 'point of view'; on the other hand they identify the narrating instance with the instance of 'writing,' the narrator with the author, and the recipient of the narrative with the reader of the work: a confusion that is perhaps legitimate in the case of a historical narrative or a real autobiography, but not when we are dealing with a narrative of fiction, where the role of narrator is itself fictive, even if assumed directly by the author, and where the supposed narrating situation can be very different from the act of writing (or of dictating) which refers to it (213 - 214).

Genette's project from this point on is to explore the "traces" (214) of the "narrating instance" in the "narrative discourse it [the narrating instance] is considered to have produced" (214) by analyzing "time of the narrating, narrative level, and 'person' (that is, relations between the narrator -- plus, should the occasion arise, his or their narratee[s] -- and the story he tells) 215). His exploration results, in part, in a description of a hierarchical arrangement of degrees of narration: *diegetic* denotes

the level of "*any event a narrative recounts*" (228) in relation to and "*higher than the level at which the narrating act producing [the] narrative is placed*" [Genette's italics throughout] (228). Using Manon Lescaut as an example, Genette explains narrative levels thus:

M. de Renoncourt's writing of his fictive Memoires is a (literary) act carried out at a first level, which we will call extradiegetic; the events told in those Memoirs (including Des Grieux's narrating act) are inside this first narrative, so we will describe them as *diegetic*, or *intradiegetic*; the events told in Des Grieux's narrative, a narrative in the second degree, we will call *metadiegetic*. . . These terms (metadiegetic, etc.) designate, not individuals, but relative situations and functions (228 - 229).

In my view, the last sentence quoted above states quite plainly the exact nature of Genette's interests (which is not to say that he has been unforthcoming about them previously). Genette's analysis of what he calls voice is an explanation (his word rendered in translation) of the rhetorical intra-dynamics of texts, against the relatively simplistic conception of such dynamics as "point of view" or as directly identified with the "actual" author of a work. He takes no interest in probing the

term voice itself, using it only once to give a name to the matters of fictive discourse he will "explain". As we have begun to see and will continue to observe, Genette's approach typifies what I will call Literature Studies' *voice-archetype* to signify the fact that with few exceptions, voice interests Literature Studies' practitioners far less than whatever it denotes for each individual practitioner's particular project. For Bakhtin it denotes an obvious and therefore relatively unremarkable aspect of dialogism; for Booth it signifies metaphorically certain elusive rhetorical phenomena; and for Genette it names a category of textual phenomena generated by narration. Other examples of Literature Studies voice-archetype are discussed in the sub-sections found below.

Gabriel Josipovici

Gabriel Josipovici's interest in voice, which he initially defines in the negative -- "something which is to be defined neither in terms of realism nor of abstraction, neither of psychology nor of construction" (128) -- emerges from his dissatisfaction with the modern insistence that "[i]nstead of thinking of a novel as being written by someone -- Dickens or Tolstoy, let us say -- we must think of it as a text, something which exists in the world, but which is governed by its own law, which will only be occluded by reference to the name on the title page" (114).

This deliberate denial and removal of a human creator-presence from the cognitive and linguistic landscape of literary criticism, embodied in the substitution of the word text for book, is both "false and harmful" (115), but it is also a fact of contemporary criticism and cannot be dismissed or ignored. The better approach, Josipovici argues, is to understand it, which also leads to understanding why it is false, and so the first part of "Text and Voice" sketches the decline of the "notion of a Creator God, who made the world suddenly and out of nothing" (115), the ascendance of the nineteenth century conviction that "[t]o trace something back to where it started was to explain what it meant" (115), and parallel developments in literary criticism, such as Northrup Frye's "grammar of the forms of literature" (117) and theories of structures and codes of "texts" that emphasize such ideas as Roland Barthes' that "le discontinu est le statut fondamental de toute communication" (in Josipovici, 118). The problem with such ideas as the latter, Josipovici explains, is that while they may apply to literature that is indeed "discontinu," they have been generalized to include literature that is not "discontinu", mainly the traditional novel.

Jean Ricardou's observation that "the novel is no longer 'l'écriture d'une aventure' but 'l'aventure d'une écriture'" (in Josipovici, 119) interests Josipovici for numerous reasons, including its influence over

the direction French criticism has taken, but in regards to voice, its significance is to symbolize the wrongheadedness that has diverted us from understanding novels and their phenomena, of which voice is one:

Poussiere, mur, lampe, chemin, do not function as words on the page. They function in the much more mysterious space of the narrative, which is neither on the page nor in my head nor in the world, but which exists for me as I read. It is not the word *poussiere* which does the trick, but the notion, what is evoked for the reader by that word. . . . Robbe-Grillet . . .

seems to be asserting that once we have realized that word and thing do not coincide we can be free to concentrate on the play of words. [In this he makes] a simple mistake about how language -- and the novel -- works (128).

That "simple mistake," Josipovici explains, may be illustrated by "something which is to be defined in terms neither of realism nor of abstraction, neither of psychology nor of construction. It is the sense of voice" (128). To illustrate what he means by "sense of voice," he turns to Robert Pinget, a writer of the *nouveau nouveau roman* (characteristically discontinu) who "explicitly talks of seeking a voice in his writing" (128), and to conclusions drawn by Roland Barthes in *S/Z*, the former to

illustrate ideas about voice in progressive "text"/novels and the latter to illustrate ideas about voice in the classical novel.

Josipovici bases his inquiry partly on matters of interest to stylistics (the function of tenses), partly on matters of interest to interpretation (how to read phrases), and partly on matters of interest to rhetoric (who speaks), with none of these being exclusive of the other. His query into what it means to narrate under the conditions of discontinuity leads to the conclusion that voice results from acknowledgment of the fact that we are locked in a physical world governed by its own immutable conditions, "... a world without transcendence. And yet, strangely, the very struggle for transcendence, understanding, gives rise to something which is other than a book, and Pinget is right to talk about that something as a voice" (130). For the classical novel, Josipovici relies on Barthes' analysis in S/Z showing "the lack of unity of the 'voice' of the classical novelist [and] how it is made up of a whole range of different and at times incompatible voices glued together in haphazard ways" (132). His conclusions about voice rely in part on his finding a middle ground between Pinget's and Barthes' formulations: "... what the novelist is doing is trying to find the voice that is truly his out of the blur of jumbled voices which he has to make use of and which, in a sense, constantly make

use of him" (132). Nevertheless, this does not yet get to what voice is, and so Josipovici offers a cumulative formulation based on the premise that voice is a readerly -- more than it is a writerly -- matter:

Voice is something that the attentive reader hears but which always eludes the writer himself. He who thinks that he has it, loses it; he who goes on groping for it, releases it. The situation, as between writer and reader, will always be asymmetrical. For the writer, as Henry James knew, it will always be the middle years, the time before, the time of failure, the time when it is necessary to start again. But for the reader the writer's middles are beginning and end, and in his work he sees the writer transformed, as Mallarme said eternity transforms us, into himself; it always takes another to hear the voice.

"Hearing" the voice also depends upon the will to hear it, which includes accepting two of the conditions voice dictates. The first is chronology, a "sense of time" (136): "what is mostly forgotten [by the modern critic] in talk of 'texte' and 'écriture' and 'structure' is that hearing this other voice come out of the past -- or the present -- is the source of the most profound joy . . ." (136). The second condition is

source, the writer: the debate over whether the writer writes words or is written by them does not change the fact, in Josipovici's view, that "before we are critics we are readers and before we are readers we are human beings. Art [and voice] is there to remind us precisely of that" (137).

Anne Davidson Ferry

Milton's Epic Voice, 1963, by Anne Davidson Ferry offers a window on the use of voice as an uncomplicated, concrete, metonymic synonym for narrator, narrator's presence or personality, and other features of narrating, such as tone, style, and point of view. It also illustrates how very tangled matters can become when voice is used synonymously for terms otherwise precisely defined throughout English Studies. Published in the waning years of New Criticism but during the earliest years of the earliest stirring of a critical and rhetorical interest in voice, Ferry's book uses voice tangentially after the rhetorical manner of Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction, 1961, to explore the "principal device" (15) in Paradise Lost for "expressing its *total* [Ferry's emphasis] meaning" (15). That device, Ferry explains, is the "voice" of an interpreter and "narrator . . . endowed with unique powers of vision to make the impenetrable world of prehistory known to us" (15). This "epic voice" denotes the "voiced"

features that fall "within the context of the narrator's vision" (xii):

"narrative, descriptive, and interpretive passages -- passages spoken by the narrator [and] monologues, dialogues, debates, interpolated histories, and prophecies spoken by the characters" (xii).

Ferry makes three main points relating to "voice" in Paradise Lost. First, the poem's genre -- literary epic -- requires the judiciously echoed replication of "oral" folk epics' conventions: "invocations, 'author comments,' similes, catalogues, epithets, and repetitions" (3), but especially the "narrating voice" with its central interpretive purpose of conveying the poem's "total meaning" (see above). Her second point is that Paradise Lost's dramatic qualities, stemming partly as they do from folk epic conventions, have the fortuitous effect of appealing to our modern preferences for dramatic literature while advancing the poem's "total meaning." However, as Paradise Lost, for all its dramatic qualities of "immediacy" and "objectivity" (10), is *not* a play, and as Milton chose to write a literary epic, not a play, it is necessary to "look at the different ways language is made to work" (14) in a genre charged through with dramatic qualities:

"Like a play, an epic presents a story about characters involved in events located in some events located in some

identified time and place, but unlike a play, an epic must have some sort of narrator who tells the story, observes the characters, identifies the time, and describes the place. The epic is in one sense 'about' the story and its characters, but that story is always presented to us in the context of the narration. This condition of epic is especially important for Milton's purposes: his story, because it is 'invisible' to us, demanded not only a narrator but one endowed with unique powers of vision to make the impenetrable world of prehistory known to us . . . " (15)

Essentially, Ferry argues that Milton's "way of making language work" is fundamental to "the view of existence expressed by the language of the poem" (xiii). "Way" and "view" are united in the word "spoken" which denotes and connotes "voice," which leads to analyses of "features" of voice: tone, point of view, and to permutations on these, such as the narrator's doubled voice -- didactic or analogic, depending on the need.

Ferry's third point and conclusion is that Milton's most brilliant achievement was to reject traditional choices for the narrator's identity, such as Moses, and "invent . . . instead a special voice designed to express his special interpretation of the story of Adam's Fall, [a] narrative voice

as bird and especially as blind bard" (179). The effect of this move on Paradise Lost is twofold: to gather "[e]verything in the poem . . . within the circle of the narrator's vision (179) and to express the "scope, inclusiveness, and complexity of that vision" (179) through a "characteristic tone of voice [emphases mine] which creates the impression we have when we read Paradise Lost of the poem's absolute uniqueness" (179).

Ferry asserts that there is no other speaker in English literature who stands in the same relation to his characters and his readers, no voice which uses quite the tone sustained through Milton's epic" (179). The English novel, she explains, adopts a "tone" characteristically measured by our social modes of private conversation or of public discourse" (180), but Paradise Lost takes us, via its language, into a world characterized by the "power and compression of private prayer, yet . . . addressed to all men, with the conviction that we will share the speaker's great concerns. The poem's language, Ferry says, fuses "universal and individual" (181) qualities, which include "heroic pitch", "lyrical intensity," and a "tone" "mingling judgment and sympathy" (181), leading, she argues, to a "tone" that could only come from a "fallen but redeemed blind bard, a creature limited like the bird but capable of flight

and endowed with the power of heavenly song. This tone expresses in the voice of the narrator Milton's vision of the inner life of every man in its eternal relation to nature, to history, and of God" (181).

Earlier in this chapter I observed that just as there is some danger in pressing an intentionally ambiguous poem too closely, there is some danger in expecting any writer to be more precise than suits her topic, her purposes, her tools, and the conventions of the textual context in which she works. A lyrical sentence such as the one quoted above ("The tone expresses in the voice of the narrator Milton's vision of the inner life of every man in its eternal relation to nature, to history, and to God") deserves protecting from overly zealous scrutiny, as neither is Paradise Lost nor Ferry's disquisition on it is a theoretical treatise. However, in a book entitled Milton's Epic Voice, we are surely justified in asking what the writer means by voice and observing how and to what effect she uses the term.

For Ferry, voice appears to be a commonplace expression used not as a precisely-defined critical term but expressively and metaphorically to convey a collection of ideas that by 1963 had become commonplaces of literary criticism: narrator, narrator's presence or personality, tone, style, point of view, and the impression that written language may seem

to be "spoken" or narrated by a "voice." Occasionally Ferry uses voice to denote matters related solely to her argument, such as the assertion that a "narrator endowed with unique powers of vision . . . make[s] the impenetrable world of prehistory known to us" (15) **through** the special dynamics of narrating which are endowed with the special qualities of a voice. More often, however, voice metonymically signifies a variety of concepts, regardless of whether they are precisely or imprecisely defined elsewhere in English Studies. For example, the entry for *tone* in M. H. Abrams' 1961 edition of A Glossary of Literary Terms reads as follows:

In recent criticism 'tone' is often employed, after the example of I. A. Richards, for the attitudes to the subject matter and to the audience implied in a discourse or literary piece.

In the course of the cumulative paragraph of her concluding chapter, Ferry refers to the "narrative voice," to a "tone of voice," a "voice' which "uses a tone," a speaker who uses a "sustained" tone, the "tone of the speaker," a tone with a "beautiful mingling of judgment and sympathy," and a "tone [that] expresses in the voice of the narrator Milton's vision of the inner life of every man in its eternal relation to nature, to history, and to God" (all quoted from pp. 179 - 181). Only the reference to the "beautiful mingling of judgment and sympathy" is aligned with a definition of tone

as author's attitude toward subject matter and audience. All other uses attest to two phenomena: the first is voice's plasticity which allows it denote attitude ("judgment and sympathy") in one sentence and in the next an apparent **quality of sound** (in text) that conveys a **"vision"** of very specific and complex concepts: **"the inner life of every man in its eternal relation to nature, to history, and to God"** (181).

How a tone, its definition unspecified, could express an eternal relation to nature, history, and God, remains unexplained in Milton's Epic Voice. The apparent presumption, resembling a leap of faith, is that such a feat is both possible and that it can anchor an interpretation of Paradise Lost. Such is voice's slippery slope. It seems perfectly natural and unremarkable to segue from one use of voice to another, as the term comfortably sustains both attitude and sound quality as signifiers of nearly anything that can be conceived by the human mind and conveyed by the human voice. But from a critical point of view, voice as metonymic signifier of nearly anything eventually leads us away from criticism as explanation of something that matters and into belief, as we saw with the evangelic voice-compositionists. Neither is this necessarily a problem, as certain kinds of belief are fundamental at the deepest levels of English Studies' epistemologies. What is a problem is the failure to recognize the

point at which criticism becomes belief and to continue to proceed as if criticism-as-tone-poem were the same thing as criticism as "exposition, analysis, comparison, and evaluation of works of literature" (20). In criticism, this dichotomy is captured somewhat in the differences between "impressionistic and judicial criticism [Abrams' emphases]" (21), but such distinctions are rarely thought about or applied to the use of the term voice.

Efforts to define voice began in earnest nearly twenty years after the publication of Milton's Epic Voice, and it is not my intention to hold Ferry to standards that did not exist when she wrote her book. (Her use of tone in Milton's Epic Voice is another matter but not the subject of this Dissertation.) It is my intention to point out that judging from evidence presented throughout this chapter, voice in Literature Studies remains in 1997 as imprecisely defined as in 1963 when for Ferry, as for Booth in 1961, it functioned primarily as a metonymic signifier to advance arguments that had little to do with voice itself, despite such titles as Milton's Epic Voice and "The Author's Voice in Fiction."

It is one of the premises of this Dissertation that the time has come for us to revisit the possibility that if voice eludes conclusive definition (as at some level all of English Studies does), it should not elude the

discipline's awareness that it eludes definition. Anything less than discipline-wide acknowledgment of voice's strengths and weaknesses as a signifier of disciplinary phenomena weakens its effectiveness when it does genuinely capture a matter that can be named by no other name than voice.

Michael J. Toolan

Michael Toolan's book, The Stylistics of Fiction, 1990, opens with the observations that "[t]he concept of style has had a troubled history in the modern period" (1); that "... it has commonly been argued that we use the term 'style' without knowing its meaning" (1); and that while we have little trouble with the word in everyday usage, our use of it "in the status of the judgement [sic] usually remains unexamined" (1). He asks,

When we speak of style in Milton -- or McEnroe -- are we merely spontaneously asserting the presence of some quality which is subjectively perceived and unanalysable, that is, making purely arbitrary personal evaluation or 'witnessing'? (1).

It requires no stretch of any kind -- not of logic, syntax, semantic content, or of rhetorical intention -- to substitute the word voice for style in the preceding passages without altering the gist of the argument.

In such a reformulation, voice and style would seem to be English Studies' troubled twins but only if one ignores what follows Toolan's introductory assertions about style's perceived, essential subjectivity, which is a recapitulation of style's complex association in this century with literary linguistics. One would also have to ignore style's long history dating at least to On Style, Theophrastus, c. 370 - 285 B.C. (Murphy, 80) and including work on the subject by Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and the anonymous author of Rhetorica ad Herennium. Also removed from the picture would be Literature Studies' work on style in this century, of which M. H. Abrams cites The Problem of Style, Murray, 1925; Modern Prose Style, Dobree, 1934; and Baum, The Other Harmony of Prose, 1952.

The point is one we have returned to repeatedly throughout this Dissertation, beginning with our earliest observations about voice's carnivalistic face as revealed in database portraits; continuing with voice's wildly variant denotations and uses found throughout Rhetoric and Composition's academic literature; and made throughout this chapter as we observed Literature Studies' habit of adapting voice to the exigencies of practitioners' projects. It is that voice, for all its easy surface similarities with other linguistic phenomena such as metaphor and style, reveals a radical and largely unstudied side of English Studies, which is

that when the need warrants, as it apparently does at present, English Studies seems able to fashion certain aspects of itself a-historically and out of nearly whole cloth. All disciplines are "invented," but contemporary critical attention to invention presumes either self-awareness of the nature and degree of a discipline's reflexive constructedness or awareness of the need for self-awareness. With some exceptions, such as Stephen Ross' survey of major critical approaches to voice and Sara van den Berg's attention to a definition of voice in The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry², Literature Studies has done what appears to be largely natural to the human inventors of "invented" academic disciplines -- to presume for voice a stable, accepted meaning and to act on it accordingly. The degree to which this presumption penetrates English Studies is well-illustrated by an example from the literature of stylistics: Michael J. Toolan's The Stylistics of Fiction.

Stylistics, with its close ties to linguistics, would seem to be the side of Literature Studies most inclined to scrutinize voice as a technical term for definitional precision in the service of application, as it does other terms, such as style, tone, clause, phrase, transformation, transitivity, animacy, and agency, to cite just a few examples. And indeed, Michael Toolan's opening sketch of "the wider background of

orthodox literary and linguistic studies, particularly as these on bear on influential theorizations of such key notions as style, stylistics, literature, and linguistics" (1) suggests that if we are to find in English Studies close attention to the precise meaning of voice *when the term is used*, we will find it in stylistics. His two opening chapters include the sub-headings "Style and literary linguistics," "Style and the bi-planar model of language," "Literary linguistics and its critics," Theory and rhetoric," "Referentiality," and "Stylistics and deconstruction."

Considerable time is taken to define, explain, and at times to explore such terms as "bi-planar model of language," "referentiality," "intention," and "meaning," but "voice" is presumed to have a stable, accepted denotation known to Toolan's audience and therefore to be a topic needing no special attention. [Before I proceed, I must note, as in earlier discussions of this same matter, that I mean no criticism of Toolan on the basis of the content he chooses to cover. The Stylistics of Fiction is not a book on voice, and voice need not receive undue attention in it. However, as I have pointed out earlier, when voice is foregrounded, as it is in a subsection of The Stylistics of Fiction entitled "Merged Voices in Go Down Moses," the reader naturally expects to find herself and the author on common ground regarding the meaning of the term; as with Booth and Ferry [see page 306],

this she does not find.

Toolan's first use of voice in The Stylistics of Fiction is found on page six in a discussion of the directions contemporary literary criticism has taken:

Influential critics are those who acknowledge and analyse the cultural conventions and conditions affecting what a society admits as artistic literature, the intricate network of (often binary) categorizations, privileging one, excluding or marginalizing the other, investing with voice here, silencing there . . .

His next use of voice is found fifty-four pages later following a detailed review of stylistics' modern contexts -- linguistics, literary linguistics, critical theory, rhetoric, theories of referentiality, and deconstruction. He opens the section containing voice's second appearance by explaining that he will

. . . review some of the major difficulties encountered in taking a literary-linguistic approach to a novel . . . [and] . . . give the reasons for focusing this study particularly on progressive verbs, pronouns, and causal connectives . . . (59 - 60).

He also notes that Faulkner's "prose is highly variable, a supple instrument capable of . . . full and terse or graphic styles . . . , Hemingway tough-talk style, a naive-experiential style an lyric-romantic style, an opaque ratiocinative style, and so on . . ." (60). He then makes the telling observation: that [o]ne of the stylistician's problems thus becomes that of adequately distinguishing and characterizing these separate **styles or voices** [my emphasis] that contribute to the polyphony of a Faulknerian novel" (60).

Thus, as nearly everywhere in Literature Studies and as very often throughout English Studies generally, Toolan initially uses *voice* synonymously with *style*. This would not be a problem if theory and consistency accompanied such usage, but we are beginning to see from examples cited throughout this chapter that a first use of the term voice tends to loosen constraints on the meaning of the term. Bakhtin's early mention of voice denotes style but his later uses (although he does not abandon style as a "meaning" of voice) emphasize the rhetorical phenomenon of intentionality. In A Rhetoric of Irony, Wayne Booth's discussion of "the ironist's voice" begins with a concept of voice as a rhetorical phenomenon which is soon converted in voice as a "style or tone" (176). Anne Ferry bundles a collection of concepts, including style,

into voice, but ends up favoring voice as tone; the problem the critical reader runs into in this instance is that tone is used liberally to sometimes denote the standard definition of author's attitude toward his or her subject matter and audience and at other times to denote a "quality of sound" in writing that leads to a "vision" of philosophical and theological concepts. We find similar patterns in the way Toolan uses voice.

After the "styles or voice" phrase on page sixty, voice appears next in an example of the kinds of checklists stylisticians commonly use in crafting an analysis of style: along with "sentence adverbials (disjuncts)," "modal verbs," and "mood," Toolan lists "voice (especially passivization" (68). Eight pages later he begins a rather detailed review of the theories and controversies associated with free indirect discourse (FID). Relying on such specific and bounded terminology as "framing introductory clause," "modal adverbials," and "narratorial assertion," he reaches at the end of four densely-packed paragraphs a conclusion that reads thus:

But in all cases the distinct voice of the character inhabits text that nominally emanates from the narrator, often resulting in a jarring co-telling. All FID, it can be argued, reveals this duality of voice or accent" (75).

So within 75 pages of a 320 page volume, voice has denoted style, passivity (in the grammatical sense), and accent. From thereon the term "dual-voice" and variations -- "duality of voices" and "double-voiced" (both on 78) are used as needed, with an apparent common understanding of meaning assumed between writer and audience.

Toolan makes frequent use of voice in a section of Chapter Three entitled "Merged Voices in Go Down Moses." He discusses the difference between "narratorial point of view" and "narrative voice, what constitutes "narratorial voice," and what "voice [is] rendered" in FID (all on 79 - 80). In "A Rhetoric of Free Characters," the section that follows "Merged Voices . . .," the term "anonymous Voice" appears in a passage cited from O. Vickery's The Novels of William Faulkner, 1959, and in Chapter 4, "Progressive Verbal Forms in the Narrative," the term "middle-voice, one-participant clauses" (95) appears in a discussion of "the type and aspect of the finite verbs, and the options in transitivity which they realize" (95). Beyond this point the term voice does not appear again as Toolan moves on to other matters.

4.5. Conclusion: Literature Studies and Voice

What we have seen in the preceding description of Michael Toolan's use of voice in an overview of contemporary stylistics and then in a

stylistic analysis of William Faulkner's style, culminating in a defense of stylistics, is two characteristic approaches observed in earlier examples cited throughout this chapter. In the first of these, critics, aware of the need to define voice, define it idiosyncratically to suit their particular projects; we saw this in Bakhtin, Genette, and Josipovici. In the second approach, critics, assuming a common understanding of what voice is, use the term unreflectively; this results in slippage around the meaning of voice, resulting as we have seen in Ferry's numerous denotations for voice, including narrator, narrator's presence, tone, style, and point of view, and in Toolan's references to voice as style, as passive voice in the grammatical sense, and as "accent." He also uses literary-rhetorical formulations, such as narratorial voice and double-voicedness. The wide distance he has traveled between voice-as-style and double-voicedness can be illustrated by substituting style for "voicedness": apart from its semantic and stylistic awkwardness, "double-styledness" neither denotes nor connotes the content and the nuances of "double-voicedness," but Toolan does not overtly indicate any awareness of the direction his uses of voice have taken him.

Voice remains an unexamined matter throughout most of Literature Studies more because of the nature of the term itself than because of

negligence on the part of critics who use the term. "Voice" seems as transparently denotative as "mind" or "self," and it functions metaphorically -- voice of the shuttle, Milton's epic voice -- as comfortably as "leg of a table" or "arm of the chair." It is the task of the student of voice to dislodge voice from its home ground, examine it, perhaps refine it, and then to return it from where it came either with its facets sharpened or with a clearer understanding of what sharpening might require. To do this we must next look in detail at the most complete theory of voice we have at present, which is found in the work of Walter Ong.

NOTES
Chapter Four

¹Cited respectively from Gressett (vision or the gaze), Matthews, and Slatoff in Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice, 4.

² In The Action of Ben Jonson's Poetry, Sara van den Berg defines voice and describes its role in Jonson's poetry as follows: "'Voice' designates not the historical person who was Ben Jonson, not even the representation of the poet's consciousness in the text, but self in action, that capacity of Jonson which is occasioned by the specific circumstances he addresses in a particular poem. In part, 'voice' is a matter of rhythm and syntax: the strong sentence set against the strong iambic line; the recurrent pattern of initial negation, assertion, and qualification; the interplay of lavish catalogue and the one right word; the abrupt thrust that suddenly constricts narrative or dialogue into a single epigrammatic point. Yet 'voice' cannot be reduced to an abstract list of rhetorical schemes or tropes. It also involves the choice of a role appropriate to the occasion of a poem: father, friend, admirer, satirist, critic, professional writer. Manner and tone are even more important than role. in every role he plays, Jonson fashions for himself a stance of personal power and autonomy. He presumes to stand outside of the occasion he addresses, so that his response to it can be shaped by his own moral and poetic standards, not dictated entirely by the demands of the occasion. 'Voice' is both the consequence and the expression of the drama of Ben Jonson's poetry, the action of shaping a response to an occasion.

Jonson's poetry gains its distinctive realism from the energies of voice. . . ." (12).

CHAPTER FIVE
VOICE AS DESIRE:
THE ORALITY-LITERACY INTERACTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR
VOICE IN ENGLISH STUDIES

5.1. Voice: The "Floating Signifier"

1

The portrait of voice in English Studies sketched in this Dissertation relies on two sources: academic literature and database records of that literature. Seen solely from the point of view of certain recent studies found in the literature, we might conclude that progress finally has been made toward a definition of voice despite the disorderly atmosphere historically surrounding voice in English Studies. Rhetoric and Composition's history of direct attention to what voice is has produced, most recently, Peter Elbow's five "meanings" for voice: audible, dramatic, characteristic style, authority, and presence (1994); Kathleen Blake Yancey's bipartite formulation of "means of expression" and metaphor, the former of which subdivides into the "interact[ing] variables of writer, reader, and the language, knowledge, and culture of each" (1994); and Frank Farmer's distillation of ideas from Vygotsky and Bakhtin, establishing a theoretical foundation for voice as determined by its

developmental, rhetorical, and historical contexts which create "the arena of living dialogue from whence it [voice] derives its only meaning: the colloquy of other voices" (318).

Literature Studies' attention to voice, while more abbreviated and tangential than Rhetoric and Composition's, is not without its significant contributions to an understanding of the term: they include Wayne Booth's "The Author's Voice in Fiction" (Rhetoric, 169) and his discovery of Bakhtin's work; Gerard Genette's and Gabriel Josipovici's work; and the efforts of practitioners -- Anne Ferry, Stephen Ross, and Sara van den Berg come to mind -- to develop, use and extend theories of voice in their criticism. And we have seen, Creative Writing, while remaining relatively uninterested in what voice is, uses the term as naturally and matter-of-factly as it does tone or style, suggesting more certainly than do Rhetoric and Composition and Literature Studies that voice's meaning, if not its formal definition, is agreed upon and known to whomever chooses to use the term.

However, this Dissertation has also shown that database information sketches a portrait of voice far less sanguine than the one described above, amounting to something like the difference between a Renoir and a Rauschenberg. Analyses of diction extracted from database

abstracts show that while theorists such as Peter Elbow may have sorted the meanings of voice into five categories, voice and the practitioners who use the term typically subvert such neatly-formulated models. They write imperatively (voice *must be found*). They write of **written, personal, and multiple voices**; of kinds of voices from **adult to storyteller's to polyphonic**; of voice as object (**acted on, lost, distorted, known**); of voice as subject (voice can **act, oppress, shift, and evolve**); and as defined (**point of view, authenticity, writer's attitude, and metaphor**). This Dissertation has also shown -- perhaps most clearly in Literature Studies -- that an initial denotation for voice is no guarantee of consistency throughout a document. When a single term denotes concepts as different as a *grammatical construct* and *accent* within a discipline as precise about its terms as stylistics, then we may reasonably conclude that we have something to account for beyond a writer's apparent inattention to terminology.

II

In the Introduction to *Voices on Voice*, Kathleen Blake Yancey makes two especially prescient observations about the definition-of-voice problem. The first is that as her project to "identify what voice is, or to identify what voice seemed to mean to various writers, or to outline

what the metaphor of voice could mean" (vii) came up against the problem of definition, the definitions she located seemed

to argue rather than explain. The features such definitions emphasize lay the foundation for the new argument, which (of course) is that voice is exactly *not* what is claimed by the prior definitions. The aims in these definitions aren't to locate voice historically or semantically but to provide a reason for rewriting what exists. These definitions confuse precisely because they are incomplete and ahistorical (viii).

The second of Yancey's observations is that "voice . . . was a concept signifying different things to different people, a floating signifier changing from one text to the next (Crowley in Yancey, viii). Yancey's response to these vexing matters was to publish a collection of essays on voice by prominent Compositionists in order to "inquire into voice, into the ways we use the term, into what we enable and what we constrain: theoretically, personally, personally, conventionally, pedagogically, culturally, ideologically, technologically" (xx).

In my view, the problem with Yancey's approach is that she puts the fox in charge of the hen house. There is evidence throughout all of English Studies, and especially in Composition where voice has been "inquired

into" for over thirty years, that what may most be needed to "inquire into" voice successfully is distance, perspective, and "alien" (other-disciplinary) epistemologies, hermeneutics, and ontologies. There has rightly been resistance in English Studies to applying uncritically the premises and methods of other disciplines, most notably and notoriously the "scientific method" of both the hard and soft sciences. Nevertheless, there is the occasional idea that transcends the boundaries of discipline and specialty. Applied judiciously, mindful of the points of fit and misfit, Thomas Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions goes a long way toward helping illuminate the structures of non-scientific "revolutions," including the "paradigm shift" that re-visioned Rhetoric and invented contemporary Composition. As a reverse example, the academy's recent "rhetorical turn," its discovery and embrace of work originating in Rhetoric, Composition, and Discourse Analysis, shows that disciplinary boundaries need not bind good ideas serving good purposes. It is with the above in mind that I will turn in this final chapter to work done somewhat outside English Studies for a final attempt to learn more about voice in English Studies.

Walter Ong is identified in Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word as "University Professor of Humanities and Professor of

Humanities in Psychiatry at Saint Louis University, Missouri" (cover blurb), and the scope of his work suggests that perhaps this is as close as one can get to describing his academic discipline, although he is also known as a cultural linguist and rhetorician. His work is important to this Dissertation for four reasons which also provide the design of this final chapter.

- 1. His close, initial association with the Voice Project places him historically at the beginning of the first relatively systematic effort to apply theories of voice in writing to the problems of teaching students to write. However, the Voice Project illustrates yet again how voice and its advocates (in this case, not Ong but some of his associates) tend to (apparently necessarily) both radicalize and subvert their contexts and their projects.**
- 2. His work on the nature of orality and literacy offers us the most fully developed and carefully reasoned theories of voice yet attempted.**
- 3. His voice-theories offer insight into some of the most vexing of the questions, contradictions, and paradoxes found throughout English Studies in relation to the matter of voice in writing and**
- 4. His theories point to ways voice in English Studies might be**

studied, understood and used more effectively than at present.

5.2 Walter Ong and the Voice Project

In Voice in Writing John Ward Amberg traces "[t]he idea for a Voice Project, in which a preliminary body of teaching activities based on the concept of voice would be developed" (101) to discussions taking place in 1965 within a subgroup of the President's Science Advisory Committee. Later that year a committee chaired by Walter Ong at the Tufts Seminar to Initiate New Experiments in Undergraduate Instruction took up the topic of voice in writing "within the contexts of the functions of English teaching" (102). In the course of discussions, John Hawkes, a committee member, brought up Ong's essay, "Voice as Summons for Belief" in relation to "the issue of voice" (102). Eventually committee members

... agreed that one of the problems of students (and others) in writing was finding their real selves, and that finding oneself was the obverse of finding others to whom one was really talking ... The relationship of the speaking voice to the 'authorial' voice of the writer was discussed at some length: the two are most often quite different and yet intimately related (Voice Project, 1967, 5 in Amberg, 102).

They "further agreed that a writing project to explore the use of voice as

a teaching concept ought to be proposed" (103) to help students circumvent "some of the limitations of the more conventional rhetorical approaches to the teaching of writing and to [help] the student to write not 'machine prose' (as Albert Guerard called 'voiceless writing') but a prose that was identifiable as the student's own" (Voice Project, XIV in Amberg, 103).

From thereon the Voice Project essentially became John Hawkes' project: he became a spokesman for the advocates [on the Tufts Committee] for the use of voice to teach writing" (104); he wrote the addendum attached to the Tufts Seminar report proposing a "voice project" and the methods eventually used in the Voice Project to link the speaking voice and writing by way of a "belief [Amberg's term, my emphasis] that, even though the products of speech and writing are dissimilar, their tacit relationship is important" (105). He proposed that the vehicle for exposing and exploring that relationship be certain methods used by actors in rehearsal of the kind he had observed at the San Francisco Actor's Workshop in 1964:

I was able to see something very like the writing process being acted out unintentionally by people who, as actors in a community situation, were nonetheless closely related to the

'silent' writer. I became increasingly aware that acting, which reveals the almost immediately perceivable relationship between gesture and word, could be a very real means for bridging the various distances that exist in writing courses and for making concrete the problems and realities of voice (Voice Project, 20 in Amberg, 105).

Ironically, by 1982 Ong describes drama as "lack[ing] a narrative voice" (Orality, 148) because [t]he narrator has buried himself so completely in the text, [that he has] disappeared beneath the voices of his characters" (148). There was of course no way for Hawkes, et al to know the direction Ong would take on this matter, but as I will show later in this chapter, familiarity with Ong's work might have led one to proceed more cautiously with premises about the relationship between voice in writing and drama.

That Hawkes postulates from Ong's premises ideas about "problems and realities of voice" (in Amberg, 105), about teaching voice, and about a writing-process mimesis linked to the methods and dynamics of theater rehearsals illustrates yet again what I have shown throughout this Dissertation. Voice has the curious and predictable effect of loosening the constraints that otherwise guide and at times govern academic

enterprises. It is one thing to postulate and then inquire into relationships between ideas and activities, such as voice and teaching methods. It is quite another to **believe in** such relationships, to **assert** their characteristics, and then to act on belief and assertion.

Chapter Two provides examples of such faith-based, personalized approaches to voice: Donald Bartholomae's "I want," "I feel I must," and "I must call on some faith;" Donald Stewart's "your way," "your words," and "your authentic voice;" and the entire "Evangelistic" project as critiqued by I. Hashimoto. The John Hawkes-Voice Project example shows us that such approaches to voice and writing are found at the very genesis of voice in contemporary Composition. Chapter Four has shown that throughout Literature Studies, voice is generally defined in whatever way suits a particular writer's particular project, even in as tightly-disciplined sub-categories of English Studies as stylistics.

What Chapter Five will show in the sections that follow is that reasoning systematically toward a theory of voice in writing is not only possible, it has been done. This is not to say that all questions are answered nor that we have a complete theory of voice nor that the theory we have is necessarily accurate (although I think that its many strengths recommend it as the most accurate of the theories we have). It is to say

that cognizance of efforts already made, whether we agree with the results or not, frees us from the heavy reliance on belief, argument, presumption, and improvisation that we witness throughout English Studies when the matter of voice comes up. It also increases the chances that, being aware of what voice is for us -- in Sharon Crowley's term, a "floating signifier" -- we may decide as a discipline not by default but by design that voice as "floating signifier" does or does not suit our and our discipline's purposes. With this in mind, then, we turn to Walter Ong's work on voice.

5.3. A Theory of Voice in Writing

I

Walter Ong's contributions to a theory of voice in writing derive from his larger, decades-long project of studying the dynamics of orality and literacy. The part of that project in which a theory of voice is worked out most fully is found in The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History, 1967, which is based on lectures delivered at Yale University in 1964. Ong describes The Presence of the Word as being "concerned with a matter of evident religious implication: with the word, chiefly the spoken word, but also its interior, imaginary counterparts" (ix). It is this second aspect of his

topic -- the spoken word's "interior, imaginary counterparts" -- that will be of interest to us here because "interior," "imaginary" phenomena are what constitute the idea that the **written word**, an invention surrounded by an invention of its own invention -- "a vast, artificially contrived media" (ix) -- paradoxically retains "all the richness of human life" (x) and can be studied in "its original and still natural habitat, the world of voice, of sound" (x).

Ong's detailed attention to "word as sound" (111) begins in Chapter Three, which itself begins both with a synopsis of those premises advanced and argued earlier in The Presence of the Word and those to be introduced and argued in the course of the chapters that follow them. They include the following:

- Sound is a time-bound phenomenon and is "irreduc[ible] to purely spatial categories" (111).
- "*Sound is more real or existential than other sense objects, despite the fact that it is also more evanescent*" [Ong's emphases] (111). It requires a "discernibly active" (111) source existent in the presence. The result is "involvement with the present, with here-and-now existence and activity" (111).
- "Sound signals the present use of power, since sound must be in

active production in order to exist at all" (112). In this way, he explains, sound differs from the other senses in that "[o]ther things one senses may reveal actual present use of power, as when one watches the drive of a piston in an engine . . . but vision can reveal also mere quiescence, as in a still-life display. Sound can induce repose, but it never reveals quiescence. It tells us that something is going on . . . Force is operating" (112)

- As the foregoing are the characteristics of sound, and as words in their original state are sounded phenomena, it follows that "spoken words themselves have an aura of power" (112) and that words spoken in the presence of an audience have "real power: the king's statement that so-and-so is his representative makes him his representative as nothing else does" (112).

- Words are an event by virtue of their being spoken, regardless of the cultural context in which they are spoken -- oral-aural or written-literate. An example cited commonly is "[t]he Hebrew use of the word *dabar* to mean both word and event . . . [which] is perfectly consistent . . . with the very nature of words themselves" (113).

- "Since sound is indicative of here-and-now activity, the word as

sound establishes here-and-now presence (113) . . . One cannot have voice without presence, at least suggested presence. *And voice . . . being the paradigm of all sound for man* [my emphasis], sound itself thus of itself suggests presence. Voice is not inhabited by presence as something added: it simply conveys presence as nothing else does" (114).

Having advanced the preceding series of premises relating to sound, Ong turns next to the paradoxical relationships between sounded and written words. He approaches his main point -- that writing is necessarily less "powerful" and "accurate" than speech -- through a series of corollaries that include the assertions that writing causes words to "appear to be disengaged from nonverbal actuality to the extent to which technological man today commonly takes them to be" (114), which is a radical extent; that "[r]educed by writing to objects in space, words can be compared with other objects and seen to be quite different; that "reduced by writing to objects in space, [words] are one remove from actuality, less real (although more permanent) than when they are spoken" (114); and that "the spoken word, evanescent though it is and elusive though it is and lumped with other nonverbal activity though it is, is nevertheless in the deepest sense more real and more really a word than the word sensed,

through writing (and even more through print), as something different from 'things'" (115).

||

Our thinking about the nature of written discourse has advanced a very long way since 1967, the publication date of The Presence of the Word. Non-representational theories of discourse, discourse analysis, epistemic rhetoric, reader response theories, and speech act theory have taught us that the terms in which Ong framed his arguments in 1967 -- the reality/unreality of spoken/written words -- essentially misstate matters to the point of impeding productive inquiry into them. The differences between written and spoken language are the differences between different semiotic systems, not the differences between "real" and "unreal" versions of the same system. However, Ong himself reframes these matters in Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word, 1982, acknowledging, at times drawing on, and at other times debating the work of structuralists, deconstructionists, reader-response theorists, speech-act theorists, and textualists, so the fact that we find The Presence of the Word situated in its cultural, temporal, and academic contexts should not deter us from using those aspects of its arguments that retain their vigor and validity. Among them continues to be Ong's

probing of the power of sounded words, which necessarily includes a simultaneous probing of the power of voice, as words are necessarily sounded only by voice, by reproduced "voice" (as by recorded, synthesized, or digitalized means), or by the imagination.

In similarly dated terms, Ong moves beyond reality/unreality differences between speech and writing to observe that writing is often thought of as the purview of "the very specially gifted and specially trained individuals, professional writers or literary artists who can use writing often in specially controlled or limited circumstances, in truly exceptional ways" (115). It is such a view that Expressionist Rhetoric argues against, following its conviction that virtually everyone is capable of powerfully expressing an inner, discoverable, essential self, leading to "writing with power" in nearly any situation. It is also a view that Composition's general academic project opposes in its mission to teach nearly anyone to write well. However, by 1977 in Interfaces of the Word, Ong's analysis of the abstracted positions of writer and writing -- both removed as they are from "real" interaction between a "real" audience and a "real" speaker -- took the form of what has become one of Rhetoric and Composition's truisms: that "[t]he writer's audience is always a fiction" (54 - 81, cited in Orality and Literacy, 177). As he explains,

[t]he fictionalizing of readers is what makes writing so difficult. The process is complex and fraught with uncertainties. I have to know the tradition -- the intertextuality, if you wish -- in which I am working so that I can create for real readers fictional roles that they are able and willing to play. It is not easy to get inside the minds of absent persons most of whom you will never know. But it is not impossible if you and they are familiar with the literary tradition they work in" (Orality and Literacy, 177).

It is one of this Dissertation's major arguments that the recent popularity of the term voice throughout English Studies and its exceptionally common, multiply denotative uses across English Studies' sub-disciplines is partly explained as a paradoxical reaction to English Studies' and Linguistics' successes as they probe the characteristics and dynamics of writing. Having argued accepted and contributed to the argument that writing is an invention, a technology, that "texts are inherently contumacious" (79), that "a written text is basically unresponsive" (79), and that "[o]ne of the most startling paradoxes inherent in writing is its close association with death" (81) while paradoxically "... the deadness of the text, its removal from the living

human lifeworld, its rigid visual fixity, assures its endurance and its potential for being resurrected into limitless living contexts by a potentially infinite number of living readers (1977, 230 - 71 in Orality and Literacy, 81), English Studies has unwittingly turned somewhat against its new silent abstract, denatured textworld to embrace, at least in diction and in impulse if not in theory, "the old oral, mobile, warm, personally interactive lifeworld (80) of "voice." One can test this out by reviewing once again the identities and qualities attached to voice by English Studies practitioners. In a sampling documents cited in this Dissertation from across English Studies, we find that voice is characterized as **adult, Gothic, lyric, storyteller's, personal, reason, poetic, writer's, philosophy, tool, pace, and language diversity; as "gesture," and the "movement of a telling"** (Shiflett in Amberg, 45); as **"the human sound that rises from the written page"** (Murray, 32 - 33); as **"mother's milk" and "electricity"** (Elbow, 286); and as conveying a **"vision" of "the inner life of every man in its eternal relation to nature, to history, and to God"** (Ferry, 181).

III

From very early on this Dissertation has asserted, adapting Ong, that a study of voice yields information about the interior structures of

English Studies. Applied to English Studies, such an assertion is metaphoric in nature, as English Studies is in no way an apparatus governed by acoustical principles, but to a certain extent the same could be said of the human organism which produces sound both acoustically and intelligently and whose sound is thus distinguished fundamentally from the sound produced by other living organisms and by objects.

Nevertheless, it is in my view a measure of an unusual depth of insight that Ong's observation that "*[s]ound is a special sensory key to interiority*" [Ong's emphases] (117) operates on literal, metaphorical, and psychological levels and that Ong is able to argue persuasively that this is the case.

The interiority that interests Ong is an existential one. Like other such concepts, such as direction and interiority, attempts at definition are relentlessly and necessarily circular and ultimately "point not to an abstract set of relations but to an existent historical situation or event or series of events" (119). Regarding direction, for example, "... the sun sets regularly in a certain position. The definition [of west in Webster's Seventh New College Dictionary, 1963] can only point to the historical, existential fact and structure itself of this fact" (119). The same is true of interiority, exteriority, in, and out:

Ultimately the meaning of in and out or interior and exterior depends on pointing to a historical or existential fact, a fact which appears ultimately to be of self and other, our experience of ourselves as existing somehow inside our bodies with an exterior world outside. What we mean by in and out comes from our experience of ourselves. We find ourselves situated in insidedness and outsidedness. Our bodies are a frontier, and the side which is most ourselves is 'in' (119).

Our perception of interiority is not of course limited only to the sound that emanates from an organism or object. Through sight we perceive surfaces revealed to us through both reflected and direct light sources; through taste we determine

"what is agreeable or disagreeable for intussusception by one's own organism (food) or psyche (aesthetic taste). Touch, including kinesthesia, helps form the concepts of exteriority and interiority. We explore tactually the inside of a box . . . But to explore an interior, touch must violate the interior, invade it, even break it open. Kinesthesia, it is true, gives me access to my own interior without violation -- I feel myself somehow inside my own body and feel my body inside my own

skin -- but kinesthesia gives me direct access to nothing but myself. Other interiors are inaccessible to it (except through empathy, indirectly) (117 - 118).

But through sound we are able to determine interiors without invading them. A tapped wall reveals if it is hollow or solid, flatware if it is silver or silver-plated. The tone and pitch of a French horn change as the player's hand is inserted into the bell to alter the horn's physical interiority and thus its sound. There is no need for the trained auditor or musician to see the hand; the ear perceives all -- in short, Presence.

Ong also explores links between intelligence, sound, and voice, arguing that [t]he increasing exploitation of voice as one moves up the evolutionary scale toward greater 'interiority' of being parallels the movement toward intelligence . . ." (121) and asserting that "[i]ntelligence, in its subhuman analogue [porpoises, chimpanzees] as in its human form, is closely associated with sound" (121). This leads to another of his premises that apply to voice in English Studies as well as to literal sound: "Sound unites groups of living beings as nothing else does" (122). The evidence he advances argues for "some relationship between resort to sound and socialization (122), which is not an "absolute" (122) relationship but an important one nevertheless,

particularly as organisms ascend the evolutionary scale: "the fact that sound signals present, ongoing activity gives it immediate value in establishing social relations, particularly flexible ones in variable situations. Sound reciprocates . . . [and] therefore, sound is useful for eliciting true responses from other living organisms, even at a distance" (123). In human beings, the effect is profound and is accomplished through the sound of voice forming and projecting word and thereby intelligence, thought, and interiority:

Because the spoken word moves from interior to interior, encounter between man and man is achieved largely through voice. The modes of encounter are innumerable -- a glance, a gesture, a touch, even an odor -- but among these the spoken word is paramount. Encounters with others in which no words are ever exchanged are hardly encounters at all. The written word alone will not do, for it is not sufficiently living and refreshing. The scholar, isolated in his den with his books and sheets of paper, is plunged into words, but he is still liable to the charge of being 'dead' . . . Man must give meaning and life to his actions, including his study of books, by his encounters with others, which means that in one way or

another, explicitly or implicitly, he must relate his other actions to spoken words (126).

And voice exteriorizes and interiorizes words, interior to interior, exterior to exterior. As Ong puts it, "Voice, for man the paradigm of all sound, manifests the actual use of power by the most interior of interiors, a person" (163). It is in voice "in which communication between man and man (man is the deepest of interiors) flowers as in no other sensory manifestation. Voice is alive . . . because sound is alive" (309).

5.4. Implications for English Studies

English Studies is of all the academic disciplines the one that works most self-consciously, most reflexively, and most relentlessly with the word. Having turned its attention over the last thirty years to the word itself, having tried to theoretically disentangle the word from its messy human cargo -- including the "objective" intellectual cargo of humanism, faculty psychology, Romanticism, and New Criticism -- it has achieved some success at a price. It has rightly abandoned theories of direct representation between thing and word; it has illuminated the word as text, as a phenomenon that needs and awaits a human reader/interpreter/responder; it has identified, described, and probed the

constructed (and deconstructable) cultural, social, political, and textual contexts of word/text; it accepts and acts on the maxims that "all text is pretext" and that the "writer's audience is always a fiction" (Ong, 1977, 54 - 81); it has asserted the death of the author and the birth, in its place, of discourse; it has denied foundationalism; and it has reasserted, after many centuries, the fundamentally rhetorical nature of writing and speaking.

Along the way, however, English Studies has found itself facing its own constructed world of radically relative signs, and while a return to the old world order preceding critical theory, historicism, and rhetoricism is both unlikely and undesirable, there is evidence in English Studies of a need, at times unwitting, to humanize and soften theory without radically revising or reversing it. It has been a major premise of this Dissertation that this very human need, embedded in an academic discipline grounded in, encompassed by, and defined by the human word explains in part what we find once we realize that voice, the floating signifier, signifies something quite specific: a desire that the abstract, sited codes of sight, the "dissecting sense" (Ong, *Orality*, 72), evoke the bodily, enveloping, harmonizing features of sound, the 'aggregative' (73) sense and a desire to close/bridge the real/perceived fissures between

the abstract world of textual signs and the concrete world within which they are situated and from which they seem to emanate. It has also been a major premise of this Dissertation that voice's persistent, peripatetic presence throughout English Studies' written academic literature signals matters that English Studies will eventually need to understand and directly address. They include

- The importance of the ancient, hardy, and perhaps necessary epistemological, psychological, and physiological oral coloration carried by the word "voice" into English Studies' essentially (theoretically, at least) voiceless literate world of print.
- The persistent conflict between theories advancing the existence of silent, unsounded script anticipating and needing resurrection by, and interaction with, a human reader/responder and the human desire to project thought and imagined sound onto all script, before, and regardless of, whether it is read or not. Related to this is the human habit of imagining sound, of thinking in sound, and of infusing the written word with imagined sound, regardless of whether the word is actually sounded or not.
- The old and very deep conflicts between orality and literacy that still animate human activity in this late-stage culture of secondary

orality that we presently inhabit. Text-saturated as we are, we have found in audio media (itself paradoxically deeply, fundamentally dependent on literacy) connections and disconnections with the old, primary orality:

Secondary orality is both remarkably like and remarkably unlike primary orality. Like primary orality, secondary orality has generated a strong group sense, for listening to spoken words forms hearers into a group, a true audience, just as reading written or printed texts turns individuals in on themselves. But secondary orality generates a sense for groups immeasurably larger than those of primary oral culture -- McLuhan's 'global village'. Moreover, before writing, oral folk were group minded because no feasible alternative had presented itself. In our age of secondary orality, we are group-minded self-consciously and programmatically. The individual feels that he or she, as an individual, must be socially sensitive" (136). This suggests a partial (though certainly not the full) explanation for Composition's intense interest in group processes and dynamics and for English Studies' general recent interest in the "voicing" of groups'

identities, issues, and problems.

- **The evidence, some of which is presented in this Dissertation, that English Studies practitioners will use the term voice in ways that suit their own purposes, regardless of whether those ways are sanctioned by formal definitions codified in handbooks or by researcher's efforts to arrive at definitions disseminated by way of the academic literature. "Voice" as a technical term simply will not be reined in; doing so seems tantamount to reining in the voices (personal identities of the individuals) who voice voice.**
- **The need to study, describe, and then come to closure on discipline-wide inconsistencies in definitions and uses of the term voice. Closure might require, as explained below, that English Studies accept in the term voice an unprecedented degree of ambiguity and latitude when it comes to definition, application, and pedagogy.**

5.5. Conclusion

5.5.1 On Voice

This Dissertation does not argue that a single definition of voice is needed unless that definition acknowledges voice's range, conflicts, and paradoxes plus their human contexts; but such a "definition" could be no

definer (to end) tion (OED, 136), as voice, like cats, will not be bound by boundaries. Rather, definition might be replaced with assignation, the assigning to written voice its proper recognition not as a technical term, but as a metaphorical sign for whatever features, textures, tones, identities, utterances, vocalizations, actions, and contexts that human speakers/writers assign also to the human voice. If a stylistician wishes to denote X by voice or a Ben Jonson scholar the characteristics of Y, so be it. If the work of Literature Studies' practitioners abstracted in a database conveys through the word voice such concepts as **history, philosophy, teachings, tool, concept, quality, aspect, point of view, choices, and literary language**, so be it also.

Such a position as the one advanced above neither begs the question nor gives up the ghost. It does acknowledge that in English Studies, for the moment, *voice in its present, unbounded form is something English Studies seems to need*. Carnivalistic and dialogic like the novel, voice "does not participate in any harmony of the genres" (Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination, 4). This seems well-illustrated in Composition's latest efforts to describe voice, which strike this practitioner as having the unintended effect of denying voice. A description of voice as denoting just five possibilities -- audible, dramatic, recognizable or distinctive,

just five possibilities -- audible, dramatic, recognizable or distinctive, authoritative, and resonance or presence (Elbow in Yancey, 6 - 18) -- offers us a characterization well-bundled for a handbook or textbook but denies us insight into how and why, then, voice appears in authoritative disciplinary sources used as boldly as "self in action" (van den Berg, 11), as narrowly as "accent" (Toolan, 313). Clearly each of these characterizations fits at least one of Elbow's five categories, but just as clearly, each also fits all five. To use the apparently more narrow (and therefore presumably more limited of the two examples cited above, "accent" might simultaneously be audible, dramatic, recognizable or distinctive, authoritative, and resonant. And what might one do with one of the many examples cited earlier in this Dissertation, such as the abstract written by MH for ED238826 in which a book subtitled The Voice of the Ojibway People is described as a "book on the history, philosophy, and teachings of the Ojibway people"? The misfit between voice as denoting topics and voice as denoting effect (audible, dramatic, recognizable, authoritative, and resonant) is too obvious to ignore. One possible explanation for such findings (of which there are many other examples throughout this Dissertation) is that some English Studies practitioners practice their discipline and use its terminology more

carefully than others. But such a conclusion would also ignore what cannot be emphasized too strongly: that voice is, to use Ong's terms, the aggregative sign of aggregative orality contrasted with sight, the "dissecting" sense. It is more in the nature of voice to bundle up than to unbundle, be it self in action, five meanings for voice, or three aspects of the Ojibway people.

We would find ourselves a step closer to understanding voice in English Studies by drawing together the contributions of voice-theorists into an new, aggregated model of voice in writing -- one that acknowledges, reflects, and perhaps celebrates in English Studies the emergence of a new category of metaphorical, deliberately unbound technical terminology, for which the first candidate would be a simultaneously mimetic and metaphorical sign for the most powerful expressions of human presence -- voice -- in the most human of human inventions -- writing.

5.5.2. On Method

It is my contention that analyses of the textual characteristics of databases made this study's premises, overall findings, and conclusions possible. Voice has been studied by Smith, Amberg, and Hashimoto through the lens of collections of individual documents, fully retrieved. It has

been theorized through experiential reasoning by Elbow and others; through meta-analysis by Yancey, Spooner, and Farmer; and through critical analysis by Booth, Genette, Josipovici, van den Berg, and Toolan. However, it had not previously been studied aggregatively, in keeping with its own central, defining aggregative characteristics, until information became available through databases aggregatively, easily, and repeatedly. Frank Farmer reminds us that "[v]oice lessons are necessarily history lessons" (318). So are database lessons. The method advanced in this Dissertation could be applied to any collection of database documents, but surely the disciplines that produce and maintain databases -- computer sciences and information sciences -- inscribe themselves indelibly in their products and projects and could/should be among the first studied as such.

As I point out in the Preface to this Dissertation, when the I and the eye are willing to see differently, database information tells a coherent, textured, layered, and complex "story" very different from the one we are used to letting it tell us, which is a very short story about what a document is, who wrote it and when, and where it may be found. However, "letting" is a word we researchers must use rather advisedly, as we are never in full control of when, where, how, and in what form the technology

we need to see differently will be available to us. Nor do we ever really know what direction "seeing" might take. What we can do is sharpen our awareness of what may need understanding. In English Studies, this might include portraits of English Studies as it writes itself in its own course descriptions; in its web sites; and via other self-defining terms besides voice, as used within English Studies' own collections of self-defining documents. The companion term to "voice" would be "sight" and to sight, "point of view." Another term needing close study is "write," as in recent years it has come to mean far more than literal inscription. This Dissertation has focused mainly on the diction of database texts, but analyses of rhetoric, audience, intention, tropes, syntax, and grammar promise rich insights into English Studies as it voices/sees/writes itself at the end of the second millennium. The same could be done for any enterprise that writes itself in databases, and in my view this possibility of general use beyond English Studies strongly recommends continued experimentation with the methods of database analysis advanced in this Dissertation.

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Education

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Fifth Year and Washington State Standard Teaching Certificate, University of Washington, 1973.

B.A., English, University of Washington, 1969.

Publications

"Finding Our Voices: Participating in Teacher Research Groups."

Washington English Journal, Fall, 1989.

"The Personal Touch: What Helps Students Make Text-Base Revision Changes." Re-Seeing the Teaching of English, 1989.

Awards

Received the 1989 Excellence in Education Award, consisting of \$2,000.00 and a crystal apple. Credited with "drawing minority students into honors classes" [and] "play[ing] a key role in bringing college-level English and social-studies classes to Rainier Beach" (Seattle Times, May, 1989).