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VOICE AND THE FICTIONAL NARRATIVE: THE PRE-WRITING STAGE IN TEACHING COMPOSITION

By

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ABSTRACT

VOICE AND THE FICTIONAL NARRATIVE: THE PRE-WRITING STAGE IN TEACHING COMPOSITION

By

Donna Rose Casella-Kern

Over the past twenty years, critics and educators have been exploring the function of fictional narratives in teaching college composition. Though their theories and methodologies may differ, many agree that English departments have too long kept literature and composition apart. This study explores one method of using fictional narratives in beginning composition instruction; in the proposed course, the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives occur during the pre-writing stage of composing. The goal of the course is the stimulation and development of the student's voice through exposure to the voices of fictional narratives. The reading and interpretation of the narratives and accompanying oral and written in-class exercises stimulate and develop the student's voice in preparation for the actual composing process.

The first four chapters of this study present the theoretical basis for the proposed course. Chapter I reviews the theories and research on the relationship of reading and writing and on the use of fiction in composition instruction. Chapter II defines voice by identifying the elements of voice and the voice properties of discourse. One way to stimulate and develop the student's voice is by exposing the student to another's voice during the reading process. Chapter III studies what happens to the reader (and the reader's voice) during the

communication process of reading. Interpretation, the reader's response to the fiction writer's voice, is the subject of Chapter IV.

Chapter V explores the main goals of the proposed course and the pre-writing activities that can help students achieve these goals:

(1) to engage students in reading and interpreting fictional narratives in order to stimulate and develop their voice in preparation for the five major writing assignments: experience, place, person, philosophy of life/issue, autobiography;

(2) to focus student attention on (the) voice communicating) through (the fictional narrative) and on their own (developing voice.)

The fifth chapter analyzes the in-class exercises and presents sample student papers and student responses to the course. The appendix complements the last chapter by featuring the proposed syllabus, a list of suggested fictional narratives and samples of student papers.

The purpose of this study is to present the theory and methodology for introducing the fictional narrative into composition courses. The underlying assumption of the proposed course is that students can grow as writers if they can recognize voice in discourse and learn ways of developing voice; it is my belief that students can do this by reading and interpreting fictional narratives in the pre-writing stage of composition.

To Linda Wagner, my teacher and friend, who has given me so much support and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In six years of graduate study I have been influenced and encouraged by many people. I owe my appreciation to each one of them. I especially wish to thank Linda Wagner who has guided me and my ideas from the start of this study; Jay Ludwig who has spent long hours helping me to discover the implications of my ideas; Cathy Davidson, a teacher and scholar, who has served as my role model throughout my graduate studies; and Jenifer Banks, my colleague and friend, who has shared much of my enthusiasm for teaching and scholarship.

I also want to thank my writing students who in the past five years have patiently endured my experimenting and have been generous with their fruitful suggestions. My friends, too, have been patient; they have contributed to my enthusiasm for my work and kept my mind off my frustrations.

Finally, I must thank two people, Olga and Jim, who in their special way have encouraged me throughout my graduate studies. Olga, who has returned to college at the age of 42, has always shown an interest in my work; her academic enthusiasm and new-found knowledge have reminded me of the importance of teaching and learning. Jim, who has witnessed my confusion and discoveries, has been my editor, my comforter and my listening ear for the past six years. Throughout these years, he has continuously reassured me that I have something to give to my profession.

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INTRODUCTION

The use of reading in college composition instruction, especially the reading of fictional narratives, has been the subject of much discussion in the past two decades. Critics such as H. Alan Robinson claim that students can acquire ideas for writing through reading fiction; the reading assists them in making major content decisions during composing.[1] The critics James Britton and James Moffett[2] look at the process of reading fiction and the way it assists the process of writing non-fiction; through the act of reading, they argue, the student writer reaches an invaluable understanding about the role of writer and reader in the composing process.

The work of such critics as Moffett, Britton and Robinson has created a new perspective about the role of the fiction reader and writer in the composing and reading process. This understanding is useful in identifying the changes that occur in students when they read a work of fiction, and the ways these changes are related to what happens to the students when they begin the composing process. I propose that one of these changes occurs in the student writer's voice, that property which reflects something of the writer's identity. In this study I argue that a beginning composition course which utilizes the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives can stimulate and develop the writer's voice in preparation for the composing process. In the proposed course, the reading and interpreting of fiction are part of the pre-writing stage of composition.

When a student reads a work of fiction, that student hears the writer's voice communicating a particular experience and understanding to the reader. Voice individualizes one piece of discourse from another. According to the results of John Hawkes' Voice Project (1967),[3] voice conveys something of the writer's/speaker's personality. Hawkes also suggests that the message and style of a discourse are voice properties of that discourse. An identifiable voice is one the listener can hear and recognize in the content, structure and language of the discourse. Voice conveys something of the individual in all aspects of the discourse.

During interpretation, the reader assesses what the writer's voice has communicated in light of the reader's own past experiences and vision of life; as a result of this assessment, the student reader reaches a new self awareness. During interpretation, students use their voice to communicate (and hence validate) this growing self awareness. The student's exposure to the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives, then, can contribute to the development of the student's voice by allowing the student to continuously reassess the self and relation to the world.[4]

Because the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives can lead to the reader's self awareness, the activity can properly be termed <u>expressive</u>. The term <u>expressive</u> is taken from E. Sapir's <u>Culture, Language and Personality</u> (1961); he defines expressive activity as any activity that involves the reorganization or clarification of the individual's identity or sense of self. Any activity which uses language, according to Sapir, is expressive because language reflects

one's personality:

> In spite of the fact that language acts as a socializing and uniformizing force, it is at the same time the most potent single known factor for the growth of individuality . . . .the readiness with which words respond to the requirements of the social environment in particular the suitability of one's language to the language habits of the persons addressed--all these are so many complex indicators of the personality.[5]

Reading/interpreting of fiction is an expressive activity because during this activity, the individual undergoes an identity reorganization.

When the reading of fiction is placed in a composition course, the act of reading and interpreting occurs during the pre-writing stage of the composing process. Janet Emig and James Britton (Development, 1975) define pre-writing as an expressive stage, one in which the individual looks inward and redefines the self. Since the interpretation of fiction is an opportunity for students to undergo self assessment, the activity can be useful in pre-writing.[6] I believe that the fiction readings can stimulate and develop the writer's voice during the pre-writing stage; interpretation allows students to contemplate experiences and review beliefs, in preparation for composing.

The course methodology proposed in this study is based on the theory that the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives can serve a pre-writing function. The proposed course is divided into five units, each defined by the major writing assignment of that unit: narration of experience, description of place; description of person; philosophy of life/issue paper; and autobiography. Each unit is divided into two sections: Interpretive Activity and Voice Activity. During the Interpretive Activity section, students complete oral and

written exercises directly related to the reading assignment. These exercises require that students use their activated voice at the same time that they identify their voice and the voice of the narrative. In the Voice Activity section, students complete oral and written exercises that "tune up" the already activated voice. The purpose of the two activity sections is to prepare students for the composing process in each of the major writing assignments.

The reading of fictional narratives in a composition course can be a valuable and exciting teaching method, especially when the main focus is the development of the writer's and reader's voice. One goal of a composition course is to provide students with the atmosphere and opportunity to develop an individualized prose. The exploration of voice through exposure to the fictional narrative, and completion of related exercises, can aid students in this development.

NOTES

[1]H. Alan Robinson, ed., Reading and the Language Arts, Supplementary Educational Monographs, Number 93 (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963).

[2]James Britton, Language and Learning (London: Penguin Press, 1970), Development of Writing Abilities, 11-18 (London: Macmillan, 1975); James Moffett, Teaching the Universe of Discourse (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968).

[3]John Hawkes, "The Voice Project: An Idea for Innovation in the Teaching of Writing," in Writers as Teachers/Teachers as Writers, ed. Jonathan Baumbach (New York: Holt, 1970), pp. 89-145.

[4]Louise Rosenblatt believes that the reading process leads to the reader's new self awareness. The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1978).

[5]Edward Sapir, Culture, Language and Personality (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1961), p. 11

[6]Janet Emig, The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1971).

CHAPTER I

THE UNION OF READING AND WRITING: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In Sense and Sensitivity (1965), J.W. Patrick Creber argues that any instruction in composition, like writing instruction, that does not include listening is incomplete. Creber notes that one form of listening, the reading of literature, can complement writing instruction:

> Reading is the kind of knowledge which may make a real impact on the way of life of those who can use their imagination to realize the essence of truths which stated abstractly would otherwise be mere theory--indigestible, intellectual food.[1]

He explains that reading is a form of listening, because it is a means of taking in and translating the ideas of others. This process of listening by reading, he argues, assists students in the writing process by developing their imagination. As a result of reading, the quality of student writing will be a "fair reflection of their reading experience."[2] Creber's major argument, then, is that reading, which he defines as a listening process, provides students with a unique knowledge directly applicable to the writing process.

Creber's position reflects the general belief in the last two decades that reading and writing are inseparable language arts, that writing feeds on the knowledge acquired through reading.[3] Some critics,

like Creber, believe that the imagination is the link in both processes; the imagination functions when students read and write.[4] Such critics as James Britton, James Moffett and Mina Shaughnessy also have argued for the inseparability, but they link reading and writing as forms of discourse exchange.[5] Reading and writing, according to these critics, are discourse activities that involve the exchange of language. A reader uses language to comprehend the writer's message; the writer uses language to transmit the message. These critics have contributed somewhat different interpretations of the relationship between the two processes of reading and writing, but all agree that both processes are inseparable in composition instruction.

In light of the overwhelming support for the inseparability of reading and writing, it is surprising that few composition instructors use reading, especially the reading of fiction, in non-fiction composition classes.[6] In fact, a taboo seems to hang over this instructional method. The theoretical opposition to the use of fiction in composition instruction is negligible and much of this opposition stems only from the lack of innovative theories and research in support of the method. Maybe more instructors would use fiction if they could be shown its importance to the writer's growth. The work of such critics as Moffett, Britton, Louise Rosenblatt, Walter J. Ong, S.J., Wolfgang Iser and Mary Louise Pratt has paved the way for a solid theory and methodology in support of reading fiction in a composition course. These critics view the process of reading fiction as a dialogue between writer and reader, a dialogue that influences the way a reader thinks and writes. In line with these theories, I propose that the way the individual is influenced during this reading

process can be useful preparation for the writing process. The act of reading fiction stirs an individual to respond to the writer's voice--the message and personality behind the message; the reader's response indicates that the reader's voice has been activated and is undergoing change. The resulting growth in the reader's voice is invaluable to the reader as writer.

The following review of the literature explores those theories that establish the link between reading and writing and those that emphasize the importance of fiction in the writing classroom. The review is offered in preparation for a fuller exploration of the meaning of voice and the way it functions during the process of fiction reading and non-fiction writing. The brief overview begins by outlining those theories which view reading and writing as comparable language arts. The second part of the overview presents the theories in support of using fiction in a non-fiction composition course. The theories and methodologies for using fiction vary widely: fiction is used to exemplify style, help the reader discover paper topics, and so on. The theories and accompanying methodologies, however, that best account for the writer's growth as a result of reading fiction, emphasize reading and writing as process-oriented activities. Students can learn about style and generate ideas from reading fiction; however, the acquisition of such knowledge is symptomatic of a larger change in the overall make up of the reader.

The relationship among the language arts of reading and writing has dominated the work of twentieth-century researchers and

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critics in the fields of language learning and composition theory. Throughout the sixties and seventies, authorities in both fields recognized the impossibility of separating reading and writing instruction. These critics include H. Alan Robinson (1963), James Moffett (1968, 1976), William D. Page (1974), James L. Calhoun (1971), Peter Evanechko (1974), James Britton (1970, 1972, 1975) and Mina Shaughnessy (1977). All argue for reading and writing as inseparable experiences and explore the kind of knowledge transferred from reading to writing.

H. Alan Robinson's Reading and the Language Arts (1963) is a comprehensive collection that represents the major theories of the fifties and sixties on reading in the composition classroom. The papers, delivered at an annual conference on reading held at the University of Chicago in 1963, center on the language arts as a single pattern of closely related skills: reading, writing, spelling, vocabulary, linguistics, etc. Reading and writing are comparable language arts because they involve the same set of "symbols": ideas, information, opinions, feelings and emotions. Consequently, each art can provide stimulation for the other. These educators suggest that when reading is introduced before writing assignments (even non-fiction writing), the writer is motivated to write and provided with the skills necessary for clear writing. The three articles in Robinson's study which closely explore the reading and writing experience include Nila B. Smith's "Language, a Prerequisite for Meaningful Reading," Wayne C. Booth's "Interrelationships of Reading and Writing," and Oliver Andresen's "Interrelating Reading and Writing in Grades Nine through Fourteen."[7,8,9]

In her historical approach to reading and writing instruction, Smith notes that for many years, reading and composition instruction occurred in the same classroom; teachers made combined use of speaking, listening and comprehension. Eventually, the different segments of language arts were separated to facilitate instruction. However, Smith now sees the trend moving towards a merger of all the language arts and believes strongly in the need to restore reading, writing and other language arts to a single instructional method. To support her contention that reading and writing are comparable language arts, Smith lists four ways in which the two processes are similar: both have common purpose, symbols, structure and thinking processes:

> In writing an author has a message he wishes to share; the reader wishes to receive this message. The basic purposes of communication hold true in reading as well as in other forms of language expression . . . . In language communication interchange of thought is accomplished through the use of word symbols. . . .Regardless of whether we speak, listen, write or read, we draw our word coins from the same bank. . . . The same structural patterns of sentences are used in all forms of language expression. . . .Basic sentence patterns are of great importance; in fact they are said to be "the backbone and central nervous system" of language. These patterns, of course, are the same in speaking, writing, listening, and reading and are basic in conveying meanings. . . . Understanding the meaning of language symbols is the substratum factor in the efficient functioning of all forms of language expression. Thinking is the agent which pre-digests, accompanies, or post-digests the raw material of language and converts it into meanings. (pp. 6-7)

Because she sees crucial similarities in both language arts, Smith suggests that reading be taught in the writing classroom and that writing be taught in the reading classroom. She devotes most of her study to looking at the relationship between the two language arts in pre-college students and ends her study suggesting that the two language

arts should be taught together at all levels: "Ted, a college student who had taken a course in reading improvement, evidently benefited from the use of composition as a prerequisite to reading skill" (p. 11). She concludes that all teachers of reading and writing should develop a keen awareness of the relationships of all language arts and integrate them in the language arts classroom.

Booth in "Interrelationships of Reading and Writing" explores the connection between reading and writing in the college composition class; in his article, he assumes the importance of reading to writing and explores the opposite. He emphasizes that extensive writing can motivate reading, provide cognitive contribution and cultivate an aesthetic appreciation for reading:

> The first major contribution that writing assignments can make to our reading instruction is in providing motivation. The usual way of putting it is the reverse of this: reading can be used to motivate writing. But we too often overlook the ways in which the whole set of attitudes a student brings to his reading can be modified by his experience with writing. . . . Again we are more inclined to recognize the service of reading to writing than of writing to reading. We all know, don't we, how much it can mean to students when, for the first time, the devices of coherence are pointed out to them . . . .It remains true that students who have been required, in their writing, to respect coherent thought (through reading comprehension) will certainly prove less vulnerable than most Americans are in their reading habits. . . . In addition to the affective and cognitive contributions that writing can make to reading, there is an important aesthetic contribution: how one appreciates other men's writing depends in some degree on how one can write. It is easier to see the reverse contribution; it is often remarked that whether a man writes with style and taste depends largely on the styles he has tasted. (pp. 113-114, 116, 119)

In order to encourage student reading and writing, Booth explains, the teacher must help the student develop an emotional commitment to both, learn the meaning of coherence, and acquire an aesthetic appreciation

for both. These three areas in which he links reading and writing are inseparable: ". . . the student's emotional commitment to writing and reading cannot be finally separated from his desire to think clearly and to know beauty" (p. 122).

Another essay dealing with reading and writing in Robinson's collection is Andresen's "Interrelating Reading and Writing in Grades Nine through Fourteen." Andresen's emphasis, unlike Smith's and Booth's, is on the compositional skills that can be acquired through reading. She argues that in order to comprehend or express meaning fully, the reader and writer should be aware of the other's rhetorical devices; therefore, instruction in one art is dependent upon instruction in the other. According to Andresen, both writer and reader must learn to identify and create the third-dimensional effect of ideas. The perceptive reader, she says, senses a third-dimensional effect of ideas (expressed according to rhetorical patterns); the successful writer learns of this third-dimensional effect through reading and attempts to reproduce this effect in writing:

> The essence of good writing is clarity and style. In other words the writer reproduces in print his thinking in as precise and interesting a manner as possible. To achieve this, the writer expresses his ideas according to rhetorical patterns. For example, he might make a point by a question and answer, by a comparison of two issues, or by showing a cause and effect. With these patterns the writer gives clear indication of what he considers to be his more significant thinking over that which is less significant. The result is the third-dimensional effect.
>
> The reader, therefore, in order to sharpen the third-dimensional effect on the printed page should be conscious of the writer's rhetorical patterns; for these patterns are a guide for the reader to a more complete comprehension of what the writer has to say. (p. 131)

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Andresen also discusses the teaching techniques that can enhance student awareness of the third-dimensional effect; she focuses on the teacher's responsibility to develop reading comprehension of phrases, sentences and paragraphs. The students learn these basic rhetorical techniques through reading and then apply these techniques in writing; Andresen implies in her discussion that when students are placed in the reading role, they have the opportunity to witness the way a writer creates ideas and differentiates among these ideas: "His chief guide to the differentiation of one idea from another is the rhetorical pattern in which the writer has presented his ideas" (p. 137). With this knowledge of the essence of the writer's role, the students are better equipped to assume that role in the writing process.

The classroom methodologies proposed in Robinson's collection have since been scrutinized and updated, but the basic premise of the theories and research has not changed: reading and writing are inseparable language experiences. More recent authorities, such as James Moffett, William D. Page, James J. Clahoun, Peter Evanechko, Julia Falk, James Britton and Mina Shaughnessy, also argue for the interrelationship of both experiences. In addition, these critics explore the specific knowledge transferred from one process to the other and in some cases provide support from research.

James Moffett in Teaching the Universe of Discourse (1968) takes an important step towards clarifying the unity between reading and writing when he identifies both as forms of discourse. A discourse is any piece of verbalization which processes experiences. When students read or listen, they internalize experiences; when they write,

they attempt to communicate experiences. To clarify the development of reading and writing abilities in students, Moffett compares this development to a child's language acquisition. During a child's acquisition of language, the two discourse forms of reading and writing are related,but distinguishable; reading comprehension comes before writing comprehension in the child's natural language acquisition. Similarly, students' writing comprehension partly depends on previous exposure to reading material:

> We have to distinguish, however, between the capacity to produce a given discourse and the capacity to receive and understand it. It seems clear to me that the reading schedule, though proceeding through the same steps as the writing schedule, and in the same order, would run ahead of the latter in most cases. That is, a student would read, say, essays of generality before attempting to write them. In fact, his own ability to monologue at that level (writing) may partly depend on prior familiarity with others' monologues at that level. (p. 31)

Students learn how to produce a particular discourse, according to Moffett, by exposure to another's similar discourse.

Moffett sets up a naturalistic language curriculum that emphasizes the importance of speaking, listening, reading and writing in students' language acquisition at all levels before college. The basic premise of this curriculum is the similarity between the way we communicate and receive language. Moffett proposes expanding students' repertoire of language uses by having them "write, as well as read, interior monologues, private diaries, personal letters, autobiography, biography, history, and science" (p. ix); each item in this listing is a form of discourse. In his curriculum, students learn the basic operation of the discourse modes by being made aware of the relationship

between speaker and listener, i.e., the levels of abstraction in association with each form of discourse. Moffett defines the abstractive process as the way the speaker symbolically translates the message for the benefit of the listener:

> Within the relation of the speaker to his subject lie all the issues of the abstractive process--how the speaker symbolically processed certain raw phenomena . . . . What creates different kinds of discourse are shifts in the relations among persons--increasing rhetorical distance between speaker and listener, and increasing abstractive altitude between the raw matter of some subject and the speaker's symbolization of it. (pp. 10-11)

Crucial to the writing process, Moffett implies, is an understanding of the relationship between writer and reader; built into that relationship are the rhetorical and abstractive distances between the speaker and listener. An understanding of this relationship through reading can help students decide on the form of this relationship when they sit down to write.

Six years later, William D. Page in "The Author and the Reader in Writing and Reading" (1974), agrees with Moffett: reading and writing are forms of discourse.[10] He applies the theories of communication and transformational grammar to illustrate the unity of both processes. Citing communication as the intent of both writer and reader, he explores the theoretical and structural implications of the communicative intent:

> The analysis that follows expands the ideas of expression and reception by identifying similarities and dissimilarities in the elements and functions of the writer and the reader. It emphasizes the fact that most of the communication process is not observable and can only be understood if one constructs a theoretical framework for piecing together the observable fragments. What is observable includes the organisms, the writer and the reader, some of their responses, and the graphic

> display of the writing or written surface structure produced by the author and encountered by the reader. (p. 170)

His analysis rests on the assumption that writing and reading are ways of processing language and that transformational grammar terms (surface structure, deep structure, meaning and knowledge) can be used to define the activities of writing and reading.

After establishing communication as the intent of both writer and reader, Page applies the theory of transformational grammar to the reading and writing process. Print or writing, he says, is observable language or surface structure (as defined linguistically). The author's internal concept of the sentence about to be written is conceived structure. Perceived structure is the perception internalized by the reader of the observable surface structure. In addition, both conceived and perceived surface structure "are circumstances of inner speech, unobservable elements of the writing and reading process" (p. 171). Beneath the surface structures lies the deep structure from which the meaning of the sentence can be determined: "Deep structure not only includes the clause and phrase relationships,but it also involves the language user's grammatical rules required to produce or interpret a sentence" (p. 172). Page proposes that meaning--that which we put into print when we write and get from print when we read--includes grammatical relationships (diagrams of deep structure) and qualitative relationships (analogies of signs).

When discussing reading and writing in connection with transformational grammar, however, one cannot simply refer to the meaning of the text; one must rather refer to the knowledge derived from the

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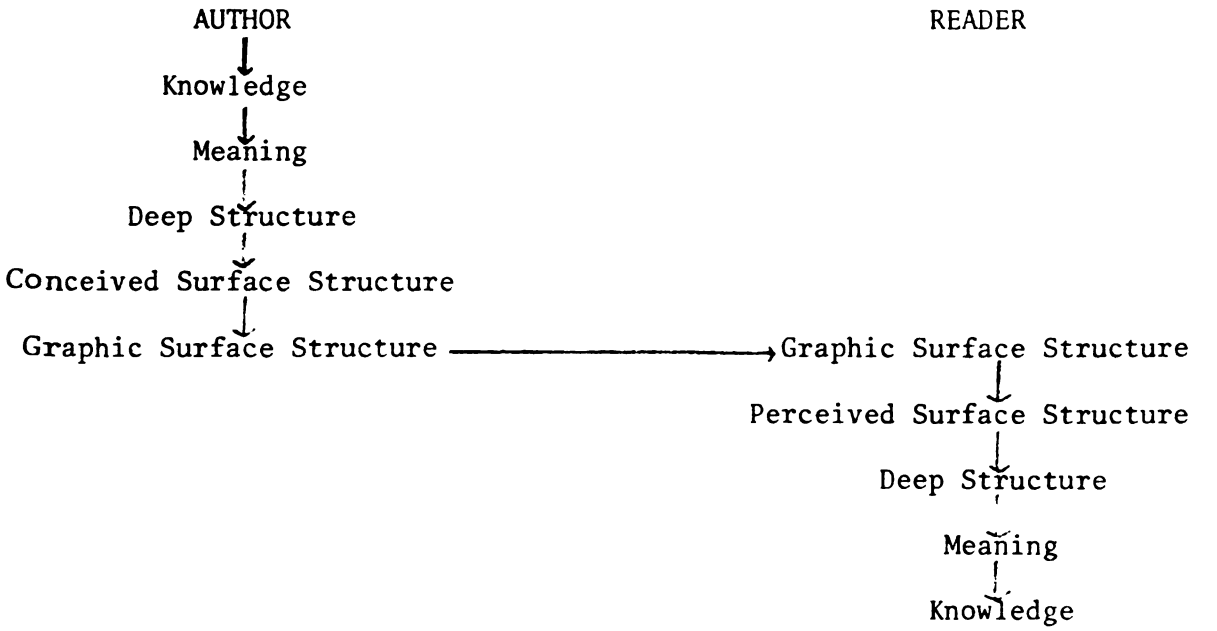
> are often treated as identical entites, but in this analysis of writing and reading, it is productive to separate them for a number of reasons. The separate words of a sentence may be individually meaningful on a lexical or referential basis, but the sentence may remain uninterpretable. Similarly, the meaning of a sentence may be understood, but not believed because of other, conflicting and more compelling experiences. A sentence may be meaningful in isolation, but prove itself unbelievable due to an internal inconsistency in a paragraph, passage or book.
>
> Knowledge gained from reading includes meaning, in the sense that we can know what a sentence means by reconstructing the author's analogies, but knowledge also includes what we infer from a sentence in relation to our experiences after reconstructing the author's analysis. (p. 173)

The reader, according to Page, is not the only individual acquiring knowledge; the author, through the constructive process of writing, also is acquiring knowledge:

> The author's knowledge represents a beginning point in the communication process and the reader's knowledge is seldom a precise reconstruction of the author's knowledge since both are engaged in a constructive process. (p. 174)

Page concludes his study by exploring a sequential relationship between reading and writing. His diagram transforms the author's knowledge through various steps to the reader's knowledge (see page 18). At the point of producing surface structure, the author's participation ends and the reader's begins. Using rules of the reader's language, the reader assigns deep structures to the perceived surface structure; the deep structure relationships result in meaning. The reader acquires knowledge when infering additional meaning by applying life experience to the deep structure meaning. Communication, the purpose of writing and reading, according to Page, is met at the point of the reader's acquisition of knowledge.[11]



(p. 176)

His conclusions about reading, writing and the theories of communication and transformational grammar lead Page to suggest the importance of interlocking the two processes in reading instruction:

> The language experience approach in beginning reading instruction involves getting the ideas of the learner into writing to permit the learner to encounter his own language forms. (p. 182)

Page concludes that learning to read and write are interdependent language experiences.

At the same time that Page was working with transformational grammar as the link between reading and writing, James L. Calhoun (1971) and Peter Evanechko (1974), in two separate studies, published their research on the affects of reading on writing instruction; both suggest a relationship between reading and writing and emphasize the importance of using reading in writing instruction. Calhoun in "The

Effect of Analysis of Essays in College Composition Classes in Reading and Writing Skills" states his question:[12]

> . . . will the systematic teaching of selected reading skills through written exercises and discussion result in measurable gains in (a) the ability to recognize specific examples of the effective use of composition techniques, and (b) the ability of the student to use theme techniques in his own writing. (1971A)

Six English composition classes at East Nazarene College provided the experimental and control groups. The experimental treatment--ten lessons based on essays--was administered over a period of ten weeks to the experimental group. The control group had no systematic instruction in such analysis, but all other elements of instruction remained the same for both groups. Calhoun used a t-test to test for significant gains in achievement from pre-test to post-test in reading and writing. He compared the reading and writing achievement in both groups through an analysis of covariance.

Results from Calhoun's study indicate that a student's systematic analysis of essays (from outside the classroom) contributes to an increased awareness of rhetorical techniques when they are encountered in reading:

1. Significant gains occurred on the reading post-test for the control group at the .025 level.
2. Significant gains occurred on the reading post-test for the experimental group at the .005 level.
3. No significant gains occurred on the composition scale scores for either the control group or the experimental group.
4. The results of the analysis of covariance on the reading test showed a significant difference at the .01 level in favor of the experimental group.

5. Analysis of the composition scores showed no significant difference between the two groups. (1971A)

Calhoun could not prove conclusively that the "technique" awareness, as sampled by a reading test,can be shown to transfer into writing skills; but he emphasizes that "Statistically significant correlations were observed . . . among all the measures of reading and writing skills used in the study" (1971A). His study, then, suggests the importance of reading in the understanding of certain rhetorical techniques that can be used in the writing process.

Evanechko's research model was more sophisticated than Calhoun's and yielded better results because he specified categories of compositional skills. In his 1974 study, Evanechko acknowledges the work of his predecessors, but notes that the specific nature of the relationship between reading and writing is often unclear.[13] In order to increase the overall effectiveness of reading instruction, he proposes to identify the common elements in the two processes. Using 188 sixth-grade children from four classrooms in a Victoria, British Columbia school, Evanechko investigated the relationship between children's performance in the receptive language act of reading and expressive language act of writing. His specific aims were

> to determine the best combination of indices of writing performance to predict reading achievement; and
> to identify and apply valid indices of written language behavior which are based upon transformational grammar theory. (p. 316)

Among the variables measured in the study were: sentence patterns, sentence transformations, vocabulary, information, interpretation, appreciation, and literal, creative and general comprehension.

In the conclusion of his study, Evanechko contends that a strong relationship exists between the receptive behavior of reading and the expressive behavior of writing. And, he adds, both reading and writing use certain language skills in common; the presence of these skills could result in better performance in both reading and writing. He cites language fluency and the control of syntactic complexity as the main language skills in common:

> Thus for the Grade Six children in this setting and of the language behaviors, indexed, fluency in language as measured by total number of communication units appeared to be the single most important concomitant of success in reading. The child's competence in the use of a variety of structures leading to greater syntactic complexity as measured by the Two Count Structures was the next most important index of reading success.
>
> Also, it appears that these same two language competencies, fluency and control of syntactic complexity, underly all measured reading behaviors. Language measures which do not tap these competencies therefore appear to be inappropriate as indices of children's language competence related to reading behavior. On the basis of this information, the Botel and Granowsky Formula for Measuring Syntactic Complexity could be considerably simplified and still produce the same results.
>
> If fluency and control of syntactic complexity are the key language competencies underlying reading achievement, then building these two competencies may well improve reading performance. Since language is learned more readily in oral form rather than written form, the development of fluency and control of syntactic complexity in oral language would seem to be a first step. Logically, fluency would seem to come first, first orally and then in written form. Control over complex syntactic devices would then build on fluent expression. (pp. 325-326).

Evanechko suggests in his conclusion that a systematic instruction of language acquisition, oral and then written, will lead to reading achievement.

In part of his study, Evanechko uses language acquisition theory; Page's entire study is based on the linguistic theory of transformational grammar. Another critic who uses linguistics as a means of identifying the connection between reading and writing achievement is Julia Falk. In "Language Acquisition and the Teaching and Learning of Writing" (1979), Falk suggests that all language acquisition (including writing) occurs through the internalization of "patterns and principles that are acquired through extensive exposure to and practical experience with the use of language in actual, natural contexts and situations" (p. 44).[14] According to Falk, students come into contact with natural language when they read.

Assuming that writing is a form of language acquisition, Falk shows how the learning of writing skills is similar to the production of oral language in children:

> Writing, as the written representation of language, and speech, as the oral representation of language are different but co-equal concrete means to express language. Therefore, whatever is known about the learning of oral language production (i.e., learning to talk) will have implications for the learning of written language production (i.e., learning to write.) Both are instances of language acquisition. . . . In combination these two assumptions provide a model of the adult who is learning to write as a form of natural language acquisition, similar in fundamental ways to children's acquisition of speech. (p. 437)

A child, she explains, acquires language through consistent exposure to speech. Similarly, the long exposure to the writing of others prior to the production of writing, provides the student learner with written samples and eventually with an understanding of the patterns and structures of written language. The best practical preparation for learning to write at any level, therefore, is learning to read.

Falk explains that in planning writing assignments, instructors should encourage students to read extensively in the form of writing they will later produce.[15] Exposure to this reading material provides students with information about writing styles; the students can then "utilize their natural language acquisition capacities to internalize the basic principles, structures, and organization of the style prior to any overt teaching on the part of the instructor" (p. 348.) Falk emphasizes the importance of "extensive" reading assignments as opposed to "random" reading assignments. Referring again to language acquisition in children, Falk argues that a child is exposed to a particular style of speech to a great degree before producing it. This extensive exposure facilitates comprehension which occurs before production:

> In oral language acquisition, children's comprehension appears always to precede their production. (The memorization of nursery rhymes is, of course, an exception, but phenomena such as this appear to be peripheral to language acquisition.) Not only do children hear a great deal of speech in a particular style before producing it themselves, but they are also able to comprehend specific words, sentence structures, and discourses before they can produce such aspects of language.

The same is true for the adult acquisition of writing:

> This, too, supports the importance of reading. Unless a student has acquired the ability to comprehend a particular type of writing, that student normally will not produce acceptable samples of writing. . . . It will not be enough to have students read one or two essays, nor will the predicted result occur when readings are drawn from an anthology designed to present a wide sample of distinct forms and genres of writing. Indeed, we can find clear indication of these points in the professional fields. (pp. 438-439)

Children, like adult learners, absorb (internalize), comprehend, then produce.[16]

Falk emphasizes that student comprehension of writing style which comes from the internalization or absorption of another's style--syntax, sentence structure and discourse--must occur prior to any overt teaching on the part of the instructor. All natural language acquisition is an unconscious process that can be hindered by overt teaching. Language acquisition cannot be taught traditionally; it can only be learned through the internalization of patterns acquired through extensive exposure to speech (oral or written). This basic premise holds true for the child and the student learner:

> Without overt instruction, the child unconsciously observes the use of speech in the environment and develops an ideal of how the linguistic system works; the child identifies what appear to be the patterns and structures of the language. As the child develops these hypotheses, he or she will use them in attempts to communicate. (p. 440)

Similarly, the student writer should not be interrupted as the student observes the use of style during the reading process and absorbs the patterns and structures of the written word:

> For writing, then, we must allow students to form their own hypotheses about how written language works. The data that students will use come from the examples of written material that they have read. To test their hypotheses, students must write, and their writing must represent efforts at communication. (p. 441)

Once the student has made the attempt at communication, the communicative effectiveness must be tested. At this point, the teacher and the student's peers step in to test the effectiveness of communication through the exchange and discussion of papers. Falk's major point is that the teacher's involvement must be kept at a minimum in order for the writing acquisition to proceed naturally, just as parent involvement must be kept at a minimum during the child's oral language acquisition.

Falk's link between oral language acquisition in children and writing acquisition in adults provides a strong argument for the use of reading in the writing classroom: reading comprehension can be the initial stage in writing acquisition. Implicit in Falk's argument is that reading comprehension and writing acquisition are process-oriented. Two other theorists, James Britton and Mina Shaughnessy, agree that the benefits of reading in the writing classroom are process-oriented, but they offer somewhat different explanations in their supporting arguments. The student writer, they propose, needs to learn about the role of the reader/audience; students can best understand the reader/audience by assuming that role.

In his extensive research on pre-college students, James Britton concludes, "it is impossible to consider writing as something separated from the whole foundation of the individual's language ability."[17] He includes the ability to read in the individual's overall language ability and emphasizes that the individual's writing progress depends on reading experience. Britton specifically addresses the issue of writing progress and its relationship to reading experience in the last chapter of Language and Learning (1972). Here he explores the changes an individual, as writer, undergoes in a lifetime of reading. One of these changes, according to Britton, is an increase in the individual's sensitivity to the needs of an audience and to the expectations of a writer.

In Language and Learning, Britton explores the writing of three of his students to show the importance of students' assuming the role of reader throughout their writing development. Britton's fifteen-year-

old who had written a piece entitled "The Oldest Person I Know" chose a third-person point of view even though she was the protagonist. According to Britton, the piece was written for an audience of a literary competition; the girl had concluded that third person was more appropriate than first person when writing for a wider audience. Her assumption came from reading third person fictionalized works. The assumption was faulty, but nevertheless useful. The student experienced the third-person form. Only through extensive reading and testing of point of view, according to Britton, will she come to understand the dynamics of the relationship between writer, point of view and reader. Britton concludes that the experience, including the mistake, was important:

> But we must regard these as growing pains, for it is important that a writer's mode of writing should come to be influenced by what he reads: there is a kind of sad stagnation about the poetry written by an adolescent who fills whole exercise books with his (her) poetry but rarely, if ever, reads the work of another poet. (p. 26)

Britton discovers a more particular effect of reading upon writing in the samples of two other students. Clare, age thirteen, wrote voluminous pieces in high-flown diction. She had adapted her style from the extensive reading of women's magazine stories. According to Britton, her experience as audience of these glossy pieces led her to conclude that a writer's audience is most receptive to this particular style. As she grew out of the stage of women's magazines, she relinquished this style and adapted others:

> All that sustained effort cannot, however, have been wholly wasted: perhaps she began to learn something of how to handle long stretches of narrative, perhaps she merely gained a kind of technical fluency. (p. 261)

Britton suggests that Clare probably would learn, through reading and testing of style, the importance of different styles of writing to different audiences.

Another of Britton's students, a sixteen-year-old, voraciously read Dylan Thomas' stories; she soon began to adapt his style. One of her pieces began:

> I lived in a slum, a smothering sunless smoke-smitten slum in which my house was hunched, a crippled deformity. Its eyes were perpetually closed with moth eaten curtains and though they reflected the drama of the streets they gave no inkling to its inner secrets--secrets of sleep . . . (p. 261)

At first, it appears that Britton's student has simply mimicked Thomas' style without allowing her own style to develop. However, according to Britton, she benefited in two ways from experimenting with his style:

> Looking at her world through Dylan Thomas' spectacles was a way of eventually extending her view of it: as the balance righted itself, she found her voice again, but richer for the experiment of using his. Trying other people's voices may for the adolescent be a natural and necessary part of the process of finding one's own. (pp. 261-262)

Britton argues that the development of a person's voice is contingent upon being at the receiving end of another's voice communication. Students' reading experiences can influence their growth as writers.

Mina Shaughnessy looks more directly at the relationship between writer and reader and argues that through the reading experience, students come to understand all aspects of that relationship. Shaugnessy argues that student writers should play the role of readers not to imitate style and not to find ideas for writing. These approaches to learning writing are product rather than process oriented:

> That is, they pose tasks for the student that require him to look at a piece of writing as something that contains meaning, as a pound of sugar might be said to contain its weight or a word in the dictionary is perceived to be its meaning.[18]

The problem with product-oriented approaches, according to Shaughnessy, is that the student reader is made aware of the separation between writer and text. The importance of reading in learning to write, Shaughnessy argues,rests with the student's understanding of the writer's intentions, reader's responses and the relationship of both writer and reader to text:

> This alienation of the student writer from the text robs him of important insights and sensitivities, for it is only when he can observe himself as a reader and imagine that a writer is behind the print of the page that he understands his own situation as a writer. (The student who refers to the author of The Great Gatsby as "they" is already in difficulty with the text.) (p. 223)

According to Shaughnessy any attempt by student or instructor to separate the functions of writer, text and reader can only be detrimental to the learning experience of student reader/writer.

Shaughnessy argues that in the role of reader, students can imagine the writer's intent and discover the writer's rationale for the choice of words, structure and perspective. At the same time, the student becomes sensitive to the range of reader responses to a text and aware of what generated those responses: "Using the text as his terrain, he tries, in short, to map the thinking of the writer and finally to see in relation to that map where he,as one reader, travelled" (p. 223). A writing approach to reading, she explains, emphasizes the reader's acknowledgment of responses, an understanding of them and an exploration of what in the writer, reader and text created them.

These insights make the student

> a more careful writer and a more critical reader. As a writer, he must think about the kind of responses his words are likely to arouse; as a reader his growing critical stance encourages him to raise questions about what he reads, to infer the author's intent, and even to argue with him. And, of course, these same critical skills can be turned upon himself when he writes, for the process of writing utterly blurs the line that many college programs draw between reading and writing . . . (p. 223).

The student gains valuable knowledge and experience in the audience role of reader.[19]

Though she vehemently supports the use of reading in writing instruction, Shaughnessy does not outline in Errors and Expectations the nature of that material. However, in an interview posthumously published in The English Journal (1980), she argues for the use of fiction in a beginning composition course where students are writing non-fiction. Here again, she emphasizes a process-oriented approach and suggests the use of short stories and novels, particularly short stories:

> You can also call attention to the structures of stories or of books. The story is an excellent form for the basic writing student because it is short and it is much more tightly structured than the novel. You have to be constantly asking the student not just to get caught up in the narrative and the language, but to work also on the matter of structure. I also think that working with books instead of essays is helpful. We tend to subject students to the most instructured and the most difficult kinds of structures to derive when we study the personal essay--Orwell, for example, or James Baldwin. On the other hand, if we take a book and don't require that the student read it, blow by blow, but ask the student to tell us what the different chapters are, we are asking him to attend to structure . . . .And what I think you ought to do is, again, let the student in, in countless ways, on the fact that these things don't just happen. They are highly crafted, deliberate things. Then students can begin working on their own ways, forming their own structures.[20]

According to Shaughnessy, students do not copy the structure of the reading material, but attempt to understand the writer's intent in using a particular structure; students also determine the importance of that structure to them as readers. Then, the students "can begin working in their own ways, forming their own structures" (p. 33).

Shaughnessy's emphasis on a process-oriented approach to using fiction in a writing class is important, since the reluctance to using fiction has stemmed from the assumption that the approach can only be product oriented.[21] Indeed, most studies supporting fiction as reading material have emphasized a product-oriented approach. These supporters of fiction in the writing class propose limiting methods that focus on isolated exercises; these methods strive for specific results that are not directly related to the overall growth of the student as writer. The methods call for students to write critical responses to works of literature, to learn rhetoric and style through imitation, and to discuss fiction in order to generate theme topics.[22] As the methods indicate and as Shaughnessy notes in Errors and Expectations, these theories and methodologies separate the students from the text they are reading by emphasizing the meaning and style of the text as if it had an existence of its own, apart from the author or reader.

Robert L. Eschbacher, in "Lord Jim, Classical Rhetoric and the Freshman Dilemma" (1963) argues in favor of using fiction as a source for critical analysis and as a model for rhetorical devices. Eschbacher proposes to set up the perfect freshman course as the marriage of literature and composition: ". . . the course as commonly taught should fuse solid composition with a solid introduction to literature--and

establish literature in the freshman mind as a vehicle of truth comparable or superior to nonfiction."[23] He encourages written critical responses (which he categorizes under the rhetorical technique of argumentation) and teaches rhetorical principles--definition, classification, diversion and comparison/contrast--through literary models.

In the critical response section of the course, Eschbacher uses Lord Jim to set up an argument that the students must debate in a critical essay. In the argument exercise he assigns questions like: Does Jim redeem himself in Patusan? If so, from what? If not, why not? The students must also defend their opinion in class discussion. Eschbacher finds that these critical papers bring up some social and ethical problems relevant to Lord Jim. The approach results in a variety of opinions, vehemently supported: "It can be vigorous, not to say violent, and I then devote the final ten minutes on the novel to an oracular summary of my own interpretation--and discussion continues in the hall" (p. 97). According to Eschbacher, his main goal in this part of the course is to prime students in the argumentative method and to encourage them to make a commitment to literature.

Eschbacher's approach to teaching the rhetorical techniques is similar to the critical analysis section of the course. In discussion and essays, students explore the rhetoric of Lord Jim: the many uses of the key word romantic; the classification of minor characters; comparison/contrast of sections; and the process of the novel. Eschbacher believes that in studying the rhetorical techniques, students come to a real understanding of the novel, to an appreciation

of the novel's aesthetics and to an increased perceptiveness of literature and life:

> The student who has defined romantic (or perhaps verified its lack of firm definition in Lord Jim) has come far toward a real understanding of the novel. He has examined the text closely, and if definition has been well taught, he has seen almost automatically one major method of organizing a subjective pastime. . . . Again, the very best students will not exhaust this vein [comparison/contrast] which even the worst can mine with some profit. Here is one of the many questions which might be suggested to close this essay with a significant literary and moral judgment: In which half of the novel does Jim merit the reader's greater sympathy? After the approach outlined here, problems such as this become much more malleable--and much less a subject of sentimentalism. . . . This essay, like those to follow demands serious thinking on some of the most basic issues of the student's own life, in the light of a great modern novel. (p. 96)

In his conclusion, Eschbacher emphasizes that the critical and rhetorical goals of his freshman composition course can be achieved by using other novels, as well as drama, short stories, satires and criticism.

Almost every aspect of Eschbacher's approach emphasizes the importance of understanding fiction through critical response and rhetorical identification; his analysis of this approach, however, does not sufficiently show how and why this method develops the student's writing style. Only his critical exercises seem somewhat directed at contributing to the student's writing development; his students critically analyze to discover some of the basic issues of life. By exploring past experiences, students can learn to better communicate in their non-fiction prose; in a beginning composition course, the student's world is supposedly the subject. But students in Eschbacher's composition course do not write personal, descriptive pieces or arguments on

issues directly related to their lives. They are never given the opportunity to express the ways literature has enriched their lives. Students write about literature only, instead of using literature as a vehicle for understanding their own lives in preparation for writing about their lives. Eschbacher's emphasis on rhetorical techniques is just as limiting; his approach helps students identify techniques in books instead of having them look at the reasons a writer uses these techniques for the purpose of communicating to a reader. In general, literature and composition vie for the top spot in Eschbacher's "composition" course, and literature wins out because it is "a vehicle of truth comparable or superior to nonfiction." Students in Eschbacher's classroom are more likely to worship literature than to learn from it.

J.W. Patrick Creber in Sense and Sensitivity (1965) and S. Leonard Rubinstein in "Composition: A Collision with Literature" (1966) provide theories and methodologies for reading literature that are more clearly in tune than Eschbacher's with the student writer's needs. Both believe that the reading process exercises the student's imagination in the same way that writing does; therefore, reading literature is a way of validating the student's perceptual understanding of the surrounding world. Creber isolates reading and writing as forms of comprehension in which the imagination is at work. He argues that the teacher of reading and writing is responsible for creating an atmosphere in which the student's imagination can grow; this atmosphere is one in which the student extensively reads and writes:

> An essential part of the discipline of English teaching should be to make some attempt at a rigorous scrutiny of such

> a concept as imagination. The main purpose of this book is to outline such a systematic course of imaginative work, and if I begin by drawing on the theory and practice of poets and novelists to illustrate the argument, a partial justification for this must be that we are trying to create the conditions in the classroom where our pupils can be poets and novelists, in posse if not in esse, just as, in the laboratory, they are chemists or botanists or entomologists.[24]

Creber emphasizes that when students read literature, their writing comes naturally out of their perceptions and imaginations, rather than out of an exercise demanded of them. By introducing reading in the composition class, teachers create situations directly related to the students' "field of experience," not alien to it.

According to Creber, when students read literature they become involved in the lives of another; through this involvement they utilize their perceptions and imagination in preparation for the act of writing:

> The work is now seen as having a moral aim, for it is here that one seeks to encourage that involvement in the life of others, generally by means of literature, which is the most important part of English. Not only this, but the imagination has an important part to play in enabling the less intelligent children to grasp truths which, if expressed abstractly, would baffle them. (p. 17)

Literature according to Creber can teach students about areas of life they don't understand or reawaken in students undeveloped parts of their own lives. Literature can demonstrate to the students that they don't have to be ashamed of "deeper feelings . . . idiosyncrasies of taste and absurd aberrations from the assumed norm" (pp. 19-20). By cultivating the student's capacity for empathy, literature prepares the student for the writing process. Writing is an activity which calls

for "imaginative projection, which involves in part a projection of one's self, but also calls into play the exploration of other's experiences, other's attitudes, other states of mind" (p. 19). Students can learn of this "other" world through exposure to literature.

Rubinstein proposes a similar methodology for reading literature in the composition classroom; he suggests that instructors use literature to evoke discussion, develop the imagination and show how assertions are made responsible by example: "The function of the teacher is to make the need for discovery crucial."[25] The job of the instructor, Rubinstein notes, is to move the student from an abstract, unclear reaction to a literary work, to a solid, clear and expansive understanding of the text, the writer's intentions and the student reader's life. Rubinstein's purpose is twofold: to develop writing ideas through exposure to literature and to show the student how writers validate their ideas: "The instructor is concerned with the validity of ideas, not with the morality of ideas" (p. 83). Rubinstein's classroom methodology does not involve lecture, teacher intereference or rhetoric instruction. Instead, he encourages "discussion . . . over lecture, discovery over imposition, dialectic over rhetoric" (p. 85).

Rubinstein outlines his methods by showing the way he teaches Ernest Hemingway's "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" in a composition course. Students are posed questions that determine Hemingway's intentions, the meaning of the text, the structure conveying that meaning and the student's opinions on the ideas expressed in the story. Included in the list of questions are:

> Does a lack of belief in order and purpose in life lessen one's need for order and purpose in life?
>
> Is this problem real in your life? Do you believe that pain and death have purpose and plan? Does Hemingway?
>
> - - -
>
> Is there a difference between being victorious in life, and being undefeated?
>
> Which one of these states is possible to man and admirable in men?
>
> - - -
>
> What does Hemingway mean by dignity in the story? What do you mean by dignity? (pp. 80-83)

Rubinstein emphasizes that the students do not have to understand the story, or even have an opinion about what they do understand, before they come to the classroom. He believes that it is important for the students to discover together and strongly discourages student use of critical articles and the teacher's imposition of a single interpretation. The key to the success of his method is the pure, untainted discovery of ideas that helps the students interpret their own worlds in preparation for the writing task. Unlike Eschbacher's students, Rubinstein's use literature as a means of reaching out and understanding their own worlds so they can write about these worlds.

The major arguments of such theorists as Rubinstein, Creber, Suahghnessy and Britton is that reading belongs in the writing classroom and that literature should comprise the students' repertoire of reading material. However, all these supporters of literature in the writing classroom emphasize that only certain methods can directly and substantially influence the student's writing development. All agree that

these methods should be process rather than product oriented. The methods which they describe as process-oriented are those that emphasize the importance of the literary work to the students' understanding of their own worlds and concentrate on the students' awareness of the writer's and reader's roles.

The purpose of this study is to provide another, but related, rationale and methodology for using fiction, especially short fiction in the college composition class. I propose that when students read fiction, they become part of a communication process that involves the voice of the writer. As the students read, the writer's voice conveys messages to the student through the text; these messages are a product of the writer's vision or view of the world. Students respond to the writer's voice during the interpretive stage of reading and use their voice in that interpretation. This voice is the same voice, in a different role, as the one students use during writing. The methodology based on this theory involves extensive reading of short fiction in order to develop the student's voice in preparation for writing. During the course of the term, students are made aware of the existence of voice in a literary work, are given exercises to develop their own voice, and are encouraged to follow the development of their and their colleagues' voices.[26]

NOTES

[1]J.W. Patrick Creber, Sense and Sensitivity (London: Univ. of London Press, 1965), p. 76. (Further references to this and other works in this chapter will be indicated in the text by page number.)

[2]Creber deals specifically with pre-college students; however, in his fourth chapter, he emphasizes that his general statements regarding listening and comprehension, reading and writing, are applicable to instruction on all levels. When students listen, comprehend, read or write, he argues, they use their imagination. That imagination comprehends ideas in the context of the individual's past experiences. The culture and age of the students determine the nature of their past experiences. The imagination of an older student, Creber notes, may translate ideas differently than that of a younger student (Sense, pp. 73-83).

[3]The term "knowledge" is used in this study to mean any transference that occurs in the student from the reading to the writing process. In the next chapter, this knowledge will be identified as voice.

[4]According to Creber, reading stirs the imagination that students use in writing. Louise Rosenblatt in Reader, Text and Poem (1978) also acknowledges the function of imagination: "[Imagination:] The capacity of the human being to evoke images of things or events not present, and even never experienced, or which may never have existed, is undoubtedly an important element of art . . . .Yet this imaginative capacity is not limited to art but is basic to any kind of verbal communication" (p. 32).

[5]James Britton, Language and Learning (1970), Development of Writing Abilities, 11-18 (1975); James Moffett, Teaching the Universe of Discourse (1968); Mina Shaughnessy, Errors and Expectations (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977).

[6]When I refer to the writing class throughout this study, I am talking of the non-fiction writing class, unless otherwise indicated. The use of non-fiction readings in the non-fiction writing class has also spurred some opposition. I feel that the reading of certain non-fiction pieces serves an important role in the writing class, but one different from the reading of fiction. The use of non-fiction, however, is the subject of another study.

[7]Nila B. Smith, "Language: A Prerequisite for Meaningful Reading," in Reading and the Language Arts, pp. 3-12.

[8]Wayne C. Booth, "Interrelationships of Reading and Writing," in Reading and the Language Arts, pp. 113-122.

[9]Oliver Andresen, "Interrelating Reading and Writing in Grades Nine through Fourteen," in Reading and the Language Arts, pp. 131-140.

[10]William D. Page, "The Author and the Reader in Writing and Reading," Research in the Teaching of English, 8, no. 2 (1974),pp. 170-183.

[11]Page's theory outlining the active role of reader and writer in the reading process indicates that the reader is not a passive receiver. The reader must not only internalize the writer's message, but translate it in terms of the reader's frame of experience. The same constructive activity occurs when an individual begins the writing process. Here the individual must formulate concepts in terms of the individual's frame of experience. When the writer puts pen to paper, these concepts have begun to crystallize. Indeed, Page's theory provides a sound argument showing the way reading complements the writing process.

[12]James L. Calhoun, "The Effect of Analysis of Essays in College Classes in Reading and Writing Skills," DAI, 32 (1971), 1971A (Boston Univ.).

[13]Peter Evanechko, "An Investigation of the Relationships between Children's Performance in Written Language and their Reading Ability," Research in the Teaching of English, 8, no. 3 (1974), pp. 315-326.

[14]Julia Falk, "Language Acquisition and the Teaching and Learning of Writing," College English, 41, no. 4 (1979), pp. 436-437.

[15]In her College English article, Falk writes, "The implication about the importance of reading experiences for the learning of writing will hold only if the quality of reading is extensive and perhaps only if the reading preparation for a writing assignment incorporates the principle of homogeneity with respect to the material read" ("Language Acquisition," p. 438). During a lecture in Fall, 1979, to the English department writing staff, Michigan State University, Falk was asked whether the use of fictional reading material instead of essays could facilitate non-fiction writing acquisition. She acknowledged that the use of fiction could achieve the same results, but emphasized again the importance of extensive reading material.

[16]In the same section, Falk notes that writing acquisition, like language acquisition,is holistic: "Language is not acquired through the mastery of separate 'skills'." In language acquisition, a child does not first master the sound and then combine the sounds to produce meaning: "Both sounds and meanings are learned together, along with information about the occasions on which it is appropriate to use the form and the type of response people will make when the form is used" ("Language Acquisition," p. 439). Similarly, written language is not acquired by learning isolated aspects of form and structure. This fact is a good argument for the use of reading (a process which unites

meaning and form). When students read, they don't consciously acknowledge the importance of a comma or a particular syntax; instead they subconsciously internalize the situational context for that comma or that particular syntax at the same time that they internalize the meaning of the text. When students read, they don't consciously separate meaning, form and situational context. Enough absorption of the dynamic combination, then, can result in the students' effective combination of meaning and form in their writing.

[17]James Britton, "Progress in Writing," in Explorations in Children's Writing, ed. Eldonna L. Everetts (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1970), p. 21.

[18]Mina P. Shaughnessy, Errors and Expectations (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), p. 223.

[19]Frank Smith in Understanding Reading (1978) does not directly address the importance of reading to writing instruction. However, his theories of reading and writing roles suggest the importance of placing the student writer in the reader's role. According to Smith, the roles are interdependent and similar: "It might be said that a book is comprehended (from the writer's point of view at least) when the reader's predictions mirror the writer's intentions at all levels" (Understanding Reading [New York: Holt, 1978], p. 171). The writer's intentions vary, according to Smith: a textbook writer leads the reader Socratically through information; a mystery author deliberately leads the reader to certain inappropriate predictions in order to create the surprise twist at the end. Similarly, readers have intentions, according to Smith. All readers have personal interests, purposes and expectations that they bring to the reading act; these shape reader response. Smith explains that readers use their experiences (with life or previous reading encounters) to make sense out of the writer's intent. Smith's outline of the writer's intentions and the reader's intentions and predictions indicate that a student's encounter with reading can help that student understand the relationship between writer and reader, a relationship that the student will again form as a writer.

[20]Jeanne W. Halpern and Dale Mathews, "Helping Inexperienced Writers: An Informal Discussion with Mina Shaughnessy," The English Journal, 69, no. 3 (1970), pp. 32-37.

[21]E.D. Hirsch and Donald Murray are the two most vehement opposers to reading literature in the non-fiction writing classroom. At the core of their opposition, is the belief that the writing approach to reading can only be product oriented. They assume that students read literature in a composition class in order to imitate style and/or gather writing ideas. Hirsch in Philosophy of Composition (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1976) asserts that composition teachers use literature because they are ignorant and "know a lot more about literature than the craft of prose" (p. 141). Assuming that the instructor's intent is to teach style, he argues against this instructional method because the

study of style in literature is the fusion of form and content whereas learning to write assumes the separation of linguistic form and content:

> While both subjects may make students aware of style, they do so in conflicting ways. The study of style in literature is a study of the fusion of form with content. But learning how to write implies just the opposite assumption; it assumes the separation of linguistic form and content. (p. 141)

Donald Murray makes a similar argument in opposition to the reading of fiction in a composition class. In A Writer Teaches Writing (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), Murray contends that teachers of literature feel more secure with fiction in the writing class, because the method is less time consuming than giving and grading writing assignments from within the classroom:

> In the starkest application of this theory, students read and discuss for a number of weeks given literary masterpieces. During and especially at the end of a unit, students are asked to write an interpretive critical essay . . . . the resultant essay is evaluated for its content overwhelmingly. (p. 75)

Shaughnessy's argument for a process-oriented reading instruction in a writing classroom is the soundest argument countering Hirsch's and Murray's opposition. Reading in a writing classroom need not be product oriented.

[22]Perhaps the least product-oriented of these methodologies is the one that calls for the discussion of fiction to generate theme topics. As will be noted later, the act of reading places students directly in touch with their experiences, thereby creating an atmosphere conducive to writing production (see Chapter IV of this study). However, this activity should not occur in a vacuum, but together with exercises that emphasize the roles of reader and writer and the importance of rhetoric and style to those roles.

[23]Robert L. Eschbacher, "Lord Jim, Classical Rhetoric and the Freshman Dilemma," in Teaching Freshman Composition, ed. Gary Tate and Edward P. Corbett (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), p. 94.

[24]Sense and Sensitivity, p. 12.

[25]S. Leonard Rubinstein, "Composition: A Collision with Literature," in Teaching Freshman Composition, p. 85.

[26]The theory of voice communication is developed in Chapter III; this theory is supported by Mary Louise Pratt's discussion of the relationship between speech acts and literature (Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse [Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1977]). The theory of message conveyance from author to reader and the reader's subsequent interpretation of the text is based on Rosenblatt's discussion of the interpretive stage of reading in Reader, Text, and Poem. Finally, my definition of voice, as indicated in the next chapter, is indebted to John Hawkes' Voice Project, conducted in the late sixties.

CHAPTER II

VOICE

Before looking at voice communication in written and verbal discourse and its implications for a composition course that uses fictionalized reading material, the term voice should be defined. Though composition and reading theorists have not fully defined the voice that can be heard in written and verbal discourse, many have acknowledged its presence and attempted to identify some of the voice properties of discourse. Such critics as John Hawkes, Walter J. Ong, S.J., Richard Hoggart, William Labov, Robert Butler and John Schultz suggest that voice is related to the writer's identity and personality. Hawkes' "The Voice Project," (1966-1967), Ong's "Voice as Summons for Belief" (1962) and Hoggart's Reith Lectures (1971) explore voice as the vehicle through which an individual communicates something about the self.[1] Labov, in his study of the narratives of South Central Harlem children (1976), discusses an important voice property of discourse: narrative activity.[2] Butler's study of the elderly life review process (1963) reveals a connection between the individual's desire to understand the self and the onset of narrative activity: that connection is another affirmation that narrative activity is a voice property of discourse.[3] Schultz's story workshop theory (1978) attempts to identify two other voice properties of discourse: message and style.[4] Implied in the work of all these critics is that voice is a reflection of the

writer's personality and that narrative activity, message and style are voice properties of discourse.

Elements of Voice

No theorist or composition instructor will deny the importance of developing voice in learning to write. However, a definition of voice has eluded scholars for years. The concept is foreboding because the term is abstract, intangible.[5] Readers and listeners can hear the writer's/speaker's voice. The voice, therefore, must be a medium that carries or transmits something. But from where does it come and what conditions it? Hawkes in his discussion of the Voice Project, Ong in The Barbarian Within and Hoggart in the Reith Lectures argue that an individual's personality or interiority is one element that shapes voice. A second element, according to these critics, is the role chosen for a piece of discourse.

In his discussion of the Voice Project (1966-1967), which was conducted with five freshman English classes at Stanford University,[6] Hawkes highlights the writer's personality as the most evident element of voice:

> We wanted the student to know that the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality; that his personal intonation might well relate to the dictions and rhythms of his writing; that a professional writer has a kind of total presence that can be perceived and responded to as authorial "voice" . . . (pp. 95-97)

Hawkes explains that project (classroom) leaders entered the experiment with the assumption that voice reflects something of the individual's

self; voice is an indicator of the characteristics of the individual's personality. These leaders also believed that students would learn the meaning and importance of voice only if they saw the connection between voice and self, voice and personality. Successful writing could then emerge if the students realized that their personality is reflected in their writing.

Recognizing the written voice as intangible, Hawkes assumed a connection between the written and spoken voice. He then encouraged students to identify personality behind the spoken voice. That personality, he informed them, was also behind the written voice:

> . . . it is extremely difficult to help the student to arrive at an actual comprehension of the writing voice as single, palpable, real. It is far easier to respond to the speaking voice . . . .In other words 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. (p. 92)

Project leaders emphasized the connection between voice and personality together with the connection between oral and written discourse. The project's aims reflect this dual emphasis:

1) To compare qualities of personality revealed in a person's speech with corresponding qualities evident in writing;

2) To enable students to read aloud and listen back to their writing in order to become sensitive to changes in the role of the voice;

3) To allow students to "talk out" certain materials they had written in order to discover new ideas and attitudes;

4) To allow students to record and study the speech of others in order to discover the connection between voice and personality;

5) To compare the qualities of a speaker's voice audible in a tape recording with the qualities evident in a transcript of the recording;

6) To allow students to hear the voice of others in their interpretation of others' writing. (pp. 99-102)

The aims were achieved through oral discourse and predominately non-fiction written discourse.

Because the connection between voice and self is more evident in oral discourse, project leaders used tape recorders throughout the course. In this way, students could hear their speech and the speech of others; they were also encouraged to identify the personality of the speaker heard on the tape recorder:

> One student went so far as to document the life and personality of a friend by collecting tapes of her speech in a variety of situations which she then compared to her formal written compositions, examination papers and personal letters. (p. 100)

At the same time that the students learned to recognize voice in the tape recording of oral speech, they were given written exercises to develop their voice in writing. All oral and written exercises were highly personal and autobiographical.

The most valuable outgrowth of the successful Voice Project was a workable definition of voice and its importance to the writing act. Project leaders discovered that voice was meaningful and useful to the students. Their understanding of the importance of voice to good writing and their awareness of the ways personality shapes voice can help the students grow as writers.

Hawkes' emphasis throughout his study of voice is on the first element of voice: the personality identifiable in oral and written

discourse. Ong in "Voice as Summons for Belief," places the same importance on personality as an element of voice. In a chapter from The Barbarian Within (1962), Ong explains that voice emerges from the individuals inner self:

> Voice is the least exterior of sensible phenomena because it emanates not only from the physical but also from the divided psychological interior of man and penetrates to another physical and psychological interior where, as we have seen, it must be re-created in the imagination in order to live. (p. 60)

Voice is the exterior expression of one's interiority. As a result, Ong emphasizes, the voice assumes the characteristics of that self.

A reader's response to a writer's voice in a literary work, according to Ong, is an acknowledgment that contact between reader and writer has been made; such a contact signals communication and communication signals the existence of a literary work. Ong defines a literary work as a discourse, a series of words, something which is said or spoken through a particular voice. This voice, according to Ong, makes possible an I-thou relationship between writer and reader:[7]

> Any discussion of literature and belief must at some point enter into the mystery of voice and words. In a sense every one of man's works is a word. For everything that man makes manifests his thought. A dwelling or a spear tip communicates even when communication is not particularly intended. A building or a tool, we say, "shows" thought. In this, it is a kind of word, a saying of what is in one's mind. . . . A literary work can never get itself entirely disassociated from this I-thou situation and the personal involvement which it implies. For a literary work to exist in the truest sense, it does not suffice that there be code marks, which we know as letters printed on paper. A drawing can exist on paper, in space, in a way in which a literary work cannot. A drawing can be assimilated in an instant, at a glance. For a literary work to be what it really is, words must move in sequence, one after another, in someone's consciousness. The work must be read or heard, re-created in terms of communication touching an existent person or persons over a stretch of time. (pp. 49-53)

All writers, Ong explains, use their voice as a means of entering into another in order to communicate something about themselves. The voice carries the personality of the writer to the reader.[8] In a literary work this communication is accomplished through the guise of characters. ". . . in such a creation the author does not communicate directly but through a kind of covering, a disguise, fictions persons or characters, who are more or less evident and who speak his works" (p. 53).

Hoggart in his 1971 Reith Lectures also recognizes the importance of communicating one's interiority during writing; he identifies the communication medium not as voice, but as tone (style). One element of tone, says Hoggart, is the writer's personality: "Finding a tone to talk with begins with finding one that seems right to and for us" (p. 713). In any form of discourse, he explains, we must be ourselves in order to create the tone intrinsic to our written or oral speech.[9] If we have difficulties in writing, he continues, we are avoiding ourselves:

> It follows that when we are in difficulties during writing of this kind, we are likely to be avoiding ourselves as much as others. When we start cutting corners we are avoiding the risk--then felt to be high--of stumbling on some truth about ourselves. (p. 717)

The "truth about ourselves" is the essence of what Ong calls our interiority, of what Hawkes calls our personality.

The major emphasis in Hoggart's lectures is the way we come to develop a tone (style) of writing distinctly our own, one that exhibits our personality. Hoggart's explanation of the way tone emerges in our writing is similar to Ong's discussion of the way voice operates. According to Hoggart, the tone of our writing develops as we strive to

express our innermost self; we use our tone to "get in touch with" others:

> It's a double process. At the same time, one is trying to learn more about one's own personality below the disguise offered by its defences and one is also trying to find a style to express it. One feels a sort of isolation, a referring of everything back to one's self, which is not particularly pleasant. Yet we have to go that way if we are to speak to others better. We have to go that way so as to find a style, both for "expressing ourselves" and for being "in touch with" others. (p. 713)

Part of the purpose of writing is to reach others; we reach others by trying to understand and to communicate to ourselves. We understand ourselves by exploring our personality and by reaching out to express that self to others. The act of writing, according to Hoggart, is an act of discovery:

> We hope that this effort, this sort of exploring, will help us reach more convincing ways of speaking to each other. It is therefore true in the end to say that part of the purpose of writing is to reach others: not to sell them anything or persuade them, but to be quite simply in touch. It follows that we best speak to others when we forget them and concentrate on trying to be straight towards our experience, in the hope that honestly seen experience becomes exchangeable. At this point the two themes--speaking to yourself and speaking to each other--come together. They are not two directions; they are one and inextricable. (p. 716)

Through the tone of our writing, we can express our innermost self to another.

According to Hawkes, Ong and Hoggart, to engage in a discourse, to read, write or speak, we use a voice unique and peculiar to us. We cannot engage in any discourse activity without using our voice. The use of voice signals the beginning of a discourse activity. Even when we read a piece written by another, Ong argues, we hear ourselves superimposed upon the writer's voice. Ong argues that two individuals reading

aloud the same passage written by a third person will convey different versions of the writer's voice to the listener: each reader is speaking with a different voice, a different perception of the passage being read. The writer's voice can be heard, but as the reader repeats the words heard and translates (interprets) these words into the reader's own frame of experience, the reader's voice is activated. The reader, according to Ong, hears the author from the perspective of the reader's interiority:

> As he composes his thoughts in words, a speaker or writer hears these words echoing within himself and thereby follows his own thoughts, as though he were another person. Conversely a hearer or reader repeats within himself the words he hears and thereby understands them, as though he were himself two individuals. This double and interlocking dialect . . . provides the matrix for human communication. The speaker listens while the hearer speaks. (p. 51)

Since our voice is so much a part of us, this voice is present any time we are part of a communication process.

The individual's personality is one element of a person's voice. Another element of voice is the role, the mask, the persona assumed in any discourse activity. According to Ong when we use voice, we are involved in a role-playing situation: ". . . voice demands role-playing." He emphasizes that we play roles in discourse activities in order to discover something about ourselves: "Thus acting a role, realizing in a specially intense way one's identity (in a sense) with a someone who (in another sense) one is not remains one of the most human things to do" (p. 43).

Ong uses two examples--Joseph Conrad's captain in The Secret Sharer and the role of an actor--to explain the human need to role play

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and the relationship of role to voice. Conrad's tale is an allegory of human existence, a story of every individual in search of self. The stranger in Conrad's tale is the captain's other self; through the course of the tale, the captain struggles to understand this self and in the process enters an I-thou relationship with the stranger. The captain sees himself in the stranger; he sees the role of recluse that he has been playing:

> In "The Secret Sharer," that strangely existentialist story from a preexistentialist age, he has secreted on board his ship his double, a symbol of his own interior division and of his alienation from himself. The stranger-double is somehow there in the captain's own cabin because the captain himself feels himself a stranger to himself in his own soul. The same double is party to the captain's conversations with other men. . . . "As . . . I wanted my double [concealed in the cabin] to hear every word, I hit upon the notion of informing him [the visitor] that I regretted to say that I was hard of hearing" (italics added). (p. 52)

By externalizing that inner self, by witnessing that role, the captain comes to understand his own fears.

Similarly, Ong explains, an actor assumes a role as a way of discovering a connection between that role and the actor's humanity. According to Ong, the actor's role is a reflection of the actor's interiority:

> Actors are real persons, but they perform not as the persons they are, but as persons they are not. They have at other times worn masks, to show that they are not themselves, but something other. Yet is it not highly indicative that the word for mask, persona (that-through-which-the-sound-comes), has given both to the ancients and to us the word for person? It is as though this ability to take on the role of another shows the actor's own humanity, shows that the other is already within him, and is, indeed, the shadow of his most real self. (p. 54)

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An actor who is true to the art regards the role assumed as an extension of the actor, not something alien or foreign to the actor.

Writers, like actors and Conrad's captain, Ong explains, assume roles that reflect a part of themselves. In assuming a role, they externalize their innermost self in order to understand that self:

> Conrad's profoundly symbolic tale is a kind of allegory of human existence. It reveals a rift, a limitation inside our own beings, but a rift which opens its own way to salvation--for it is a rift which comes from our bearing vicariously within ourselves the other with whom we must commune, and who must commune with us, too, and thereby compensate for the rift, the limitation, in our persons. The other within must hear all, for he already knows all, and only if this other, this thou, hears, will I become comprehensible to myself. (pp. 52-53)

In the process of externalizing the self through role-playing, writers communicate that self to another. In assuming a role in any discourse activity, then, we use our voice to communicate both with ourselves and with others.

A writer's choice of a role for a particular discourse, however, is not made in a vacuum.[10] The writer's attitude toward the subject and the writer/audience relationship are two factors that influence this selection.[11] The effect of attitude on role selection is evident in just about any form of discourse, literary and non-literary. As long as the writer believes in being honest with the subject, the role chosen will be true to the writer's value system. When role and value system do not conflict, the writer's material is rich in voice. In an out-of-class writing assignment in a college composition course, students were asked to express their views of

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religion by assuming an appropriate persona. The students chose their role for this particular assignment very deliberately and consciously; they were encouraged to select a mask alien to them. The purpose of the assignment was to show students the relationship between role and attitude in writing.

One student, Mark, vehemently opposed to formalized religion, chose the role of a preacher. The finished product was a narrative in which the preacher discussed his views of his religion and congregation. Mark, through the mask of the preacher, presented a character extremely narrowminded in his views of people and life. The preacher was a religious extremist whose perception of life was more harmful than beneficial to his congreation; he was also hypocritical. The writer's attitude towards his subject--a combination of sympathy and condemnation--emerges in the character he chose to role play:

> I am here to rule you and decide your future. You are my flock and you have sinned. You sin every day of your life. And you can spend your whole life without finding goodness. Life is a trial, a series of sins that you must strive to overcome. At home you must pray; at work you must think only of God. You are bad and you are evil. Pray for yourselves . . . .
>
> It is Saturday night and I am alone again writing my sermon. The bottle has only a little left in it. I know so few people. My congregation detests me. They do not speak to me after the service. They scorn me for what I tell them in church. But isn't that what they are suppose to hear? Aren't we all evil. They think I am good; they scorn me for my goodness. My bottle needs refilling.

The student's piece is rich in voice; in his role, he has been true to his beliefs, to his opinion of formalized religion.

The role a writer chooses for a discourse is dependent not only on the writer's attitude towards the subject, but also on the

relationship between writer and audience. Donald Hall, in Writing Well (1973), acknowledges the importance of audience in the writing act:

> The larger the audience we try to reach, the more limited our associations become, and the more circumscribed our room of possibilities. If we are writing for the readers of a big newspaper, we probably do not assume that most of our readers associate April with Chaucer, Browning and Eliot.[12]

A writer selects a role, consciously or subconsciously, that is true to the writer's relationship to that audience. In a letter to a newspaper editor, the role is that of a crusader; in an argumentative piece for a debating class, the role is that of a persuader; in a textbook essay, the role is that of an informer. The role chosen depends on the relationship that binds writer to audience. As a result of this relationship, the writer must meet the expectations of the audience.

The writer/audience relationship has a profound influence on the role chosen and, therefore, the voice of a piece of discourse. In an in-class letter writing assignment, students wrote to a high school friend at another university (Letter I). They were then asked to address that letter to their father or mother and make appropriate changes, if any (Letter II). The examination of the two letters written by a freshman, Sue, shows how drastically voice can change as role changes. Sue felt so different towards her audience in Letter II that she left out pieces of information that would indicate her true feelings towards her subject matter. Sue chose an informal role for her first letter and a more formal one for her second:

Letter No. I

My God, Joan do you really believe we are at college. Sometimes it freaks me out. Don't know how to feel. Two weeks into the term, where has the time gone! A lot has happened these past few weeks. I feel as if I am drowning. Sixteen credits is too much--why did I do this to myself? Actually it wouldn't be quite so bad if I didn't have to work so much at Moon's. I love Moon's, but enough is enough.

Actually work helps me to forget how I miss all you guys. It also helps to work with someone. Barb and I are studying together right now. She is writing her paper from Com 100 and I am about to give a brief overview of the past three weeks of my life before I start studying.

Last week, I saw Bill (my ex); you know he came up here too. Sometimes I think to follow me. I met him at a party held by some common friends of ours. Its always difficult, I know, to see someone that once meant so much, but Bill said some really awful things when we broke up. All I did was cry when I saw him at the party. Thank God, he left. I couldn't. I needed a friend then. God, I hope I never see him again.

Letter No. II

Hi, Mom. It's good to finally take a break and write home. Two weeks into the term and I have been really busy. Sixteen credits is just too much. Actually, it wouldn't be quite so bad if I didn't have to work so much. But that's okay, because I really like Moon's.

Actually, I guess keeping busy is good. I can do a lot if I put my mind to it. Barb and I are working on things together right now. She's writing her paper for Com 100 and before I start my work, I thought I'd give a brief overview of the past few weeks.

Last week, I saw Bill Barnes. I met him at a party held by some common friends of ours. It's always difficult to see him and it is hard to avoid him when we have the same friends. He is fine; he likes school and thinks he wants pre-law. That whole family is going to be filled with lawyers one day. But I guess that sort of thing gets passed on.

In Letter II, Sue perceives her role as merely informative. She leaves out any information that somehow would cause her mother to judge her--

good or bad; her mother is a passive receiver of this information. Sue made the role decision on the basis of the identity of her audience and her relationship to that audience. In Letter I, Sue perceives her audience as giving sympathy and perhaps even advice on a matter that only a peer group member can understand; she sees her role as a seeker of sympathy.[13] The voice the reader hears in both these letters is different because the role chosen for each piece is different; the role is different because the relationship between writer and audience has changed.

Two important elements of voice, then, are the role chosen for a written piece and the unique personality reflected in that role. However, voice should not be viewed as void of a constant identity. A writer's voice is unique and individual; just as no two personalities are exactly the same, no two voices are exactly the same. If we define voice as that which emanates from one's interiority during any discourse activity, then the voice is as constant as that interiority. As certain elements of voice change, the overall makeup of the voice assumes a variety of shapes. The writer's realm of personal experiences, the writer's attitudes towards the material and the writer/audience relationship are constantly changing and shaping the voice in discourse activities. If Mark's defiance of religion lessens with time, his voice will change in a subsequent writing product on the subject. If Sue's relationship with her mother becomes more personal in the future, her voice will change in subsequent letters to her mother. As the individual's personality changes, so too must the voice, the communication medium in any discourse activity. Hawkes acknowledges the connection

between voice and self when he notes that the developing voice is crucial to all "human growth and communication" ("Voice Project," p. 90).

Voice Properties of Discourse

Another way to understand the concept of voice is to identify the voice properties of discourse. In any form of communication, the medium can be identified by certain symbols or outward signs. William F. Thompson in Media & Communication (1972) explains that

> Symbols make communication possible. Our prehistoric man had the image of a tree (Image 1) in his mind. In order to transfer that image to a second man, he employed a symbol by making a stick drawing. . . . The symbol allows us to deal with things that are not immediately accessible. Symbols are particularly useful in allowing us to deal with abstractions . . . .[14]

If we regard the oral and written voice as a medium of communication, then it too has outward signs or properties. Among the voice properties of discourse are narrative form, message, and style (structure and language).[15] The work of Schultz, Labov, Hoggart, Butler and Hawkes suggests some of these properties. These critics also imply that just as voice is conditioned by the individual's interiority (personality) and the role chosen in discourse, the voice properties of discourse are also conditioned by these elements.

In narrative activity, we reconstruct and reevaluate past experiences; in so doing, we explore the self. Because we engage in narrative activity as a means of discovering (consciously or unconsciously) something about ourselves, the activity signals the presence of voice. William Labov's research of Harlem narratives[16] sheds some

light on the connection between voice and narrative activity. The narrative is a voice property of discourse because the activity, as Labov explains, is the process of describing an event through sights, sounds and smells; the activity involves a recollection of personal experiences.[17] The evaluative segment of the narrative, as Labov defines it, is another indication that voice is present during narrative activity. The evaluation, according to Labov, is the speaker's attempt to understand and communicate the relevance of the experience; evaluation is crucial to the rediscovery of self in narrative activity. By both recalling and evaluating personal experience, then, the individual looks inward and reconstructs the past. The individual uses the voice to communicate to another the understanding of that experience.

Labov's definition of the narrative suggests the first link between narrative activity and voice: in the narrative activity, voice is the medium through which we evoke experience. According to Labov, oral narrative is a verbal sequence of events which, like the written narrative, is a way of recalling experience:

> We define narrative as one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occured. For example, a pre-adolescent narrative:
>
> 4
> a This boy punched me
> b and I punched him
> c and the teacher came in
> d and stopped the fight.
>
> An adult narrative:
>
> 5
> a Well this person had a little too much to drink
> b and he attacked me
> c and the friend came in
> d and she stopped it.

> In each case we have four independent clauses which match the order of the inferred events. It is important to note that other means of recapitulating these experiences are available which do not follow the same sequence; syntactic embedding can be used:
>
> 6 a A friend of mine came in just in time to stop
> b this person who had a little too much to drink
> c from attacking me.
>
> Narrative, then, is the only way of recapitulating past experience. . . . (pp. 359-360)

The subject matter of the narrative is personal experience. The genre is a dramatic form by which the user translates personal experience into a communication medium. During narrative activity, then, the speaker uses the voice.

Another part of Labov's work crucial to this study of voice is his discussion of the evaluative portion of the narrative. He concludes that one element of narrative activity is the evaluation of the narrative. The evaluation follows the orientation and complicating action and precedes the resolution and coda. The orientation sets the scene; the complicating action begins the actual experience; the resolution is the conclusion and the coda is the afterthought. The evaluation is the interpretation of the experience. Through the evaluation, according to Labov, the individual probes inwardly and comes to understand the meaning of the narrative both for the speaker and the listener:[18]

> Beginnings, middles, and ends of narratives have been analyzed in many accounts of folklore or narrative. But there is one important aspect of narrative which has not been discussed--perhaps the most important element in addition to the basic narrative clause. That is what we term the

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> evaluation of the narrative: the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative, its raison d'être: why it was told, and what the narrator is getting at. There are many ways to tell the same story, to make very different points, or to make no point at all. Pointless stories are met (in English) with the withering rejoinder, "So what?" Every good narrator is continually warding off this question; when his narrative is over, it should be unthinkable for a bystander to say, "So what?" Instead, the appropriate remark would be, "He did?" or similar means of registering the reportable character of the events of the narrative. (p. 366)

Evaluation, says Labov, is necessary for both the speaker's and listener's understanding of the experience. Ong would say that this understanding is achieved as the speaker's voice carries this evaluation from the speaker's interiority to the listener's interiority.[19]

Narrative activity, according to Labov, then, consists of both recall and evaluation; because the activity deals with the reconstruction and exploration of our experiences, hence ourselves, it is a voice property of discourse. Another critic who defines the narrative much as Labov and suggests the connection between voice and the narrative activity is Robert N. Butler. In "Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence of the Aged," Butler explores the narratives of senior citizens and concludes that the recall and evaluation of past experiences helps the seniors to rediscover their human worth; the activity is a form of life review crucial to the senior's ability to cope with old age and death.

According to Butler, the narratives of seniors are highly expressive, that is, they deal with the self, with personal experience. A psychologist, Butler concludes that the life review quality of these narratives is one way for the seniors to deal emotionally and physically

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with the closing years of their lives:

> Reviewing one's life, then, may be a general response to crises of various types, of which imminent death seems to be one instance. It is also likely that the degree to which approaching death is seen as a crisis varies as a function of individual personality. The explicit hypothesis intended here, however, is that the biological fact of approaching death, independent of--although possiby reinforced by--personal and environmental circumstances, prompts life review. (p. 67)

One major result of life review, says Butler, is personality reorganization: the sorting out of one's personality in terms of past experiences. As a result of this new sense of self, the seniors can better deal with the approach of death.

Butler's structural divisions of life review narratives are similar to Labov's and, like Labov, he emphasizes the importance of the evaluative section. The life review process begins with stray seemingly insignificant thoughts about oneself and one's life history. Next in the life review come dreams and more elaborate and precise thoughts. Sometimes the seniors attempt to deal with present social or political beliefs as a way of validating their ideas. Eventually, the process evolves into an evaluation of one's life and the worth of that life:[20]

> As the past marches in review it is surveyed, observed, and reflected upon by the ego. Reconsideration of previous experiences and their meanings occur, often with concomittant revised or expanded understanding. . . . In contrast, I conceive of the life review as a naturally occurring universal mental process characterized by the progressive return to consciousness of past experiences, and, particularly, the resurgence of unresolved conflicts; simultaneously, and normally, these revived experiences and conflicts can be surveyed and reintegrated. (pp. 66, 68)

The evaluation, according to Butler, is crucial to the whole narrative activity. The evaluation completes the formation in the seniors of an ego-identity, an identity important to their ability to cope with the onset of old age.

The narratives and evaluations of those narratives during the life review process of the elderly and the developing narratives of Labov's Harlem children reveal the voice of both age groups. Voice is evident in the narrative activity through which the writer/speaker rediscovers self through recollection and evaluation of personal experience. The voice that is evident in both narrative types emanates from the individual's interiority and is shaped by the individual's realm of experience. Narrative activity is a voice property of discourse because the self is at the center of the narrative process. Through the voice, the writer summons the reader to believe in the narrative expression, to believe in the writer's self.[21]

The message and style (structure and language) are two other voice properties of discourse.[22] Like narrative ability, message and style are shaped by the writer's/speaker's past experiences and personality: the personal background of the teller. Hawkes' "The Voice Project," Schultz's story workshop, Labov's work with the Harlem children and Hoggart's Reith Lectures all emphasize the importance and function of these two aspects of voice. Hawkes' and Schultz's work identify the connection between message, style and voice; both show the way the student develops these voice properties in a composition course. Labov suggests this connection by showing ways the social and

cultural background of the writer/speaker affect the personality which in turn affect the message and style of the discourse.

The way in which the style and message are connected with the writer's voice and, by extension, with the writer's personality is as complicated as the definition of voice. John Hawkes is satisfied in saying that just as the sound of a writer's voice conveys something of his personality, so too must the message, dictions and rhythms of writing:

> There are three ways of looking at the concept of voice. It is first of all the instrument of speech; in writing it may be taken to mean the summation of style; but also in writing it may be taken to mean the whole presence of the writer-as-writer rather than the writer-as-man. . . . To us, then, "voice" meant . . . (2) the kind of understanding we are able to "hear" in the voice of someone reading aloud. . . . We wanted the student to know that the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality; that his personal intonation might well be related to diction and rhythms of his writing. (pp. 91, 95)

Hawkes suggests that when an individual speaks or writes, the message conveyed reflects the individual's system of beliefs, understanding/interpretation of the subject. And the message, together with the language and rhythm of that message, reflects the writer's personality. The message and style, Hawkes implies, are the outward signs of voice.

In order to emphasize this connection between voice and message and style, Hawkes consistently used tape recorders in the Voice Project classrooms. He wanted students to "hear" the personality in the message and style of the discourse: "In several school classes the use of the tape recorder was clearly effective in helping students to learn about form and about the functions of language as well as to learn

about themselves and their own uses of language" (p. 101). For many students, the tape recorder was their only method of learning to write. In one case, a young black student, Skip, had written only a few times during the term, but was a good listener and criticizer. Slowly, Skip, the writer emerged on tape:"'The fourth of July is for the wight man.' 'I belief it's a dog eat dog world.' 'My daddy never taught me any thing.' 'I learned to play basketball and baseball myself with a lotta time and embarrassment'" (pp. 115-116). According to Hawkes, the Voice Project became for Skip a way to learn about the beliefs and language left to him by a society which forced him to listen more than to speak. He learned that what one said (message) and how one said it (style) reflected the individual's personality and background. When Skip criticized other writing, his main criteria became the honesty of style, particularly in language, which indicated the identity and cultural background of the speaker/writer: "He drew upon what he knew about speech to criticize other student's writing" (p. 16). Skip's emphasis on the writer's content and style indicate both are voice properties of discourse.

John Schultz's story workshop is also based on the premise that the thought processes, language and structure of student's oral and written speech are related to the student's voice. Begun in the late sixties at Columbia, College, Illinois, as an alternative to freshman composition, the story workshop concentrates on developing the student's voice by activating the thought processes. According to story workshop theory, the student's thought processes, through various oral and written exercises, can be pared and sharpened until concrete

ideas emerge. As ideas develop, through recollection of personal experiences, the story workshop director generates activities that show students the ways language and structure can be instruments of the idea, the message:

> The director will usually begin the session with a verbal recall of tellings, readings, and words from the previous meeting. The workshop recall is not a summary in any sense, but a bringing to life of imagery and events. The director coaches the students whenever needed, so the recalled event "can be seen again, happened now." To emphasize the reinforcement function of recall, he may ask such things as "What do you remember that was particularly clear? See it, tell it happening right now."
>
> After recall, the director will ordinarily move the workshop into the area of imaginative play, stirring or evoking imaginative activity through the use of word exercises, word play. . . . The director must use his awareness of every moment of the workshop session to direct that moment toward writing, just as a writer is aware of each word, pause, sentence, and image that is part of the fulfillment of a story. (p. 143)

The director generates and shapes the student's imagination through telling, reading and writing.

Betty Schiflett, in her discussion of Schultz's story workshop, explains the connection between voice and the message and style of discourse. A student's thought processes, diction, rhythm and structure are wrapped up in what Shiflett calls the student's perceptual powers: the ability to recall images of the past and to concretize those images in oral and written discourse. Writers concretize images by placing them in a rhythmic structure and employing descriptive language that employs the senses:

> The workshop utilizes a constantly developing arsenal of word, telling, reading and writing exercises of increasing demand, as the ongoing means of stirring up the student's perceptual powers. . . .as he engages in the oral exercises,

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> tellings and reading aloud, the student grows in understanding of the use of his perceptions and their accessibility to him in writing. . . . It calls upon the student to extend his powers of curiosity and seeing to extend and "let happen" his play of intelligence and perception, to anticipate, to make leaps of imagination, to begin to get in touch with the movement of story and the vivid, revelatory completeness of image. (pp. 142, 147)

According to Schiflett, the use of perceptual powers signals the presence of voice. The persistent coaching in perception eventually results in the student's production of discourse rich in voice, i.e., rich in thought, language and rhythm. In Shiflett's explanation of the theory and practice of story workshop, message and style are once again seen as voice properties of discourse.

Implicit in Hawkes and Schultz's theories of voice and the voice properties of discourse is the way the writer's personality shapes these properties.[23] Labov's research on South Central Harlem narratives indicates that the socio-economic background of speakers can influence the message and style of oral and, by extension, written discourse:

> Most of the narratives cited here concern matters that are always reportable: the danger of death or of physical injury. These matters occupy a high place on an unspoken permanent agenda. Whenever people are speaking, it is relevant to say "I just saw a man killed on the street." No one will answer such a remark with "So what?" If on the other hand someone says, "I skidded on the bridge and nearly went off," someone else can say, "So what? That happens to me every time I cross it." In other words, if the event becomes common enough, it is no longer a violation of an expected rule of behavior, and it is not reportable. The narrators of most of these stories were under social pressure to show that the events involved were truly dangerous and unusual, or that someone else really broke the normal rule in an outrageous and reportable way. Evaluative devices say to us: this was terrifying, dangerous, weird, wild, crazy, strange, uncommon, or unusual--that is, worth reporting. It was an ordinary, play, humdrum, everyday, or run-of-the-mill. (pp. 370-371)

For example, in the fight narratives he gathered, the speaker's socio-economic background shaped both style and message; style, in turn, contributed significantly to the message. Certain words in the narrative are repeated and emphasized; the format is argumentative, and the speaker is always at the center of the narrative. Every element of the style contributes to the message of the narrative: self-aggrandizement. And both the message and style are closely linked with the socio-economic background of these children who consistently faced danger-of-death situations.[24]

The following narratives are taken from Labov's study. Each consists of two parts: setting the scene and defending the prowess of the narrator. Both parts present the narrator in a positive light and both utilize rhetorical techniques that Labov found consistent in black vernacular culture, i.e., argument and ritual insults. These rhetorical techniques contribute to the message of self-aggrandizement:

> The second narrative is by Larry H., the core member of the Jets whose logic was analyzed in Chapter 5. This is one of three fight stories told by Larry which match in verbal skills his outstanding performance in argument, ritual insults, and other speech events of the black vernacular culture.
>
> a An'then, three weeks ago I had a fight with this other dude outside.
> b He got mad 'cause I wouldn't give him a cigarette.
> c Ain't that a bitch? (Oh yeah?)
> d Yeah, you know, I was sittin' on the corner an' shit, smokin' my cigarette, you know
> e I was high, an' shit.
> f He walked over to me,
> g "Can I have a cigarette?"
> h He was a little taller than me, but not that much.
> i I said, "I ain't got no more, man,"

j 'case, you know, all I had was one left.
k An' I ain't gon' give up my last cigarette unless I got some more.
l So I said, "I don't have no more, man."
m So he, you know, dug on the pack, 'cause the pack was in my pocket.
n So he said, "Eh man, I can't get a cigarette, man?
o I mean--I mean we supposed to be brothers, an' shit"
p So I say, "Yeah, well, you know, man, all I got is one, you dig it?"
q An' I won't give up my las' one to nobody.
r So you know, the dude, he looks at me,
s An' he--I 'on' know-- he jus' thought he gon' rough that motherfucker up.
t He said, "I can't get a cigarette."
u I said, "Tha's what I said, my man."
v You know, so he said, "What you supposed to be bad, an' shit?
w What, you think you bad an' shit?"
x So I said, "Look here, my man,
y I don't think I'm bad, you understand?
z But I mean, you know, if I had it, you could git it
aa I like to see you with it, you dig it?
bb But the sad part about it,
cc You got to do without it.
dd That's all, my man."
ee So the dude, he 'on' to pushin' me, man. (Oh he pushed you?)
ff An' why he do that?
gg Everytime sombody fuck with me, why they do it?
hh I put that cigarette down,
ii An' boy, let me tell you, I beat the shit outa that motherfucker.
jj I tried to kill 'im--over one cigarette!
kk I tried to kill 'im. Square business!
ll After I got through stompin' him in the face, man,
nn I jus' went crazy.
oo An' I jus' wouldn't stop hittin the motherfucker.
pp Dig it, I couldn't stop hittin' 'im, man, 'till the teacher pulled me off o' him.
qq An' guess what? After all that I gave the dude the cigarette, after all that.
rr Ain't that a bitch? (How come you gave 'im a cigarette?)
ss I 'on' know.
tt I jus' gave it to him.
uu An' he smoked it, too!

- - -

a When I was in fourth grade--
b no, it was in third grade--
This boy he stole my glove.
c He took my glove
d and said that his father found it downtown on the ground.
(And you fight him?)
e I told him that it was impossible for him to find downtown
'cause all those people were walking by
and just his father was the only one
and found it?
f So he got all (mad).
g Then I fought him.
h I knocked him all out in the street.
i So he say he give.
j and I kept on hitting him.
k Then he started crying
l and ran home to his father.
m And the father told him
n that he ain't find no glove.

> In the account of the verbal exchange that led up to the fight, Norris is cool, logical, good with his mouth, strong in insisting on his own right. In the second part, dealing with the action, he appears as the most dangerous kind of fighter who "just goes crazy" and "doesn't know what he did." On the other hand, his opponent is shown as dishonest, clumsy in argument, unable to control his temper, a punk, a lame, and a coward. Though Norris does not display the same degree of verbal skill that Larry shows in 2, there is an exact point-by-point match in the structure and evaluative features of the two narratives. (pp. 356-358, 367-368)

Labov cites numerous other examples of narratives in which style and message shift in accord with a narrator's experience and perception of self as a result of that experience. Through these examples, he shows the development of verbal skills in educationally disadvantaged children. But the results of his study can also be used to show the ways voice is evident in these narratives through the message and style of the discourse; both message and style reflect the individual's background and understanding of self, thus signalling the presence of voice.[25]

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The work of Labov, Schultz, Hawkes and Ong, when taken together, contribute to a full definition of voice: the medium writers/speakers use to express "something" about their interiority, by communicating that "something" both to themselves and to others. Writers/speakers communicate by externalizing an aspect of themselves so they and others may view, scrutinize, and come to understand it. In written and oral discourse, individuals assume a role, an attitude that best communicates that aspect or message; this message is one of the voice properties of discourse. Other voice properties include style (language and structure) and in a larger sense all narrative activity. A discourse is rich in voice when it contains ideas and a style peculiar to the speaker/writer. As Schultz argues, "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" ("Story Workshop," p. 151). Voice is the writer's expression in oral and written discourse of the writer's own peculiar, individual understanding of self and the world.

NOTES

[1]Walter J. Ong., S.J., "Voice as Summons for Belief," in The Barbarian Within (New York: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 49-67; Richard Hoggart, "Talking to Yourself," The Listener, 25 Nov. 1971, pp. 713-716. Both Hawkes and Ong use the term voice throughout their studies and suggest the connection between voice and personality; Hoggart employs the terms tone and style instead of voice. (Further references to these and other works in this chapter will be indicated in the text by page number.)

[2]William Labov, Language in the Inner City: Studies in Black English Vernacular (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1976). Labov explores these narratives without mentioning the term voice.

[3]Robert N. Butler, "The Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence in the Aged," Psychiatry, 26, no. 1 (1963), pp. 65-76.

[4]John Schultz, "Story Workshop: Writing from Start to Finish," in Research on Composing: Points of Departure, ed. Charles Cooper and Lee Odell (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978), pp. 151-187. Betty Shiflett, "The Story Workshop," College English, 35, no. 2 (1973), pp. 141-160. (An analysis of the theory and practice of Schultz's story workshop.)

[5]In Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English, Stephen N. Judy acknowledges the difficulty in defining the term voice:

> When a paper first comes in the teacher needs to begin the assessment by trying to discover whether or not the student was excited about the activity. The teacher needs to ask if this is real communication. Can you hear the student "talking" when you read it? Is it a lively piece of work that reveals the student's active participation? This quality in student writing is difficult to define but rather easy to detect. Many people call it "voice"--meaning that the paper sounds as if a unique person wrote it not a computer or a bureaucrat. (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 103-104

[6]The Voice Project was conducted at Stanford University in 1966-67. One hundred students forming five classes participated on a volunteer basis in the program. The selection of students was made randomly with a ratio of three males to one female; six geographic areas were represented. The classes depended heavily on team teaching, colleagueship between teachers and students, and the sharing of materials between classes.

[7]Ong credits Martin Buber with the term I-thou. Martin Buber, I and Thou, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Scribner, 1970).

[8]Chapters IV and V look at what happens to the reader's voice during the interpretive stage of reading. In these chapters I argue that reading, the process whereby an individual takes in the voice of another, activates the reader's voice as the reader interprets what has been read.

[9]Hoggart equates style with tone and discusses both as Hawkes and Ong discuss voice. Hoggart makes some valuable points about how our personalities are reflected in our writing. But his interchangeable terms of tone and style complicate his argument. Tone is something we can hear in writing; style is something we can see. Tone is a more accurate term for Hoggart's point regarding personality in writing. Later in the chapter I will discuss how style is a voice property of discourse, an outward sign that voice is present in the discourse.

[10]In this and subsequent paragraphs, I discuss factors that consciously or unconscously influence the role chosen for a discourse. Though I use written discourse as examples, my conclusions apply equally to oral discourse.

[11]Attitude is here used to mean that part of an individual's belief system that judges the subject matter of the discourse.

[12]Donald Hall, Writing Well (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), p. 38.

[13]Notice how the word flow is smoother in the second letter than in the first; the second also contains more deliberate sentences. Hall sees a correlation between diction and audience:

> You use words with your best friend that you do not use with your grandmother; hitchhiking a ride with a white-haired man wearing a blue suit, your words probably are different from those you would use if the driver wore sunglasses, bell-bottoms and long hair. If your vocabulary stays the same, chances are that you are being hostile in the sacred name of honesty. . . . The choice of a level of diction comes from a subject and audience. (Writing Well, pp. 38, 131)

[14]William F. Thompson, Media and Communication (New York: Harcourt, 1972), pp. 10, 9.

[15]The choice of narrative for a discussion of outward signs of voice is not meant to imply that expository forms of discourse do not signal the presence of voice. The highly expressive nature of the narrative makes it more suitable for a discussion of the voice properties of discourse.

[16]In a 1976 project, Labov researched Black English vernacular in South Central Harlem children to discover the ways in which the vernacular culture uses language and verbal skills develop. In the third part of Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular (1976), Labov examines the narratives obtained in his study of South Central Harlem preadolescents (9-13), adolescents (14-19) and adults. He determines what linguistic techniques are used to evaluate

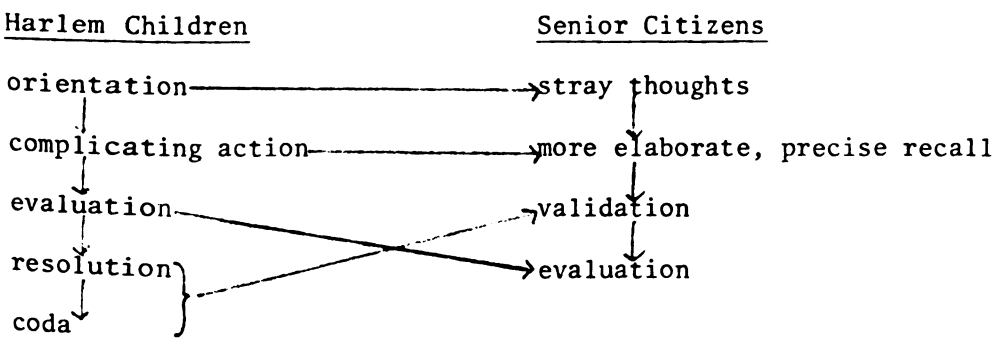
experience in the BEV culture. Interviewers in the study prompted narratives of personal experience from the various age groups by introducing topics important to the culture, i.e., "Danger-of-Death" situations; interviewers often inserted encouraging questions during the interview to spawn total recall of the experience. Labov's results isolated certain syntactical devices used in the evaluation of personal narratives.

[17]"Personal experience" is used loosely here to mean any degree of involvement in the event narrated.

[18]As a child grows older, Labov discovered, the narrative's evaluation becomes more sophisticated: "An unexpected result of the comparison across age levels is that the use of many syntactic devices for evaluation does not develop until late in life, rising geometrically from preadolescents to adolescents to adults" (Inner City, p. 355).

[19]Ong believes that the looking inward, the exploration of our psychological interior, is the first step in using our voice: "Voice is the least exterior of sensible phenomena because it emanates not only from the physical but also from the divided psychological interior of man and penetrates to another physical and psychological exterior. . . ." ("Summons" [1962], p. 60).

[20]The structures of the Harlem children and senior citizen narratives are similar, except for the placement of the evaluation:



The validation in the senior's narratives is similar to the coda in the Harlem narratives. For some reason, the evaluation in the senior's narratives comes last.

[21]See Note 19.

[22]The term message takes in the writer's idea and the thought process evident in the creation of that idea. Implied in the use of the term is the influence of the writer's belief system on the creation of the message. The term does not refer to the reader's understanding of the text which can be quite different from the writer's initial message.

I use the term style to mean the writer's structure and language: structure refers to the order of ideas and language refers to the words

chosen to express those ideas. I specify the way I use the term because many critics and researchers interchange the terms style and voice. I view style as part of voice.

[23]The personality of an individual is influenced by too many factors to begin documenting each. Past experience is one major influence; when talking of the personal background of a writer and how this background influences voice, the writer's reading experience should also be considered. Louise Rosenblatt in Reader, Text and Poem (1978) believes strongly in the importance of our reading encounters to our "experiential frame":

> The reader's attention to the text activates certain elements in his past experience--external reference, internal response--that have become linked with the verbal symbols. Meaning will emerge from a network of relationships among the things symbolized as he senses them. . . . But the text may also lead him to be critical of those prior assumptions and associations. . . . (p. 11)

[24]The interviewers did coach the children to narrate "Danger-of-Death" situations. But the topic choice was deliberate given the socio-economic background of the speakers. (See pp. 69-72 of this chapter.)

[25]Like Labov, Hoggart in his Reith Lectures, implies a connection between the individual's particular social and cultural background and the message and style of writing. Our styles are us, he says, and we must make the best of them. According to Hoggart, a direct correlation exists between who we are and the thought patterns, structure and language of our writing. Furthermore, these two elements are shaped by social and cultural patterns:

> To wish otherwise is like a small man trying to pretend he is tall. When I was young I used to wish I could acquire a full, flowing style--which was like the illusions one had singing opera in the bath. I wanted a long syntactical breath with lots of runs, contrasts, juxtapositions, ambiguities, interlacings, and with subtle variations of length and pace and tone and stress. I realized later that my style doesn't by nature have a long line but moves by putting together short and idiomatic units, which may owe something to being brought up in a society which talked rather than read, talked in short periods, and used many concrete metaphors (p. 711).

His conclusions are very similar to Labov's and Hawkes': cultural, societal influences affect the nature of the information and the flow of language in the narrative.

CHAPTER III

THE READER AND THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

John Hawkes and John Schultz have defined the written voice as that which conveys something of the writer's personality. The message the voice transmits, say Hawkes and Schultz, reflects the writer's vision or outlook on life. One of the major conclusions of Hawkes' Voice Project (1966-67) is that student exposure to the oral and written voice of others can help in the development of their own. In his story workshop theory (1978), Hawkes argues that student exposure to the fiction writer's voice can help the development of the student's voice. The underlying premise of the methodologies that developed from the Voice Project experiment and the story workshop theory is that an individual's exposure to the voice of another can help the growth of the oral and written voice of that individual.

Another way of exposing students to voice is through the reading process. During the reading process, the author's voice is communicated to the student reader. On the receiving end, as the student reader witnesses the writer's experiences and vision, the student discovers a whole new world. The reading process prompts the reader to evaluate another's experience with life. As a result, the student starts formulating opinions on issues never before considered. The student recalls people and experiences from the past and starts reassessing, evaluating and judging the self.[1] This evaluation can lead to a reaffirmation of already

existing values or the development of new ones. In either case, the reading act adds to the reader's life experience by stimulating memories of past experiences and prompting the reader to evaluate those experiences in light of the text's message.[2] In so doing, the process stimulates the growth of the reader's voice.

The relationship between author and reader via the text indicates that reading is a communication act. Throughout the process of voice communication from fiction writer to fiction reader, the fictional narrative serves as the form of communication, the means by which the writer's voice is transmitted.[3] The voice embodies the writer's vision; the author, through the text, shares the vision with the reader and invites the reader to explore the reader's life. As a unit of communication, the fictional narrative transmits messages of experience from one party to another; like other forms of communication, the narrative involves a speaker (author), a listener (reader) and a subject (message conveyed by the text). The author (speaker) fosters a response in the reader (listener) through the reader's exposure to the text.[4]

The concept of the reading of fiction as a communication process has been supported by such critics as Mary Louise Pratt (1977), James Moffett (1968), Wolfgang Iser (1975, 1978), D.W. Harding (1937, 1972), James Britton (1970, 1975) and Barbara Hardy (1968). All have provided convincing arguments that the fictional narrative is a unit of communication and the reading process a communicative one. Pratt, Moffett and Iser look at the process as a form of verbal communication. When students read fiction, these critics claim, they can hear the voice

of the speaker with their inner ear. Harding, Britton and Hardy view the process as one of visual communication. As the reader's inner ear picks up the writer's voice, the reader's inner eye follows the actions of the characters. The reader's inner ear hears the writer's voice as the inner eye identifies the voice properties of the discourse.[5]

Mary Louise Pratt links literature with other forms of discourse to show the way the fictional narrative is a unit of communication. In Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse (1977), Pratt identifies the narrative as a unit of communication by arguing for a speech act theory of literary discourse; this theory describes and defines literature in the same way as we would other forms of discourse:

> The greater part of this study is devoted to this latter enterprise, that is, the development of an approach which allows us to describe literary utterances in the same terms used to describe other types of utterances. . . . Speech act theory views a person's ability to deal with literary works as part of his general ability to handle possible linguistic structures in specific contexts. (p. xiii)

In her study, Pratt searches for a descriptive apparatus which adequately accounts for the uses of language outside literary discourse; this apparatus, she believes, also accounts for the uses of language in literary discourse:

> Needless to say, no such apparatus exists at present. However, the hypothesis itself finds ample support in some fairly recent development in sociolinguistics and speech act theory, the two areas of linguistic inquiry most deeply concerned with language uses. I have tried to demonstrate how some of the general principles of language use worked out by sociolinguists such as William Labov and Emmanuel Schegloff and speech act theoreticians such as John Searle and H. Paul Grice can be used to describe what writers and readers are doing with language when they are participating in works of literature. (p. xiii)

With this descriptive apparatus, she defines literary discourse in terms of its similarities to other verbal activities.

In searching for an apparatus that explains the use of language in literary and non-literary discourse, Pratt depends heavily on the sociolinguistic studies of William Labov:

> I propose to turn now to the work of a linguist who has approached the aesthetics of nonliterary discourse from outside poetics and whose results provide a vital corrective to the views of "ordinary language" arising from structural poetics. I refer to the eminent American sociolinguist William Labov, whose work on the oral narrative of personal experience may well be the only body of data-based research dealing with aesthetically structured discourse which is not, by anybody's definition, literature. (pp. 38-39)

She links Labov's structural divisions of the natural narrative with the traditional divisions of the fictional literary narrative.[6] According to Pratt, the similarities between the two indicate that literary discourse takes on many of the content and structural characteristics of other forms of discourse.

The major content similarity between the fictional narrative and the natural narrative, according to Pratt, is that each attempts to render experience. Novels, anecdotes, or collections of anecdotes, are similar in content to our daily speech:[7]

> One of the most striking aspects of Labov's model, as I suggested earlier, is its self-evidence. I think it is self-evident for two reasons. First the oral narrative of personal experience is a speech act exceedingly familiar to us all, regardless of what dialect we speak. We all spend enormous amounts of conversational time exchanging anecdotes. . . . That novels and natural narratives both have a structurally similar "narrative core" is not so surprising, since both are attempts to render experience. (pp. 50, 51)

The intention of the narrator in both narrative forms is to communicate experience and have that experience judged by the receiver.

According to Pratt, however, the similarities between the natural and fictional narrative go beyond the basic rendering of experience; the structural divisions within the natural narrative (as outlined by Labov) parallel those within the fictional narrative (according to traditional definitions of fiction). Labov defines a complete narrative as one displaying the following structural elements: orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution and coda.[8] Pratt argues that these elements resemble the traditional fictional narrative components of introduction, gradual rising action, climax, swift falling action, resolution and epilogue (optional):

> The second reason Labov's analysis seems so obvious is that his subdivision of the narrative into six main components corresponds very closely indeed to the kind of organization we are traditionally taught to observe in narrative literature. Every high school student knows that novels and plays have an introduction, a gradual rising action and a climax followed by a swift denouement and resolution with an option of an epilogue at the end. (p. 51)

Pratt explains that, because of these similarities, all structural problems encountered by the natural narrator are encountered by the novelist; they are confronted and solved in the same manner:

> We know that aneceotes, like novels, are expected to have endings. We know that for an anecdote to be successful, we must introduce it into the conversation in an appropriate way, provide our audience with the necessary background information, keep the point of the story in view at all times, and so on. And as with any speech situation, literary or otherwise, we form firm judgments all the time about how "good" an anecdote was and how well it was brought off by its teller . . . .(pp. 50-51)

Both the natural and literary narrator, Pratt explains, face problems like "What's the best orientation?", "What's the most effective evaluative device?" or "What's the most suitable ending?" Because the problems are the same, the solutions can be readily adapted from spoken to written discourse.

Pratt believes that the structure of the fictional narrative most closely resembles that of the natural narrative in the following devices: orientation, evaluation and coda. Like the natural narrative, the fictional narrative has an orientation section which identifies time, place and opening situations: "The point to be made here is that both natural and literary narrators are considered to be under the same obligation to orient the narrative . . ." (p. 56). The orientation is usually set apart by a paragraph, a space in the text or an independent textual unit. In the case of a long fictional narrative, a novel, she explains, the orientation can vary widely in scope; sometimes the author can devote as much as an entire chapter to orient the reader. In a short fictional narrative, the author can use just a few lines to achieve this purpose. In both instances, however, the purpose of the orientation is the same as in the natural form: to introduce the reader to the narrative's events and themes.

According to Pratt, an orientation is critical to both the fictional narrative and the natural narrative, for to maximize communication, both narratives must provide the reader with certain basic information. Citing as evidence the opening paragraphs of Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener," Pratt argues the importance of the orientation:

> Here, Melville's narrator tells us in more detail why his subject matter is worth our attention (scriveners are "interesting" and "singular," nothing has even been written about them, and Bartleby is the "strangest" of them all) and why he is particularly and uniquely competent to deal with the subject matter (he has worked in "more than ordinary contact" with scriveners, he is an "original source" about Bartleby, there are no other sources, and so on). He also informs us of his competence to deal with his subject matter in writing. He tells us he could write the biographies of many scriveners and lets us know more generally that he is an educated man, presumably a lawyer, placed high enough to have employes and chambers, and a man who reads enough to know that scriveners are an unusual literary subject. Through these remarks, the narrator solidifies the newly made contract between himself and his reader and reassures his audience that they have not erred in giving him their attention.(p. 62)

The orientation adds validity to what follows by sealing the contract between narrator and audience. Remarks like those of Melville's lawyer, and the contract they establish, Pratt continues, are also common to natural narratives:

> The stock phrase "I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes" is often used by natural narrators in their abstracts to stress their own credibility and the worth of their upcoming story. Similarly, it is perfectly appropriate for a natural narrator to start off with a statement like "well, I've been in a lot of places and I've met a lot of people, but I never knew anybody like this guy in Algiers." Notice that such a remark could be used either as a way of requesting ratification to tell a story (i.e., or inviting the "oh yeah?") or as an extension of the abstract after permission has been granted. In the latter case, its job, as in the Melville passage, is to seal the narrator/audience contract. (p. 62)

In both narratives, Pratt concludes, the orientation serves to reassure the audience that the story is worthy of attention and that the audience should read on or listen further to determine the implications of that worth.

The author's/speaker's evaluation is a second structural element very similar in both the natural and fictional narrative, according to

Pratt. Like the orientation, the evaluative section provides another source of information for the receiver. This section, Pratt notes, indicates the teller's point, the narrative's raison d'être. Through the evaluation, she continues, the speaker openly invites the reader to respond. According to Pratt, the author/speaker interrupts the narrative in this section to initiate the reader's attitude and point of view toward the subject:

> We are all familiar with author interruptions instructing us what judgments we should form (Labov's external evaluation), with the long passages of internal monologue as the hero pauses to reflect on his situation, with the dialogues assessing a state of affairs from several viewpoints, and with the pronouncements of authority figures on whose judgments we are invited to rely. As in Labov's data, it is in novelistic passages like these that we find the highest concentration of comparative constructions, complex auxiliaries, metaphors, and so on. All the evaluative devices Labov described in natural narrative are there in literary narrative, and they perform the same function in both types. (pp. 63-64)

The evaluation in both the natural and literary narrative, according to Pratt, is usually concentrated in one section, but evaluative devices are generally spread throughout the entire narrative, "forming what he [Labov] calls 'a secondary structure'" (p. 47).

Pratt defines Labov's typology of evaluative devices and then adapts the typology to the literary narrative. She concentrates on two evaluative devices: evaluative commentary and sentence-internal evaluation. In the evaluative commentary, she explains, "the narrator interrupts the progress of the narrative with a statement reaffirming the tellability of the story or assessing the situation" (pp. 47-48). The narrator uses one (or more) of the following devices each defined by the agent who delivers it: the external speaker, who comments directly

on the events of the story (narrator in Jane Eyre); the internal speaker, who comments on the events as they are witnessed (Nick in The Great Gatsby); and the outside observor, who is removed indirectly from the story's events (the narrator in Silas Marner). Sentence-internal evaluation occurs when intensifiers--devices added to the basic narrative syntax--or when comparators--verb phrases other than the simple past--are used. Examples of intensifiers are expressive phonology, statements like "way back" and "all the way down," ritual interjections and repetition; examples of comparators include questions, commands, negatives, futures and modals.[9]

A final structural similarity between the natural and fictional narrative, Pratt argues, is the coda; like the evaluation and orientation, the coda provides another important source of information. In a literary narrative, coda types include the word "fin," the last word or a symbol. In a natural narrative, phrases such as "the end" or "and that was that" serve the same brief conclusory function.[10] Codas in both natural and literary narratives, however, can also take the form of an elaboration, expansion, summary or moralization:

> Frequently, however, novels have elaborate codas that, like those of natural narratives, explain, recapitulate, and evaluate the story's outcome, inform us of the ultimate consequences of the story, provide supplemental narrative information, extend the story into the future so as to "bring the narrator and the listener back to the point at which they entered the narrative," and generally "leave the listener with a feeling of satisfaction and completeness that matters have been rounded off and accounted for" (Labov, 1972: 365). (pp. 56-57)

Readers, according to Pratt have come to expect codas in natural speech and in fiction. The coda is the cue that the information the narrator has been presenting has come to a close. The coda signals the end of the narrative.

The expansive, summary and open-ended coda are among the types Pratt defines. The author, says Pratt, can use the coda to help develop the reader's final response. This type is an expansive coda which takes the reader far beyond the limits of the text. The close of Melville's "Bartleby" provides a good example of this expansive coda. The narrator signals the beginning of the coda by leaving a space in the text. The lawyer then comments on the state of Bartleby's existence, the state of any lonely individual's existence, finally the state of all humanity:

> 'With kings and counsellors,' murmured I.
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> *
>
> There would seem little need for proceeding further in this history. Imagination will readily supply the meagre recital of poor Bartleby's interment. But ere parting with the reader, let me say, that if this little narrative has sufficiently interested him, to awaken curiosity as to who Bartleby was, and what manner of life he led prior to the present narrator's making his acquaintance, I can only reply, that in such curiosity I fully share, but am wholly unable to gratify it. Yet here I hardly know whether I should divulge one little item of rumour, which came to my ear a few months after the scrivener's decease. . . . The report was this: that Bartleby had been a subordinate clerk in the Dead Letter Office at Washington, from which he had been suddenly removed by a change in the administration. . . .
>
> Ah, Bartleby! Ah, humanity![11]

His final musing, "Ah, Bartleby. Ah, humanity," invites the reader to think beyond the surface events of the story; the narrator thereby furthers the reader's understanding and appreciation of the story.

The summary coda, according to Pratt does not add any new information, but reminds the reader of the story's events; the summary coda also gives the reader a feeling of natural close. The coda in

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Stephen Crane's "The Blue Hotel," for example, recounts the events for the reader and for the cowboy, a character in the story. The coda informs the reader and the cowboy that everyone in the hotel was responsible for the Swede's death:

> "Fun or not," said the Easterner, "Johnie was cheating. I saw him. I know it. I saw him. And I refused to stand up and be a man. I let the Swede fight it out alone. And you--you were simply puffing around the place and wanting to fight. And then old Scully himself! We are all in it! This poor gambler isn't even a noun. He is kind of an adverb. Every sin is the result of a collaboration. We, five of us, have collaborated in the murder of the Swede. Usually there are from a dozen to forty women really involved in every murder, but in this case it seems to be only five men--you, I, Johnie, old Scully; and that fool of an unfortunate gambler came merely as a culmination, the apex of a human movement, and gets all the punishment."
>
> The cowboy, injured and rebellious, cried out blindly into this fog of mysterious theory: "Well, I didn't do anythin', did I?"

This information is already evident from the events of the story, but the reaffirmation adds a final touch of irony: all were aware that they contributed to the Swede's demise, but no one had the courage to prevent it.

Another type, the open-ended coda leaves the evaluation of the text almost entirely up to the reader; that is, the author provides the reader with little assistance in understanding the events of the story. A classic example of an open-ended coda is provided by Saki's "The Open Window." In this tale, a young girl scares away a pompous bore by telling him an absolutely fantastic story about her house and her family; the child appears so innocent and truthful that even the reader believes her story. At the end, the girl begins another fantastic story for which the motivation is not nearly so clear and the

reader is left to guess at the credibility of both tales:

> "I expect it was the spaniel," said the niece calmly: "he told me had a horror of dogs. He was once hunted into a cemetery somewhere on the banks of the Ganges by a pack of pariah dogs, and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him. Enough to make any one lose their nerve."
>
> Romance at short notice was her specialty.

The coda in "The Open Window" adds to the charming mysteriousness of the entire story.

Pratt's comparison of the structural units of the natural and fictional narrative provides strong evidence that literary and natural narratives are formally and functionally similar. She emphasizes that an author uses language to communicate in the same way that a speaker does. Furthermore, the problems encountered in both the speaker/listener and author/reader relationships are the same:

> Put another way, all problems of coherence, chronology, causality, fore-grounding, plausibility, selection of detail, tense, point of view, and emotional intensity exist for the natural narrator just as they do for the novelist and they are confronted and solved (with greater or lesser success by speakers of the language every day. These are not rhetorical problems that literary narrators have had to solve by inventing poetic language. . . . we are obliged to draw the more obvious conclusion that the formal similarities between natural narrative and literary narrative derive from the fact that at some level of analysis they are utterances of the same type. And, let me repeat, their identity goes beyond minimal narrativity. From the point of view of structural poetics, this claim implies a redefinition of the relation between literary and nonliterary uses of language. It means that most of the features which poeticians believed constituted the "literariness" of novels are not "literary" at all. They occur in novels not because they are novels (i.e., literature) but because they are members of some other more general category of speech acts. (pp. 66-67, 69)

The literary narrative, she emphatically concludes, is a form of discourse, a speech act. The process of reading the literary narrative, therefore, is a communicative one.

Pratt's study focuses on the internal structural features of the natural and the fictional narrative. In her utilization of Labov's structural devices, she hints at the importance of the speaker/audience/text relationship to the definition of literary discourse. In Teaching the Universe of Discourse (1968), James Moffett places this relationship at the center of his argument that the fictional narrative is a form of discourse, a unit of communication. He sets out to define all narratives--literary and non-literary--in terms of this relationship. As with Pratt's study, Moffett's work also points to the reading of literature as a communication process.

In Universe of Discourse, Moffett interprets all discourse (fiction and non-fiction) as a system of communication operating among three elements: the teller, one told to and the telling medium.[12] The shifting relationship among speaker, listener and subject determines the form of the narrative, the type of discourse:

> For the sake of parsimony, the things that make for variation in discourse can be put as a matter of time and space. (1) How "large" in time and space is the speaker, the listener, the subject? (2) How great is the distance between them? (3) Do two or all of them coincide? Since these questions relate directly to the "removal" of phenomena from time and space (the degree of particularity or generality), by asking them we may easily relate "persons" (I, you, it) to levels of abstractions.
>
> For one thing, the very activity of the discourse--thinking, speaking, informal writing, or publishing--is essentially determined by the distance in time and space between speaker and listener. (p. 32)

He outlines the discourse forms in order of increasing distance between first and second person. In a reflection, speaker and listener are one and the speaker shapes the text to fit personal demands. In a

conversation, the material is shaped to aid another's understanding; this other is within vocal range. In a correspondence, the audience is another who is often known to the speaker and who shares common interests with that speaker. In a publication, the material is directed to a larger anonymous group extended over space and time:

> Several features relevant to curriculum appear already. (1) The communication system expands throughout the progressions. (2) Each kind of discourse is more selective, composed, and public than those before. (3) Feedback becomes increasingly slower until it tends to disappear, which is to say that two-way transaction is yielding to one-way transmission. (4) Emphasis shifts necessarily from the communication drama between first and second persons to the bare message or content; from the I-you relation to the I-it relation. (p. 33)

In each case, the form of the discourse changes in accord with the change in the nature of the relationship between author and audience.

Similarly, Moffett explores the literary narrative as a communication system by listing and defining a sequence of narrative (discourse) types: interior monologue, dramatic monologue, letter narration, diary narration, subjective narration, detached autobiography, memoir or observer narration, and biography or anonymous narration (single, dual, multiple or no character points of view). Each type reflects a different relationship among speaker, subject and listener. The first type, interior monologue, is an intra-organismic communication, because the speaker is also the listener; the reader is allowed to tune in on the communication. Moffett cites as an example Edouard Dujardin's We'll to the Woods No More: "The menu. Let's see fish, sole . . . yes, a sole. Entrées, mutton cutlets . . . no. Chicken . . . yes" (p. 123). These few lines indicate the reflexiveness

of the language. The message is conveyed as much by the narrator's process of perceiving and thinking as by the content of the perceptions and thoughts.

At the opposite end of the narrative sequence is the anonymous narration, with no character point of view. The anonymous narrator withdraws from the character's mind and is confidante to no one:

> One result is something like legend or myth, where external deeds and words carry the story by themselves with the narrator supplying background information and commentary. The characters tend to be typical or universal, the action symbolic or ritualistic. Personal psychology is not the point. These are thoroughly communal stories with an archetypal psychology. Another result is the external sketch. The next step would be to drop the eyewitness role as well, leaving only chorus information in the form of generalized chronicles, digests of the sorts of documents covered up to here. In other words, the rest is histories, summaries of summaries of summaries. (pp. 142-143)

To illustrate, Moffett discusses Nathaniel Hawthorne's parable, "The Minister's Black Veil." Here, the characters are symbolic and the story is allegorical; the narrator is anonymous:

> The next day, the whole village of Milford talked of little else than Parson Hooper's black veil. That, and the mystery concealed behind it, supplied a topic for discussion between acquaintances meeting in the street, and good women gossiping at their open windows. It was the first item of news that the tavern-keeper told to his guests. (p. 143)

The presence of Hawthorne's narrator is evident but very distant from the reader, who senses that the narrator is passing on a lesson, a story that has been recently heard.

The definition of the narrative as a system of communication, says Moffett, is crucial to the way readers interpret literature. Interpretation, he argues, should not be based solely on the content

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of the text. By looking at the communication structure, the reader can arrive at a more substantial understanding of literature:

> Perhaps this scheme could be of use to critics and reviewers, who could in turn help, more than they sometimes do, the average reader. Most of us are content-bound by training. We ask ourselves unnecessarily complicated questions about what a story means and what the author is doing when a simple glance at the communication structure of the work would answer many of these questions. Every message has intent as well as content, and form embodies this intent. Gatsby is "great" only as seen by Nick; if you want to create a semi-lengendary figure of romantic mystery you do not take the reader into his mind. And can you imagine what would happen to our ship of fools if it were viewed only by one of the characters? (pp. 149-150)

Interpretation, Moffett argues throughout his book, is the product of the writer's vision and intent, the specific mode of discourse and the reader's frame of experience. The individual must be aware of all these elements when reading the fictional narrative. (See Chapter IV of this study.)

Moffett's definition of narrative forms supplants the traditional point-of-view theory which states that all fictional forms have either a first or third person point of view. The problem with that theory, Moffett explains, is that it implies the absence of a speaker in third person fictions. In Moffett's narrative sequence, a speaker always exists. All fictional narratives have functional, speaking points of view, because all fictional narratives are forms of discourse, forms of communication. The reading of fiction is a situation in which a speaker addresses a listener about a subject; reading, then, is a communication process.

Wolfgang Iser also emphasizes the literary narrative as a form of discourse and the reading process as a communicative one, but he is

more specific than Moffett in identifying the movement of messages from speaker to listener. In "Reality of Fiction: A Functionalist Approach to Literature" (1975) and The Act of Reading (1980), Iser suggests that the reading of fiction is a speech act:

> The speech act theory derived from ordinary language philosophy is an attempt to describe those factors that condition the success or failure of linguistic communication. These factors also pertain to the reading of fiction, which is a linguistic action in the sense that it involves an understanding of the text or of what the text seeks to convey by establishing a relationship between text and reader.[13]

Referring to the speech act theories of J.L. Austin and James Searle, Iser proposes that the reading process has linguistic properties because the process has a speaker and listener and the interchange between the two resembles an illocutionary act.[14]

In How to Do Things with Words, J.L. Austin identifies three speech acts, each of which leads to a different listener performance:

> We first distinguish a group of things we do in saying something, which together we summed up by saying we perform a locutionary act which is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference, which again is roughly equivalent to "meaning" in the traditional sense. Second we said that we also perform illocutionary acts such as informing, ordering, warning, undertaking, &c., i.e., utterances which have a certain (conventional) force. Thirdly, we may also perform perlocutionary acts: what we bring about or achieve by saying something such as convincing, persuading, deterring, and even say, surprising or misleading. Here we have true, if not more, different senses of dimensions of the "use of the sentence" or the "use" of the language. (p. 108f)

Austin claims that an utterance which produces a desired effect has the quality of a perlocutionary act. An utterance that can only invite a response and has only a potential effect has the quality of an illocutionary act. In addition, the potential effect in an illocutionary

act depends on the illocutionary force derived from the situational context, that is,the speaker's intention.

According to Iser, the language of literature resembles more closely the illocutionary mode than the perlocutionary mode. Fictional language possesses the basic properties of the illocutionary act as outlined by Austin, but functions differently:

> As we have seen, the success of a linguistic action depends on the resolution of indeterminacies by means of conventions, procedures, and guarantees of sincerity. These form the frame of reference within which the speech act can be resolved into a context of action. Literary texts also require a resolution of indeterminacies but, by definition, for the fiction there can be no such given frames of reference. On the contrary, the reader must first discover for himself the code underlying the text, and this is tantamount to bringing out the meaning. ("Reality," p. 13)

Iser explains that the reader creates the frame of reference through the process of discovering the writer's vision; this discovery--itself a linguistic act--is critical to the communication process. Communication occurs as the reader completes the literary work, as the reader allows the work to have meaning, to be alive and be real.

Searle, in his 1969 study, Speech Acts an Essay in the Philosophy of Language, and Austin, in With Words, emphasize that the absence of a frame of reference in a literary text separates literary language from spoken language. Since literary language is void (a result of no frame of reference), they exclude it from the realm of speech. Literary language does not acquire meaning through controlled usage and cannot link up to a situational context that controls that usage. For a linguistic act to be successful, they argue, the following conditions must be met: the utterance must invoke a convention valid for both

recipient and speaker; the application of the convention must be governed by certain accepted procedures; and the utterance must be properly understood--that is, the full intention of the speaker must be clear.[15] These conditions, according to Austin and Searle, are not met by literary language and, therefore, a speech act cannot occur.

Iser modifies the speech act theory to account for the differences Austin and Searle perceive between literary and spoken language. He argues that fictional language provides instructions for the building of the situational context; during the reading process, the reader discovers and decodes these instructions:

> As far as the reader is concerned, he finds himself obliged to work out why certain conventions should have been selected for his attention. This process of discovery is in the nature of a performative action, for it brings out the motivation governing the selection. (p. 14)

Iser identifies the instructions as strategies equivalent to accepted procedures of the speech act. Like accepted procedures, the strategies guide the reader to an understanding of the text, but, unlike the accepted procedures, they combine to counter established expectations the reader might have. Since the language, through the work of the strategies, influences the reader to respond, the language assumes a performative quality and an illocutionary force. By arousing the reader's attention, the language directs the reader's approach to the text and elicits responses--all qualities of a speech act. Iser concludes, therefore, that fictional language has the necessary properties of a speech act.

The author is the user of the language that, according to Iser, possesses an illocutionary force; through the language, the author's

voice communicates an experience and requests that the reader evaluate that experience in light of past experiences. The author's request is a very natural one; the reader's interpretive response, involving self-evaluation, is also a natural one. Barbara Hardy, in "Towards a Poetics of Fiction: An Approach through Narrative" (1968), assumes that the reading of fiction is a communication act and argues for the natural quality of the author's desire to communicate; the narrative mode, she believes, is a continuation of the human mind and is consciously created out of a natural desire to share history and identity: "Thus we may be engaged in telling ourselves stories in a constant attempt to exchange identity and history, though many of us stay in love with ourselves, sufficiently self-attached to rewrite the other stories for our own purposes."[16] The fictional narrative is an act of mind transferred from life to art. Fiction, says Hardy, heightens, isolates, analyzes and clarifies the narrative motions of the human consciousness and transfers those motions to a receiver:

> We often tend to see the novel as competing with the world of happenings. I should like to see it as the continuation, in disguising and isolating art, of the remembering, dreaming, and planning that is in life imposed on the uncertain, attenuated, interrupted and unpredictable or meaningless flow of happenings. (pp. 6-7)

According to Hardy, fiction is part of a communication system that carries messages from a human mind to a receiver/reader.[17]

Hardy explores several narrative modes, fictional and non-fictional, and shows how each has a similar purpose: communicating history and identity. The novel, she argues, is a long narrative structure of human consciousness; short fiction is a smaller one;

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daydreaming, storytelling and fantasizing are even smaller constructs. All these narrative modes, Hardy explains, join the future with the past. All create, maintain and transform human relationships and try to initiate change in the author's/reader's perceptions of human experience:

> Narratives and dramas are often about making up stories and playing roles. The novel is introverted in this sense, not because novels tend to be about novels, but because they tend to be about the larger narrative structure of consciousness, and the value and dangers involved in narrative modes of invention, dream, causal projection, and so on. (p. 7)

All narrative structures provide a means whereby the reader comes to understand others and the self; this understanding is achieved by "telling, untelling, believing, and disbelieving stories about each other's pasts, futures, and identities" (p. 6).

We write because the act allows us to put our experiences into perspective; we read at least partly to seek assistance in dealing with experience. Hardy believes our attraction to both processes is rooted in a continual need to reconstruct and evaluate, to make order out of disorder and to find sense in our despair, pain, successes, madness and happiness--the motions of the human mind. She stresses at the close of her article, "It is hard to stop telling stories" (p. 14). It is hard to stop sharing, communicating. Literature is a form of discourse, and the reading process a communicative one because the text is the product of a desire to share and sharing can only be achieved through communication.

According to the theories of Hardy, Iser, Pratt and Moffett, then, the reading process is a communicative one in which the reader of

the fictional narrative plays a receptive, listening role. In this role, the reader is directed, guided by the author. The author's attempt at communication is a conscious one; the author invites the reader to witness and evaluate experience. Through the narrative discourse the author seeks approval from the reader that the experience portrayed is a possible one. The author also invites the reader to evaluate the reader's own experiences by interpreting the text. At the point of interpretation, the communication/speech act is completed.[18]

Communication/speech act theory defines the text as a form of communication, the author as a conscious communicator, and the reader as a receiver. The spectator theory of literature, which holds that the reader and writer visually perceive the events of the story, complements the communication/speech act theory and reinforces the communication quality of the fictional reading process. Under the spectator theory, the fiction writer is a spectator who uses the text to externalize a vision for both author and reader. As spectator, the writer invites the reader to be a spectator and to share in the writer's vision by discovering the text.

D.W. Harding has done the most extensive work on the reader-as-spectator concept. In "The Role of the Onlooker" (1937) and "Psychological Processes in the Reading of Fiction" (1972), he explains that the reader witnesses developments in the text and responds to them like a spectator at an event.[19] A spectator, viewing an accident, a fight or even something as undramatic as the daily activities of an office, Harding argues, constantly responds. The response may take the form of fear, horror, delight or curiosity (unconscious) or anger, disappointment,

chagrin, pride or disgust (conscious and judgmental):

> Part of everyone's time is spent in looking on at events not primarily in order to understand (though that may come in) and not in preparation for doing something about them, but in a non-participant relation which yet includes an active evaluative attitude. We can say two things of the onlooker: first that he attends, whether his attention amounts to a passing glance or fascinated absorption; and second, that he evaluates, whether his attitude is one of faint liking or disliking, hardly above indifference, or strong, perhaps intensely emotional, and perhaps differentiated into pity, horror, contempt, respect, amusement, or any other of the shades and kinds of evaluation, most of them unlabelled even in our richly differentiated language. ("Psychological Process," p. 134)

The spectator's response occurs when the spectator is alone or with others. In the presence of others, says Harding, old responses can change and new ones develop.

The nature of the spectator's response, according to Harding, depends on how strongly the spectator identifies with the participants in the event and on the importance of the event in the spectator's value system. When the event occurs, sentiments travel from participant to spectator and new sentiments are triggered within the spectator. To illustrate, Harding describes a struggle between policemen and a second group. A system of sentiments is activated in the individuals observing the confrontation. But the nature of those sentiments depends on how the onlookers evaluate the other group:". . . as men or women, drunk or sober, strike pickets, rowdy students, smash-and-grab thieves, political demonstrators" (p. 135). If the spectators feel alienated from the second group, their sentiments will resemble those of the policemen. If they are alienated from both groups, they will develop an entirely independent system of sentiments. In the latter

case, a complex interaction occurs among many mutually entangled systems of sentiment.

Similarly, Harding argues, the reader is a spectator who witnesses the actions and experiences the author presents. The reader's inner eye views the developments in the fiction's plot and the visual responses of its characters:

> A novel is so distantly related to many other sorts of art, and so closely related to activities that are not included among the arts, that an approach through aesthetic generalizations would be restricting and misleading. . . . Much more important aspects of fiction are illuminated if the reader of a novel is compared with the man who hears about other people and their doings in the course of ordinary gossip. And to give an account of gossip we have to go a step or two farther back and consider the position of the person who looks on at actual events. As a framework, then, within which to discuss fiction, I want to offer some statement of the psychological position of the onlooker (of which I attempted a fuller discussion in "The Role of the Onlooker," Scrutiny, VI, 3, December, 1937), and then to view the reading of a novel as a process of looking on at a representation of imagined events or, rather, of listening to a description of them. (pp. 133-134)

Like the spectating process, he explains, the reading process allows a person to view ways of life beyond the individual's range of experiences. The reader/spectator can witness different people, places and events--the whole spectrum of human experience. Furthermore, in this spectator role, says Harding, the reader is given the opportunity to respond actively and productively. The reader, he concludes does not read for wish-fulfillment, but for wish-development:

> What sometimes is called wish-fulfillment in novels and plays can, therefore, more plausibly be described as wish-formulation or the definition of desires. The cultural levels at which it works may vary widely; the process is the same. It is the social act of affirming with the author a set of values. . . . It seems nearer the truth, therefore, to say that fictions contribute to defining the reader's or spectator's values and perhaps stimulating his desires rather than to suppose that they gratify desire. (p. 144)

The reader's response is active because the author has encouraged the reader to define individual desires and value systems. The reader's response is an affirmation that the experience the author has portrayed is a possible human activity. The author's vision becomes worthy of attention when the reader can use that vision to redefine the reader's own beliefs.

Harding explains that in this spectator role, the reader is subjected to the same influences as a spectator at an event. The reader's response is dependent on the sentiment that binds the reader to the author, i.e., the importance of the author's vision in the reader's value system:

> One process on which the response depends--apart from the elementary perception and comprehension of the scene--is that of imaginative or empathic insight into other living things, mainly other people. But this would give only imaginative sharing of the participant's experience. At least equally important is the onlooker's, or the reader's, evaluation of the participants and what they do and suffer, an evaluation that I would relate in further analysis to his structure of interests and sentiments. (p. 147)

Such sentiments are evident in the statements of Sherwood Anderson's narrator in "The Egg"; the narrator specifically acknowledges this binding sentiment throughout the story. He repeatedly calls attention to his philosophy on life and postulates possible reader response. His readers may become bored, he notes, if he preaches too much. On the other hand, he adds, they will understand his didacticism because they, like himself, have often thought about life's precarious nature. The narrator's comments about himself, his theme and his reader are scattered throughout: "One unversed in such matters can have no notion of the many and tragic things that can happen to a chicken. . . . Did I say I

embarked in the restaurant business in the town of Bidwell, Ohio? I exaggerated a little. . . . On the seat of the wagon beside father was his greatest treasure. I will tell you of that."[20] Anderson's narrator is aware of what Harding calls the spectator role of a reader. He informs his readers of the sentiment that binds him to them and he assures them that the experiences they are witnessing are familiar ones.

The spectator theory of literature adds an interesting dimension to the communication concept of reading, especially when we consider the role of author as spectator. According to Harding and those who have adopted his ideas, the spectator theory implies a dual communication. As the author communicates to the reader/spectator, the author also communicates to the self. The author's role is as active as the reader's; the author is not a participant, but a spectator. The author's opportunity to witness and respond to the creation makes possible the act of reading. Since both writer and reader share the same spectator role, the text becomes the one element they have in common. For the author, the text is a means of communicating to the self and the reader. For the reader, the text is a means of witnessing and hence receiving the author's messages. For both, the text becomes the blueprint of human experience.[21]

Barbara Hardy also argues in favor of the author as audience. In support of this concept, she compares novel writing to daydreaming. She links the structure of a fictional narrative with that of inner and outer storytelling:

> For we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticize, construct, gossip, learn, hate, and love by narrative. In order really to live, we make up stories about

> ourselves and others, about the personal as well as the social past and future. ("Poetics of Fiction," p. 5)

Both narrative writing and daydreaming are processes of removing an aspect of ourselves and viewing and scrutinizing that aspect:

> Fantasy-life does not come to an end at eighteen but goes on working together with the more life-orientated modes of planning, faithful remembering, and rational appraisal. We can distinguish the extremes of cut-off indulgent fantasy and faithful document, but the many intermediate states blue the distinction and are compounded of fantasy and realism. The element of dream can be sterile and dangerously in-turned; it can also penetrate deeply and accept a wide range of disturbing and irrational experience. . . . Dream can provide . . . a look at the unwished-for worst. (p. 6)

In our day-to-day lives, she argues, we oscillate between fairy tale and truth, between dream and waking. As we fantasize, we externalize an aspect of ourselves in order to understand and judge ourselves. Hardy claims that our need to separate experiences for our judging and understanding is as great as our need to share these experiences with others. The spectator role gives us the opportunity to self evaluate continually, an activity that Hardy believes is crucial to our daily existence.

James Britton adheres to the same concept of the literary author as spectator in Language and Learning (1970), acknowledging the work of D.W. Harding, Britton argues that the author must be a spectator because every imaginative product comes to an individual as an experience recalled--or seen--and not as experience in the making:

> Our minds tend to dwell on what has been happening to us and when we have nothing particular to think about we respond to our environment often enough by summoning past experiences associated with whatever in it catches our attention. And these preoccupations are likely to spill over into words when we find ourselves in the company of someone disposed to listen.[22]

As spectator, Britton says, the individual does not take part in the experiences recalled, but sets them up in the mind's eye for a second view. Under the scrutiny of this reexamination, the experiences take on a new shape, often influenced by other past experiences.

Britton argues that we assume the role of spectator whenever we write, talk, read or listen. We write or talk to please others and ourselves; we invite others to share the experiences we are recalling. As readers and listeners, we can accept that invitation; the result is a viewing of another's experience and a reconstruction of our own:

> This leads to the final extension of the area of application: if I may take up the role of spectator of my own past or future experiences, of other people's experiences, past or futures, then I may also become spectator of events that have never happened and never happen. I do so, in a fairy story or its adult equivalent. The satisfaction I have in the story is the kind of satisfaction I derive, not from looking back on one I have had; it is as though I were to go back over an experience I have not had! (p. 103)

Whenever we contemplate, enjoy and/or reconstruct experiences so that we can learn from them, we are playing the role of spectator; we are communicating both with ourselves and with others.

According to Britton, Hardy and Harding, then, an individual exists behind every work of fiction. That individual visually communicates attitudes and experiences to the self and to others by recalling prior experiences for view in the mind's eye. According to the theories of Pratt, Iser and Moffett, the reader is at the receiving end of the author's conscious attempt at verbally communicating an experience and the attitudes linked to that experience. The author brings a vision into the open to seek assurance that the vision is worthy of exchange. Through the written voice, the author speaks to the reader and encourages

the reader to be co-discoverer in the writer's vision. The author seeks the reader's affirmation that the experience portrayed is plausible and interesting; the author asks the reader to share in the spectator process. The author, therefore, invites the reader to evaluate, refine and modify the reader's system of beliefs.

If we view the reading of fiction as a communication act, we can put aside our traditional emphasis on the meaning of a literary text and assume a more functionalist view of the text's effect on the reader. The reading act is a communicative one because it has a particular effect on the reader.[23] The author does not dictate meaning or a certain response; the author invites one. As in any communication situation, the reader is free to accept, reject or modify the medium's message. Any form of response indicates that the reader has performed in an evaluative manner.[24] This evaluation stage, the subject of the next chapter, is the point at which the voice is activated. The reader's sense of self crystallizes during this stage; the reader eventually emerges from the reading act with a modified system of beliefs and a well-tuned voice.

NOTES

[1]Louise M. Rosenblatt (The Reader, 1978) believes that a work of literature is an event in the life of the reader:

> First, the text is a stimulus activating element of the reader's past experience--his experience both with literature and with life. Second, the text serves as a blueprint, a guide for the selecting, rejecting, and ordering of what is being called forth; the text regulates what will be held in the forefront of the reader's attention. (p. 11)

Rosenblatt suggests that the reader's experience with life recalled through an experience with literature, results in a reevaluation of the reader's system of beliefs. (Further references to this and other works in this chapter will be indicated in the text by page number.)

[2]The author's responsibility for the reader's subsequent self-evaluation is a theory shared by many theorists, among them Roman Ingarden, Wolfgang Iser and Rosenblatt. All agree that the author, through the text, initiates change in the reader. Ingarden claims that the change is the result of the reader's attempt to fill in the blanks inherent in any text: "The reader then reads 'between the lines' and involuntarily complements many of the sides of the portrayed objectivities not determined in the text itself. . . . I call this implementing determination the 'concretization' of the portrayed objects" (The Cognition of the Literary Work, trans. Ruth Ann Crowley and Kenneth R. Olsen [Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973], pp. 52-53). Iser in The Act of Reading also argues that without this change the reading act would be incomplete:

> Thus the text provokes continually changing views in the reader. . . . It is only through readjustment of his own projections that the reader can experience something previously not within his experience, and this something--as we saw in the preceding chapter--ranges from a detached objectification of what he is entangled in, to an experience of himself that would otherwise be precluded by his entanglement in the pragmatic world around him. (The Act of Reading [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1980], p. 167)

Rosenblatt explains that self-evaluation is triggered in the reader the moment the reader confronts the text:

> The reader's attention to the text activates certain elements in his past experience. . . .the blueprint of this experience is the author's text, the reader feels himself in communication with another mind, another world. (pp. 10-11, 86)

The knowledge the reader acquires through reading, she writes, becomes part of the reader's "ongoing stream of his life experiences." (See

next chapter for a full exploration of the relationship among author, text and reader during interpretation.)

[3]In The Act of Reading, Iser argues for the reading of literature as a communication process; the importance of a work of literature is not in its meaning, but in its effect on the reader:

> If fiction and reality are to be linked, it must be in terms not of opposition but of communication, for the one is not a mere opposite of the other--fiction is a means of telling us something about reality. . . . Furthermore, once the time honored opposition has been replaced by the concept of communication, attention must be paid to the hitherto recipient/ reader of the message. (p. 54)

[4]In this communication process, the voice is the medium of transmission working through the text.

[5]I use the term inner ear and inner eye as metaphors for describing the workings of the imagination during the reading and writing processes.

[6]Labov's work with oral, natural narratives is found in William Labov and Joshua Waletzky, "Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experiences" in Essays on Visual and Aural Narratives, ed. J. Helm (Seattle and London: Univ. of Washington Press, 1970); Language in the Inner City (1976); and Sociolinguistic Patterns (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1972).

[7]Pratt points out that when she uses the word novel, she is referring to both long and short fictional narratives: "Here and throughout, I use the term 'novel' as a convenient short form for literary narrative in general, that is, for the class of literary utterances which include novels, novellas, short stories, and narrative poems" (Literary Discourse, p. 51).

[8]"A complete narrative," Labov concludes, "begins with an orientation, proceeds to the complicating action, is suspended at the focus of evaluation before resolution, concludes with the resolution, and returns the listener to the present time with the coda" (Inner City, p. 369).

[9]See Pratt's chapter "The Natural Narrative" (pp. 38-70) for a fuller explanation of evaluative devices.

[10]Pratt also notes that the end of the text visibly signals the end of the narrative (p. 56).

[11]Here Pratt uses the example of "Melville's "Bartleby" and the end of Bronte's Jane Eyre, but she doesn't illustrate the other coda types. I have selected the subsequent examples to fit Pratt's definitions: Stephen Crane, "The Blue Hotel" in Fiction 100, ed. James H. Pickering (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1978), p. 235; H.H. Munro, "The Open Window," in The Complete Works of Saki (New York: Doubleday, 1976), p. 262.

[12]Moffett refers to the text as the medium. In previous chapters, I've talked of voice as the medium. When not working directly with Moffett, I will refer to the text as the "vehicle" through which the medium of voice operates.

[13]Wolfgang Iser, "The Reality of Fiction: A Functionalist Approach to Literature," New Literary History, VIII, no. 1 (1975), p. 8. Iser's Act of Reading, published three years later, expands on the theories in his 1975 article. This theory of the reading process as a communication act is developed in the book's last section, "Interaction between Text and Reader." Here he explores the conditions that give the interaction the quality of a communication act. He also outlines Roman Ingarden's theory of indeterminacy to show that certain blanks in the text necessitate the reader's response. Communication between author and reader via the text occurs as the reader fills in the text's blanks. I use Iser's adaptation of Ingarden's indeterminacy theory in my last chapter.

[14]J.L. Austin, How to do Things with Words, ed., J.O. Armson (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1962); John R. Searle, Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969).

[15]Austin and Searle explain that accepted procedures are constitutive or regulative rules/conventions which legitimize the act.

[16]Barbara Hardy, "Towards a Poetics of Fiction: An Approach through the Narrative," Novel, 2, no. 1 (1968), p. 6.

[17]Hardy's argument centers on the novel form. However, her theory is not contingent upon whether the fictional narrative is long or short. Her emphasis is on the author's purpose in using the narrative mode and what the author expects from the narrative's reader.

[18]See Note 3.

[19]The spectator theory, analyzed in the critical works of James Britton and Barbara Hardy, was originally developed by D.W. Harding. The spectator theory is first defined in "The Role of the Onlooker," Scrutiny, VI, no. 3 (1937), pp. 247-258. Harding applies the theory more directly to literature in "Psychological Processes in the Reading of Fiction," British Journal of Aesthetics, 2, no. 1 (1972), pp. 133-147. Though Harding acknowledges that both writer and reader are spectators, he chiefly explores the nature of the reader's spectator role.

[20]Sherwood Anderson, "The Egg," in The Norton Introduction to Literature: Fiction, ed. James Beatty (New York: Norton, 1973), pp. 295-297. (My example)

[21]Rosenblatt (The Reader, 1978) talks about the text as the blueprint for the reader's future experiences:

> The reader concentrating his attention on the world he [the author] has evoked feels himself freed for the time from his own preoccupations and limitations. Aware that the blueprint of this experience is the author's text, the reader feels himself in communication with another mind, another world. (p. 86)

[22]Britton, Language and Learning (1970), p. 101. Britton believes that only certain modes of writing feature the writer in the spectator role. He outlines the differences between spectator and participant modes in The Development of Writing Abilities (1978). Here, he lists three writing modes: transactional, poetic and expressive. The transactional mode is "an immediate means to an end in itself"; since we use transactional language to get things done, we are in the participant role. Poetic writing "is an immediate end in itself, and not a means"; when using poetic language, we are in the spectator role. Expressive writing covers the spectrum from transactional to poetic writing (p. 93).

[23]The basic theory of Rosenblatt's The Reader (1978) is that interpretation is the result of an interaction between the elements of the text and the reader's previous human experiences--make-up of the reader's experiential frame (pp. 10-11).

[24]See Rosenblatt, The Reader, pp. 10-15.

CHAPTER IV

INTERPRETATION AND PRE-WRITING

Because the reading of fiction is a communication activity, the process can provide students with something instructors cannot: a very personal, private interaction with human experience and the voice that conveys that experience. Louise Rosenblatt in Literature as Exploration (1938) writes "There is not such a thing as a generic reader or a generic literary work . . . the reading of any work of literature is, of necessity, an individual and unique occurence involving the mind and emotions of a particular reader."[1] This "occurrence" is the reader's response--interpretation of--the literary work. The reader's response is an integral part of the communication process of reading. Interpretation is the reader's/listener's personalized affirmation of the existence of the author's/speaker's voice and the message that voice conveys.

Literary interpretation, the reader's response to the author's voice is a process in which the reader discovers some relationship between the writer's vision and the reader's past experiences.[2] Upon discovering that relationship, the reader restructures the self and may even alter individual belief systems to account for the new discovery. Throughout the process of discovery and restructuring, the reader's voice is activated; this voice communicates, both to the self and to others, the new knowledge acquired during reading. Since voice conveys

something of the user's personality or sense of self, the voice during interpretation reflects the new self awareness the reader achieves as a result of the reading process.[3]

Interpretation is a process in which both the reader's self and the reader's experiential frame alter; the process, therefore, is an expressive one. Edward Sapir in Culture, Language and Personality (1961) argues that all linguistic activity, including reading, is expressive, because such activity involves the restructuring of self through the recollection of experience: "That language is a perfect symbolism of experience, that in the actual context of behavior it cannot be divorced from action and that it is the carrier of an infinitely nuanced expressiveness are universally psychological facts" (p. 11). An expressive activity is anything close to the self, anything which involves reconsideration of the self. The stage in the reading process in which interpretation occurs, then, is an expressive stage.[4] In this expressive stage, the reader's voice is activated, shaped and redefined. The shaping and redefining of the voice occurs as the reader's own personality changes to account for the new awareness arrived at through interpretation.

When the reader interprets the text and tests that interpretation through communication, the expressive stage of reading overlaps with the expressive stage of writing as defined by Janet Emig and James Britton.[5] According to Emig and Britton, the pre-writing stage is expressive, because it is the point at which the writer explores the self and experience in preparation for writing. This stage extends from the moment students are stimulated to write to the moment they

put pen to paper with the intention of producing the major writing assignment. Between stimulus and production, the student publicly tests the ideas and experiences evoked by the stimulus. The stimulus for the exploration of self can come from the reading of fictional narratives.[6] Interpretation of the stimulus occurs during the pre-writing stage of the composing process. As with other pre-writing activities, the reader tests the interpretation by publicly communicating, orally and in writing, the knowledge acquired during writing. The stimulus activates the student's voice which communicates this knowledge. Once the instructors and peers confirm the students' voice during the discussion section of pre-writing, production is possible.

In order to understand the importance of bringing fictional narratives into the writing class to develop the student's voice, one must perceive the activities of interpretation and pre-writing as expressive, as dealing closely with the reader's/writer's self and experience. The expressive stage in reading must be seen as operating in the same way as does the expressive stage in writing (pre-writing); both involve the discovery of self and the communication of that discovery privately and publicly. The student's voice in both stages is activated and developed. Once the act of interpretation is viewed as accomplishing what other activities in pre-writing accomplish, this activity can be a part of the pre-writing process. The reading of fictional narratives, then, can contribute to the composing process.

Interpetation: An Expressive Activity

Interpretation of fictional narratives can be viewed as an expressive activity because during the process the reader's personality (sense of self) and realm of experiences are restructured; the voice is activated and developed throughout the restructuring process. Sapir argues for the expressiveness of all language activity for this very reason: the restructuring of self signals expressive behavior. The fact that the reading of fiction in particular is an expressive activity is supported by the work of Rosenblatt (1978), Roman Ingarden (1973), Thomas C. Pollack (1965), James R. Squire (1964) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1961).[7] While Rosenblatt and Ingarden suggest this expressiveness by looking at the influence of author and text on the restructuring process, Pollack, Squire and Merleau-Ponty argue for the influence of the reader's past experiences on the process.

Sapir in Culture, Language and Personality (1961) regards all language activity, including reading and writing, as expressive. Any encounter with language, he says, is expressive because language is the perfect symbol of experience:

> It is this constant interplay between language and experience which removes language from the cold status of such purely and simply symbolic systems as mathematical symbolism or flag signalling. This interpenetration is not only an intimate associative fact; it is also a contextual one. It is important to realize that language may not only refer to experience or even mold, interpret, and discover experience, but that it also substitutes for it in the sense that in those sequences of interpersonal behavior which form the greater part of our daily lives speech and action supplement each other and do each other's work in a web of unbroken pattern. (p. 9)

Language, Sapir argues, is our only link with experience.

According to Sapir, the communication function of language is proof of its expressiveness, for the communication of language signals the presence of a personality. Furthermore, that personality is reflected in the sound, rhythm, content of the voice through which the language operates:

> The fundamental quality of one's voice, the phonetic patterns of speech, the speed and relative smoothness of articulation, the length and build of the sentences, the character and range of the vocabulary, the scholastic consistency of the words used, the readiness with which words respond to the requirements of the social environment, in particular the suitability of one's language to the language habits of the persons addressed--all these are so many complex indicators of the personality. (p. 19)

Through communication of language, Sapir argues, we pass on our sense of self to another; we communicate our beliefs, impressions, likes, dislikes, joys and disappointments. The individual at the receiving end of the communication also uses language to decipher the speaker's beliefs in terms of the listener's own belief system. Growth in communication occurs, Sapir concludes, when language is used by both speaker and listener to discover, interpret and mold experience.

Sapir emphasizes that language behavior is expressive, i.e., contributing to the restructuring of self through the discovery of experience, only when two individuals exchange language. But, Sapir explains, overt speech is not necessary for the completion of a linguistic act:

> The primary function of language is generally said to be communication. There can be no quarrel with this so long as it is distinctly understood that there may be effective communication without overt speech and that language is highly relevant to situations which are not obviously of a communicative sort. (p. 15)

Since fiction has been defined in previous chapters as literary discourse absent of overt speech, but embodying a speaker and listener, Sapir's term expressive can be applied to the language behavior of literary discourse. The reading of literary discourse which includes interpretation, the process of discovering and communicating experience privately or publicly, is expressive behavior. As the reader tries to understand, to communicate the discovery of the text, the growth of the reader's self and of the voice that is an indicator of that self takes place.

Sapir's work on language behavior, then, strongly supports the expressiveness of both the reading and interpreting of literary discourse. Rosenblatt, Ingarden, Pollack, Squire and Merleau-Ponty provide further support for this theory of expressiveness. Each believes that the reader arrives at an interpretation as a result of a complex interaction among certain elements: author, text and/or reader's personality and realm of experience. The interaction results in expressive behavior on the part of the interpreter; the reading of literary discourse involves the discovery of a new aspect of the self and the communication of that discovery.

One important element influencing the reader's interpretation of a literary work is the author. The author contributes to the reader's interpretation by (1) offering one individual's interaction with experience as a model, (2) projecting the reader towards self-exploration and, (3) using the text to achieve the projection and to help the reader visualize the model.

Merleau-Ponty in Signs (1964) argues for the first two methods of contribution. The author, he says, projects the reader outward, expands the reader's experiential frame and in so doing invites the reader to respond. The author achieves this expansion by initiating the reader into a world that exercises the reader's perceptions:

> On the contrary, a language which gives our perspectives on things and cuts out relief in them opens up a discussion which does not end with the language and itself invites further investigation. What is irreplaceable in the work of art? What makes it far more a voice of the spirit, whose analogue is found in all productive philosophic or political thought, than a means to pleasure? The fact that it contains, better than ideas, matrices of ideas--the fact that it provides us with symbols whose meaning we never stop developing. (p. 77)

According to Merleau-Ponty, the initiation occurs throughout the reader's interaction with the text and after the text has been put aside and the reader continues to dwell on the author's vision. The reading of a literary work, he argues, is provocative and its understanding limitless.

A second responsibility of the author, according to Merleau-Ponty, is to set up a model of experience, to portray life's conflicts, to isolate them and to identify them for the reader. A writer takes a possible experience, one the reader can recognize, and sharpens it:

> The novelist speaks for his reader, and every man to every other, the language of the initiated--initiated into the world and into the universe of possibilities confined in a human body and a human life. What he has to say he supposes known. He takes up his dwelling in a character's behavior and gives the reader only a suggestion of it, its nervous and peremptory trace in the surroundings. (p. 76)

Communication with the reader is achieved when the author engages the reader, frees the reader from the limitations of reader's own world and

opens the reader to the author's world. The reader is reminded of the reader's own experiences by "joining the author at the virtual center of the writing" and discovering the author's vision.

The effect, according to Merleau-Ponty, of the author's influence on the reader is expressive. The reader, exposed to a world different from but nonetheless important to the reader's own world, begins looking inward and bridges the gap between the reader's self and the world of the author:

> Precisely because it dwells and makes us dwell in a world we do not have the key to, the work of art teaches us to see and ultimately gives us something to think about as no analytical work can; because when we analyze an object, we find only what we have put into it. . . . We could not see anything if our eyes did not give us the means of catching, questioning, and giving form to an indefinite number of configurations of space and color. We would not do anything if our body did not enable us to leap over all the neural and muscular means of locomotion in order to move to the goal. Literary language fills the same kind of office. (pp. 77-78)

Interpretation, then, is <u>not</u> a process of discovering a meaning alien to the reader's world; the author gives the reader perspectives on life that confirm the reader's place in the world that the reader knows and is trying to understand.

Since the author's relationship to the reader affects interpretation, so too must the text, the vehicle conveying the author's voice. Rosenblatt in <u>Reader, Text and Poem</u> (1978) uses the text and the author interchangeably to acknowledge the influence of the author and text on the reader's response. Rosenblatt's transactional theory of the reading act suggests that the author, through the text, contributes to the shaping of the reader's expressive response.[8] According

to the transactional theory, the author acts like a teacher instructing the reader/student on something not to be found outside the text:

> The importance of the text is not denied by recognition of its openness. The text is the author's means of directing the attention of the reader. The author has looked at life from a particular angle of vision; he has selected out what he hopes will fulfill his aim, as Conrad phrased it, to make you see, to make you hear, to make you feel. The reader, concentrating his attention on the world he has evoked, feels himself freed for the time from his own preoccupations and limitations. Aware that the blueprint of his experience is the author's text, the reader feels himself in communication with another mind, another world. (p. 86)

The author stimulates the reader to respond by offering the reader the text which conveys a particular experience that may seem different to the reader, but not at all alien to the reader's referential system. The author through the text provides the guidelines for the reader's new awareness of self.

The author, according to Rosenblatt, uses a series of signs, interpretable as linguistic symbols, to stimulate the reader's response. The reader's action on the text's linguistic symbols constitutes the interpretative process:

> The reader's attention to the text activates certain elements in his past experience--external reference, internal response--that have become linked with the verbal symbols. Meaning will emerge from a network of relationships among the things symbolized as he senses them. The symbols point to these sensations, images, objects, ideas, relationships, with the particular associations or feeling-tones created by his past experiences with them in actual life or in literature. (p. 11)

Interpretation is the reader's effort to fuse ideas and feelings, associations and attitudes, that the linguistic symbols call forth.

According to Rosenblatt, the reader's action on the text can take one of two forms: the ordering and affirming of past experiences, or the ordering and rejecting of past experiences:

> The selection and organization of responses to some degree hinge on the assumptions, the expectations, or sense of possible structures that he brings out of the stream of his life. Thus built into the raw material of the literary process is the particular world of the reader.
>
> But the text may also lead him to be critical of those prior assumptions and associations--as was the reader with too vivid a recollection of an actor's quarrel. (p. 11)

In the latter case, she continues, the reader may have discovered that the reader projected on the text elements of a past experience that were not relevant to the text, i.e., "not susceptible of coherent incorporation into the text" (p. 11). The reader's attempt at discovering why these elements have been recalled and why they seem to bear no relationship to the text will also lead to a new self awareness, according to Rosenblatt.

Whether the interpretation involves an affirmation or criticism of past experiences, and/or values, Rosenblatt emphasizes, the reader's response is always active, self-ordering and self correcting. Crucial to interpretation is the reader's active contribution in this self-correcting process. The text evokes images, feelings, attitudes and associations in the reader and demands that the reader make some sense of them in terms of the reader's own pre-notions of the subject. The reader actively responds to the demands by adjusting the pre-notions to account for the acquisition of new knowledge; the reader engages in self-correcting:

> Under the magnetism of the ordered symbols of the text, he marshals his resources and crystallizes out from the stuff of memory, thought, and feeling a new order, a new experience, which he sees as the poem. This becomes part of the ongoing stream of his life experience, to be reflected on from any angle important to him as a human being. (p. 12)

The reader brings experience and personality to the text; in the creation of the literary work (interpretation), the reader discovers a redefined experience and personality.[9]

Roman Ingarden in The Cognition of the Literary Work (1973) and The Literary Work of Art (1973) believes, like Rosenblatt, that the reading process involves a complex interaction between author and reader through the text; the result for the reader is an aesthetic experience which involves the author and in some way changes the reader. Ingarden uses different terms to define the same activities that Rosenblatt identifies.

In Cognition, Ingarden explores the reader's aesthetic experience. Anticipating Rosenblatt's transactional theory, Ingarden says that early in the aesthetic experience, the reader works along with the author, using the author's text to become a cocreator of the literary work. As cocreator, the reader does not discover the exact vision the writer had in mind when producing the literary work; the reader discovers instead another individualized reading:

> The reader then reads "between the lines" and involuntarily complements many of the sides of the portrayed objectivities not determined in the text itself, through an "overexplicit" understanding of the sentences and especially of the nouns appearing in them. I call this complementing determination the "concretization" of the portrayed objects. In concretization the peculiar cocreative activity of the reader comes into play. (pp. 52-53)

> Only an active reading, however, permits the reader to discover it in its peculiar, characteristic structure and in its full detail. But this cannot be accomplished through a mere apprehension of the individual intentional states of affairs belonging to the sentences. We must progress from these stages of affairs to their diverse interconnections and then to the objects (things, events) which are portrayed in the states of affairs. But in order to achieve an aesthetic apprehension of the stratum of objects in its often complex structure, the active reader, after he has discovered and reconstructed this stratum, must, as we shall see, go beyond it, especially beyond various details, explicitly indicated by the sentence meanings, and must supplement in many directions what is portrayed. And in so doing, the reader to some extent proves to be the cocreator of the literary work. (p. 41)

Ingarden's "cocreator" theory resembles Rosenblatt's "completion-of-the-text" theory. According to both, the reader completes the intention of the text by serving as the text's cocreator.

The reader, Ingarden argues, becomes a cocreator by filling in the blanks of the text. According to Ingarden, the literary work, by the very nature of the genre, contains indeterminacies or blanks. Cognition, interpretation, creation, occurs as the reader fills in these blanks from the perspective of the reader's own world:

> The literary work, and the literary work of art in particular, is a schematic formation (see Assertion 7, 5, 4). At least some of its strata, especially the objective stratum, contain a series of "places of indeterminacy." We find such a place of indeterminacy wherever it is impossible, on the basis of the sentences in the work, to say whether a certain object or objective situation has a certain attribute. . . . The presence of places of indeterminacy is not accidental, the result of faulty composition. Rather, it is necessary in every literary work of art. It is impossible to establish clearly and exhaustively the infinite multiplicity of determinacies of the individual objects portrayed in the work with a finite number of words or sentences. Some of the determinacies must always be missing. (pp. 50, 51)

Because of these indeterminacies, Ingarden explains, different interpretations of a literary work can occur, even by the same reader in

different readings:

> How this happens in specific cases depends upon the peculiarities of the work itself and also on the reader, on the state or attitude in which he finds himself at the moment. As a result, significant differences can exist among concretizations of the same work, even when the concretizations are accomplished by the same reader in different readings. (p. 53)

The aesthetic experience of a literary work occurs, then, according to Ingarden, upon the active involvement of the reader with the text and by extension with the author.[10]

The reader's active involvement is important to the interpretive stage. According to Rosenblatt, the text is the symbol of the writer's experience and a blueprint of the reader's. According to Ingarden, the writer's vision is in the text, but because of the text's indeterminacies, so is the reader's. Through voice, the writer evokes interpretation in the reader. The text, then, is both the reader's means of understanding the author's vision and a plan for new and renewed experiences for the reader. The result of the reader's active involvement in interpretation is a new self-awareness, a change in the make-up of the reader and the reader's experiential frame.[11]

Implicit in the work of Ingarden and Rosenblatt is the importance of the reader's personality and experiences to the reader's active involvement with the text (interpretation). The interpretive function of personality and experience is at the center of the work of literary critic Thomas C. Pollack (1965), researcher James R. Squire (1964) and philosopher Merleau-Ponty (1961). These theorists provide three complementary perspectives on the function of the reader's experiential background and personality and what happens to both during the expressive process of interpretation.

Pollack in The Nature of Literature (1965) emphasizes that the reader's personal experiences are a major element in interpretation. He suggests that during the reading act, verbal stimuli evoke the reader's past experiences and the contemplation of these experiences constitutes the reading act:

> Literature (L) may be defined as the utterance of a series of symbols capable of evoking in the mind of a reader a controlled experience (E). This is of course a contracted definition. A somewhat fuller statement would be that it has as its purpose the expression of an experience (E) of a writer through the utterance of a series of symbols capable of evoking in the mind of a properly qualified reader a controlled experience (E) similar to, though of course not identical with, that of the writer. This is the use of language with which we are familiar in novels, short stories, poems, and plays, and which we have been tending, as I pointed out in Chapter I, to symbolize by the world of literature. . . . It will thus be seen that the major part of the reality of language lies not in the external signs, which through the mechanics of writing may be isolated and indefinitely preserved but in the experiences of the human beings by whom the signs are produced and received. (pp. 96-97, 98)

Pollack's definition of literary discourse centers on the author's evocation of and the reader's contemplation of the reader's experience.

In his study, Pollack carefully traces the stages in this evocation and contemplation (interpretation) of the literary work. He explains that the author's psycho-physiological activity (recreation of experience) produces a certain series of symbols which initiate the psycho-physiological activity in the reader:

> The three major steps in this process are (1) the activity of the person producing the signs, (2) the signs themselves as extra-organic physical occurrences, such as air-waves or marks on paper, and (3) the activity of the person receiving the signs. (p. 48)

The psycho-phyiosological activity in the third stage, Pollack

continues, involves the recall and contemplation of experience. The contemplation of the experience results in the restructuring of the reader's sense of self. The reader attempts to incorporate the knowledge of self through interaction with the signs. The recall, contemplation and restructuring are the main element of psycho-physiological (another term for expressive) activity. Such activity, he emphasizes, occurs in both writers and readers.

Pollack believes that different interpretations of a text occur because no two human beings have the same set of experiences and, therefore, different psycho-physiological behavior. No two individuals, he argues, will relate to the text (signs) in the same way; each will bring to it a different set of experiences. Certain symbols can evoke similar responses, but overall, no two individuals will respond in exactly the same manner:

> The actual human experiences (E) of different human beings even in the same room at the same moment are not identical. We can frequently isolate publicly discriminable elements or characteristics which are the same in many private experiences (E); but from this we must not draw the unwarranted inference that therefore the private experiences (E) involved are exactly the same. This is a general truth, and it is true of literature (L). We sometimes say, in useful shortcut speech, that a writer "communicates" his experience to a reader. This does not mean that the total actual experience (E) which the writer attempts to express is by some linguistic miracle taken out of his life in a solid chunk and placed whole in the cranium of a reader. Such a notion is of course nonsense. (p. 107)

The past experience that the reader brings to the writing act is crucial to the uniqueness of the reader's interpretation. According to Pollack, these experiences are a major contribution to an interpretation of the text.

In a 1964 study, James R. Squire also argues the importance of the reader's personality and past experiences to the interpretation process. This conclusion is based on his research of adolescent responses to short fiction. His aim was to study comprehension and the way interpretation develops:

> The study has four dimensions:
>
> a. It seeks to provide an overall description of the responses of these students to the four stories.
>
> b. It seeks to describe the ways in which these responses develop during the reading of a short story.
>
> c. It seeks to relate these responses to the intelligence, socio-economic backgrounds, reading abilities, and other personal characteristics of the readers.
>
> d. It seeks to analyze the factors which limit and constrict the responses of these readers and thus create barriers to sound interpretations of literature (pp. 1-2)

Squire researched the responses of 52 ninth and tenth graders during and after their reading of "All the Years of Her Life" (Morely Callaghan), "Prelude" (Lucille Vaughan Payne), "Reverdy" (Jessamyn West) and "The Man in the Shadow" (Richard Washburn Child). The subject matter of the stories deals with experiences, especially those important to ninth and tenth graders. The stories explore individual philosophies of life, the development of personal independence and the individual's discovery of place in the peer group:

> Three considerations governed the selection of the four stories: quality of literature for reading by adolescents in the ninth grade; relation to certain key experiences of adolescents; and lack of familiarity, level of complexity, and capacity for eliciting a variety of responses as determined by analysis and tryout with students who were not participants in the study. (p. 9)

As students read the stories, interviewers questioned them at different intervals in the reading process. The questions determined kinds of responses to the literature, how these responses developed, the constraints on meaning and the importance of intelligence, socio-economic background, reading abilities and other personal characteristics to the responses: ". . . subjects being asked to respond freely and completely in describing the 'feelings, ideas, opinions, or reactions' which occurred to them while reading or at the end of reading each story" (p. 16). Responses were then categorized under the headings of literary judgments, interpretational responses, narrational reactions, associational responses, self-involvement judgments, prescriptive judgments and miscellaneous.

The results of Squire's analysis of the responses indicate that a reader's past experiences and personality shape the reader's judgment of the literary work, the way the individual narrates the plot of the story, any outside associations with the story, and the reader's vicarious involvement in the events of the story (interpretation):

> The findings of the analysis are presented here as they pertain to four major areas of concern: (1) the overall patterns of reader's responses to short stories, (2) the relationship of reading responses and personality predispositions, (3) the development of the responses during the process of reading, and (4) source of difficulty in literary interpretation revealed through a separate analysis of the transcripts. . . . This study explored a way of analyzing the emotional and ideational responses of individuals to four literary selections. The method revealed certain patterns of literature of individual experiences and of personal predispositions, and it revealed six basic sources of difficulty which adolescents encounter in interpreting short stories. The results suggest that although certain group tendencies are observable in reading reactions of adolescents, individual variation is caused by the unique influences of the abilities, predispositions, and experiential background of each reader. (pp. 19, 50)

Squire's research and results point out the importance of the reader's personality and past experiences to the interpretive process. Both are evoked during the reading process and the reader's evaluation of both is an integral part of interpretation. Reading, then, is an opportunity to recall past experiences, to reconsider elements of one's personality and to set both up for further evaluation.[12]

Merleau-Ponty's philosophy of perception also accounts for the influence of the reader's experiences and personality on interpretation and the subsequent alteration of both. He emphasizes in Signs (1964) that the expressive activity of interpretation involves a recall and contemplation of our perceptions which are our understanding of self and past experiences:

> The writer is said, on the contrary, to dwell in already elaborated signs and in an already speaking world, and to require nothing more of us than the power to reorganize our significations [perceptions] according to the indications of the signs which he proposes to us. (p. 45)

The "signs" to which Ponty refers are the linguistic symbols used by the writer both to convey the writer's perceptions and evoke those of the reader. In the "Preface" to Signs, Richard C. McLeary explains this complex connection between writer (the user of language), perceptions and receiver (also a user of language):

> Like the creative expression of the painter, whose body with its carnal eye perceives the world in person and expresses it with gestures of its carnal hand, speaking language and communication have their fundamental basis in the pre-objective order of the flesh. Every spoken word appears to me as a visible trace of the invisible significative intention which is constituting it, and I comprehend and respond to it by means of my own significative intentions [perceptions].(p. xvi)

The act of receiving and comprehending the language of another during interpretation, according to Merleau-Ponty, is a process of sorting out our own perceptions; eventually we will communicate those perceptions to others.

The recall and evaluation of perception is the central issue in Merleau-Ponty's exploration of the writing and reading of literary discourse. His study implies the expressiveness (closeness to the self) of the discourse. Furthermore, his definition of the term perception suggests that the operation of perception is itself expressive: "Perception is the primordial operation which impregnates sensible being with a meaning, and which all logical mediation as well as psychological causality presupposes."[13] Perceptions open the user to reality and help the user to achieve basic self-understanding. An understanding of self--which one attempts by using perceptions, by contemplating existing experiences--forms the basic purpose of all thought:

> Through its very efforts to establish the essential structures of the reflective presence of the self to itself which forms the basis of all thought, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception necessarily becomes a dialectical philosophy of existence. (p. xiv)

Our perceptions, Merleau-Ponty explains, are conscious attempts at self-actualization.

The writer and reader, according to Merleau-Ponty, then, are controllers of perceptions. The writer uses language to express the writer's sense of the world and to initiate the reader into the use of perceptions for the same purpose. In the role of reader, the receiver of these perceptions, also becomes the controller of perceptions. The

writer through signs, according to Merleau-Ponty, requires the reader to reorganize perceptions according to the indications of the signs. The writer says to the reader: I have exposed you to my perceptual world, now take your experiences, reassess them and come to new perceptions or understandings of self. Interpretation of a literary work involves the recall and assessment of perceptions. Interpretation is the reader's search for an order to the tensions, confusions and emotions aroused by the writer's own perceptions; interpretation is the reader's attempt at perceiving the world in a new light.

The work of researchers and literary/reading specialists indicate that the process of interpretation is a complex one involving author, text and reader. The process is also an expressive one in which the reader's personality and past experiences shape and are shaped by the interpretation. The process begins in an author with a vision, or perception. That author uses a voice to communicate that vision through a text to a reader. Reflecting on the writer's world, the reader finds the reader's own voice activated. As the reader conceives and responds to the writer's own world, the reader achieves a certain self-awareness, a certain perspective on the reader's own world.

The manner in which author, text, reader's personality and experiences, influence the interpretation process indicates the expressiveness of the process. Another indication of this expressiveness is the communication aspect of interpretation. The process of interpretation does not end when the reader puts the text down or completes a private contemplation of the author's vision. Interpretation continues as the reader tests the response (and perhaps, as a

result, alters it) by communicating the response to an audience.[14] At this point of communication, another factor influences the interpretation: audience. In a composition course, instructor and peers comprise this audience. Like the author, text and reader's past experiences, the reader's audience helps shape the interpretation and the voice that publicly conveys that interpretation.

As long as the reader is the only audience to the responses of the reading act, these responses remain untested and perhaps somewhat void. As a result, the communication process of literary discourse, according to Rosenblatt lacks completion:

> We are used to thinking of the text as the medium of communication between author and reader (though, as our discussion in chapter 5 reminded us, this is by no means an automatic process). Perhaps we should consider the test as an even more general medium of communication among readers. (p. 146)

A sharing of responses allows readers to confirm their understanding of the text and of themselves and to find reassurance that their response is a possible one. The reader's need to share interpretation is not unlike the writer's need to compose.

Rosenblatt believes the interchange among readers helps each to understand similarities and differences among responses and the process of self-actualization that occurs through these responses. Furthermore, the interchange can bring about necessary alterations in the response:

> Learning what others have made of a text can greatly increase such insight into one's own relationship with it. A reader who has been moved or disturbed by a text often manifests an urge to talk about it, to clarify and crystallize his sense of the work. He likes to hear others' views. Through such interchange he can discover how people bringing

> different temperaments, different literary and life experiences to the text have engaged in very different transactions with it. . . . As we exchange experiences we point to those elements of the text that best illustrate or support our interpretations. We may help one another to attend to words, phrases, images, scenes, that we have overlooked or slighted. We may be led to reread the text and revise our own interpretation. Sometimes we may be strengthened in our own sense of having "done justice to" the text, without denying its potentialities for other interpretations. . . . This, too, can lead to very basic self-awareness if it brings out into the open those often tacit underlying assumptions about the literary transaction. (pp. 146, 147)

The exchange among readers, according to Rosenblatt, is another very important step in the self-correcting process that makes our responses to fictional narratives expressive. Many of our judgments of ourselves arrived at in private response can be altered and perhaps even eliminated when tested in front of an audience. At the same time, our exposure to the self-correcting process of others can comfort us in the knowledge that others too are questioning and searching for a personalized meaning for what they have read.

The verbal exchange during the interpretation stage of reading is also an opportunity for the student to test the activated voice. This opportunity can show the student that the oral voice expressing views on the experiences and perceptions evoked during the reading act is the same voice the reader uses in writing. The speaking voice is the outward representation of the voice that carries an individual's thought patterns; this is the voice heard by others in the student's written work and in all linguistic exchange, even interpretation. John Hawkes used tape recorders throughout the Voice Project for this very reason:

> We wanted the student to know that the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality; that this personal intonation might well relate to the diction and rhythms of his writing; that a professional writer has a kind of total presence that can be perceived and responded to as authorial "voice". . . . (pp. 95-96)

It is difficult, he explains, to impress on the student writer what is happening to the voice during a composition course. Verbalization of one's interpretation of a work of fiction and the subsequent feedback from other student readers can assure the student writer that the student's voice is shaping as a result of continual exposure to situations, such as reading, that call for self-actualization.

The expressive stage of reading that develops the voice, then, involves other interpreters in addition to the author, text and the reader's experiential frame. All contribute to the literary interpretation, which is the reader's expressive response, the reader's evaluation of the vision introduced by the author through the text. The evaluation--the meaning of what the student reads--does not rest in the text, the author or the reader, but in the complex interaction among all three; this interaction is further influenced by the audience of that evaluation. As a result of the influences, the reader attains a sharper understanding of self in terms of the issues and attitudes introduced in the text; the reader's voice emerges in preparation for communicating that understanding.

Pre-Writing: An Expressive Stage in the Composing Process

The interpretation of fictional narratives is an expressive stage that activates and develops the voice; the activated voice communicates the self-correcting process that results from the individual's encounter with reading. Because of this expressive function, interpretation of fictional narratives can be an integral part of a composition course in which students write descriptive and expository prose. The interpretation of fiction is a suitable activity for the pre-writing stage--itself expressive. The expressiveness of pre-writing is supported by theorists like Janet Emig (1971) and James Britton (1975). These critics point to pre-writing and production as expressive, as shaping and redefining the self through communication. Their argument indicates that the pre-writing stage of writing achieves what the interpretation stage of reading does. During pre-writing the writer restructures the self through recollection and evaluation of experience; in this stage, the writer's voice communicates the new self-awareness privately and publicly. Because of the similarities in these two stages, the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives can be a part of pre-writing in a composition course.

Of the many sequential writing models, the two that deal specifically with pre-writing as an expressive stage are those of Janet Emig and James Britton. Both acknowledge pre-writing as expressive, as a language activity close to the self. The expressiveness of this stage is due in large part to the expressive impulse that initiates the

writer into this stage. Emig and Britton also believe that the modes of production resulting from the impulse and the pre-writing/ planning stages are also expressive.

According to Emig, all student writing emanates from an expressive impulse; she calls the impulse expressive because it stimulates the writer's thoughts and feelings. The stimulus initiates the reader into an evaluation of experience and beliefs. The source of the impulse, she explains, is any field of discourse, area of experience; the field of registers, as linguists refer to them, comprise the entire area from which the impulse to write can come:

> The first dimension of the composing process to note is the nature of the stimulus that activates the process or keeps it going. . . . All areas of experience, or fields of discourse, can provide the stimuli for writing. It is useful to pause here to present the schema of registers devised by the British linguists Halliday, McIntosh, and Strevens because of the applicability of their category-system to this inquiry. (pp. 33, 36)

The stimulus, then, can come from a variety of areas close to the self but the result is always the same: prompting the student to evaluate the self in preparation for writing.[15]

This stimulus source, Emig continues, can be self-encountered or other-initiated:

> Either the student writes from stimuli with which he has privately interacted or from stimuli presented by others--the most common species of the second being, of course, the assignment given by the teacher. Both kinds of stimuli can be nonverbal or verbal, although it is an extremely rare and sophisticated teacher who can give a nonverbal writing assignment. (p. 33)

Self-encountered stimuli--encounters with friends, personal experiences, etc.--affect the students on a daily basis. Other-initiated stimuli are

deliberate, controlled stimuli; the most common, Emig notes, is the teacher assignment. External features of this second stimulus include the student's relationship to teacher, peers, curriculum, English, and other works; internal elements of the assignment include registers, length, deadline, audience and the student's reception of the task. Whether self-encountered or other-initiated, the stimulus, she explains, is acted upon by the self.

The expressive impulse, according to Emig, stimulates the pre-writing and planning stages in which the student contemplates, evaluates and tests the self-awareness that results from the stimulus.[16] Pre-writing, according to Emig, is a contemplative stage that occurs before the student elucidates the perception in oral or written discourse for the purpose of testing the perception. Pre-writing, she explains, occurs only once:

> Prewriting is that part of the composing process that extends from the time a writer begins to perceive selectively certain features of his inner and/or outer environment with a view to writing about them--usually at the instigation of a stimulus--to the time when he first puts words or phrases on paper elucidating that perception. (p. 39)

During pre-writing, she continues, the student perceives the field, mode and tenor of the discourse. Interveners in this stage include self, adults and peers. Other-initiated factors influencing the pre-writing stage are the same as for the stimulus:

> It is an extremely rare situation for writers, particularly student writers, to proceed from initial stimulus to final draft or revision, without interruption. Rather, events and people--teachers, notably intervene; and in major enough ways to affect the process of writing and the product. (p. 40)

Emig's pre-writing is a sorting out stage, the immediate consequence of the stimulus and very similar, as will be explained later, to the contemplation that marks the beginning of interpretation.

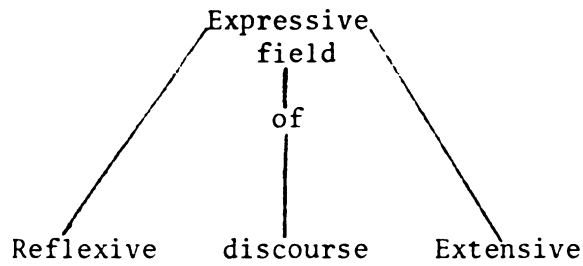
For Emig, the pre-writing stage occurs only once, but planning can occur many times (Her planning and pre-writing stages are often coupled by other composition theorists.). Emig's planning stage is the testing stage, the point at which the student, through oral and written discourse, seeks validation for the stimulated ideas:

> Planning refers to any oral and written establishment of elements and parameters before or during a discursive formulation. (p. 39)

As with pre-writing, planning is both self-sponsored and teacher-initiated. Features of the self-sponsored activities include "length of planning; mode of planning (oral, written: jottings, informal list of words/phrases, topic outline, sentence outline); scope, interveners and interventions" (p. 34). The features of the teacher-initiated planning resemble those for the stimulus and pre-writing.

The entire process, with all its dimension, Emig argues, is expressive: reflecting the thoughts and feelings of the writer in relation to some field of discourse. Following planning are the expressive dimensions of starting, composing aloud, reformulation (revision),stopping (formulating and reformulating) and contemplation of product (pp. 34, 35). She translates her dimensions into a schematic diagram which collapses the process from impulse to production and shows the expressiveness of the whole process:

Modes of Student Writing



Writing evolves from an expressive impulse toward one of two major modes both of which suggest general kinds of relationships between the writing self and the field of discourse:

> . . . the reflexive, a basically contemplative role: "What does this experience mean?"; the extensive, a basically active role: "How, because of this experience, do I interact with my environment?" Note that neither mode suggests ultimate states of passivity or participation. Note too that the mid-modes or transitional writings have been eliminated from this shema as a needless complexity--at this time. (p. 37)

From impulse to production, the student is engaging in expressive activity; the self, according to Emig is at the center of each dimension of the process, including the pre-writing and planning stages.

The importance of Emig's model for this study rests with her emphasis on an expressive impulse and expressive, self-correcting pre-writing/planning stages. James Britton also argues for the expressiveness of pre-production activities; he refers to the stage before production as pre-writing and breaks the stage into phases: conception and incubation.[17] The features of Britton's conception and incubation phases resemble those of Emig's pre-writing and planning stages. Furthermore, the writer's behavior during Britton's pre-writing phase is similar to that of the reader's during interpretation of fictional narratives.

According to Britton, the impulse to write is expressive and occurs during the conception phase; this phase includes the initiation and contemplation of the impulse. The impulse is expressive because it initiates a self-evaluative process:

> There is usually some specific incident--this may be a purely internal "mental" incident--which provokes the decision to write. In school it is normally a request from a teacher, with a greater or lesser degree of incitement or coercion, stated or implied; it is characteristic of school writing that a task is set. . . . Whatever it is that provokes the decision to write, it may begin as an isolated event but it soon comes to be seen in relation to all the writer's relevant previous experience. . . . If it is implicit or unfamiliar, he may need time to draw on the complex interrelations of his experience and its realization in language--and this includes, as well as his primary experience, all those other things he has heard about, read about, and imagined. (pp. 23,24)

In this phase, the writer summons up all the knowledge, feelings and attitudes about the subject and tries to relate this subject to the writer's own realm of experience. In other words, the student writer responds to the impulse by recalling past experiences and contemplating them; contemplation is the search for a relationship between the impulse and those experiences:

> The writer, we are claiming, must relate his task, somewhere, to his own hierarchical construct system. . . . The ability to recall is now critical--we must, after all, rely on our memory, even though we know that only some items are recalled with reasonable accuracy, while others may have been altered or rearranged inadvertently. Some relevant items may have been lost without trace; that won't bother us, but we may if we are lucky spend some time trying to recapture those things we know we know, if only we could remember them. (p. 24)

The conception phase is complete, says Britton, when the writer knows roughly what the writer will produce and is willing to acknowledge the anticipated product as the writer's own.

Incubation begins according to Britton, as the writer sorts out and orders ideas conceived in the first phase. The sorting out and ordering of ideas involves working towards an eventual synthesis of the ideas. The writer's intention during this second phase is to get the ideas "right with the self":

> Two factors are likely to influence the kinds of planning and incubating that go on in a writer's mind. There is a need to get it right in terms of the facts of the case and what is generally known or accepted; these may of course be challenged or rejected but cannot normally be ignored. There is also the need to get it right with the self, the need to arrive at the point where one has the satisfaction of presenting what is to be presented in the way one thinks it should be done. (p. 26)

During conception, the writer makes the initial connection between the ideas and the self; during incubation, the writer plans out in detail that connection and the best way to express the ideas publicly.

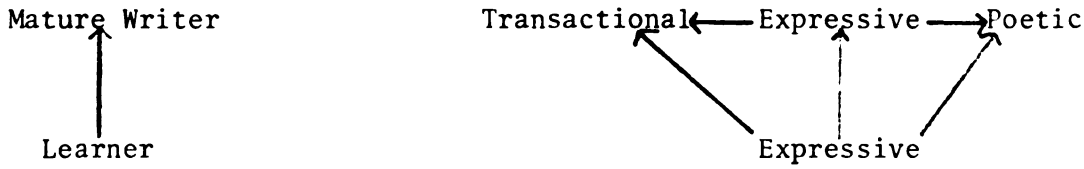
Throughout Britton's incubation phase, the writer is "hearing the words in the head." The impulse has already activated the writer's voice. In an effort to test that voice and the ideas it conveys, the student must have an audience in this early stage. According to Britton, the most successful way of progressing through incubation is by talking, by verbalizing ideas to an audience other than the self:

> Talk is more expressive--the speaker is not obliged to keep himself in the background as he may be in writing; talk relies on an immediate link with listeners, usually a group or a whole class; the rapid exchanges of conversation allow many things to go on at once--exploration, clarification, shared interpretation, insight into differences of opinion, illustration and anecdote, explanation by gesture, expression of doubt; and if something is not clear you can go on until it is. . . . One of the great values of talk in the writing process is that it permits the expression of tentative conclusions and opinions. To the extent that incubations consist of arriving at an understanding, working towards a synthesis, coming to terms with a

> general principle, it's a great advantage to be able to try it.
>
> The process won't be complete until the writing is done, but the free flow of talk allows ideas to be bandied about and opens up new relationships so that explaining the whole thing to oneself may be much easier. (pp. 29, 30)

Talking widens the student's consciousness by assisting in both the affirmation and rejection of ideas. Talk allows the writer to explore, clarify, find alternatives for and share in the ideas that contribute to the production of writing.

Incubation, conception and production are Britton's terms for the composing process; like Emig's definitions, Britton's emphasize the expressiveness of all aspects of the process, including the initial impulse and pre-writing stage. Britton, like Emig, also establishes a schematic diagram that reflects this expressiveness:



According to this diagram, all writing emanantes from an expressive impulse (close to the self). The impulse results in an expressive utterance that bifurcates into either transactional or poetic utterance. In poetic utterances the student observes some field of discourse as a spectator. In transactional utterances, the student participates through the writing in the business of the world. In expressive utterances, the student uses unstructured language close to the self:

> The more fully an utterance meets the demands of some kind of participation in the world's affairs, the nearer will it approach the transactional end of the scale: the more fully it satisfies the spectator-role demands, the nearer it will move to the poetic end. The move in both cases is from an intimate to a more public audience (and this change should be reflected in our classification by sense of audience). (p. 83)

Britton's diagram and sequential model, like Emig's, emphasizes the expressiveness of the writing process.[18]

Britton's and Emig's sequential models support the expressive nature of the pre-writing stage (the pre-production stage) and the impulse that initiates it. The impulse to write comes from a field of discourse or area of experience. The self responds to the impulse by internalizing and using the impulse to redefine already systemized beliefs; the writer begins to redefine the self. The writer's voice (an element of which is the writer's self) is activated to convey the self-correcting process. The voice takes shape as do the ideas that voice conveys.

Since pre-writing is an expressive stage in which the impulse to write comes from a field of discourse or area of experience, the reading of fictional narratives--itself a discourse activity--can function in this pre-writing stage and prepare the writer for production. The reading of the fictional narrative provides the stimulus, the germ of the idea, the conception of the work; the subsequent interpretation resembles the activity that occurs during Britton's incubation phase and Emig's planning stage. (To avoid confusion in terminology, I will refer to interpretation as occuring during a pre-writing stage that encompasses Emig's pre-writing and planning stages.) Interpretation

involves both private and public talk, thus exercising the written and spoken voice. When the student writer, through the public and private aspects of interpretation,develops the voice to the point of understanding the self in terms of the subject at hand, production is possible.

Emig and Britton both argue that the writing stimulus must come from a field of discourse, an area of experience; the fictional narrative is a field of discourse and, therefore, a stimulus for writing. The reading act is an other-initiated expressive stimulus that acts upon the reader's self. The responsibility for the stimulus rests with the author who, through the text, stimulates the reader into the process of evaluation.[19] As Rosenblatt notes, the author through the text "activates certain elements in his past experience--external reference, internal response--that have become linked with the verbal symbols" (p. 11). The author invites the reader to be a "cocreator" in the author's literary work and initiates the reader into a self-correcting activity important to the pre-writing process.

Following the reader's encounter with the stimulus, interpretation, the student's conscious response to the writing stimulus, begins. As in Britton and Emig's sequential models, interpretation involves two steps: private contemplation and public discourse:[20]

> Without distorting her intention, we can extend this to cover writing as well as speech, and we have to ask whether this vital stage in the process, this explanation to ourselves--maybe possibly hearing the words in the head--is one that can be influenced at all in the incubation stage of writing. Without it, all the careful note-making and selection and arrangement of data can do very little. . . . The relationship of talk to writing is central to the writing process. . . . One of the great values of talk in the writing process is that it permits the expression of tentative conclusions and opinions. (pp. 29, 30)

Throughout these interpretive steps, the reader develops the germ, the initial idea generated by the reading assignment. The student accomplishes the incubation of the idea by selectively perceiving the environment and self in terms of this idea. As the reader moves away from the initial reading stimulus by continually abstracting ideas, the reader uses the voice to communicate both privately and publicly. As Britton explains, the student hears "these words in the head" and then conveys them to a public. The student during the pre-writing activity of interpretation sorts out and translates, both privately and publicly, the stimulus in preparation for writing expository or descriptive pieces on the subject.

Private discourse is usually the most immediate response to the reading stimulus, though both private and public discourse can occur alternately during the pre-writing stage. During private discourse, the student internalizes the writer's vision and starts questioning it; the student tries to make sense of it in terms of the student's past and present experiences. A student in a composition course, for example, may read F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Absolution"; the initial response could be anger: How can the Catholic religion confuse and warp a young boy's sense of himself? Perhaps the student's feelings of anger stem from the student's similar experiences as a child with religious or other traditional institutions. Whatever the student's/ reader's response to the story, this response involves something already familiar to the student. In an attempt to find within the self the source for the response, the reader assesses emotions and attitudes towards the subject and the memory of the experience that the work evoked

in the student. The reassessment is part of the self-correcting that goes on throughout interpretation and pre-writing. A self-correcting response also indicates that the student's voice is developing; the audience in this private discourse is the self.

Another step in pre-writing is public discourse. Through public discourse, the student's response to the reading material is tested and/or reshaped. During this discourse step, the young writer, in search of feedback, expresses tentative conclusions and opinions about the fictional narrative the writer experiences. As Britton notes, public discourse is the opportunity for "exploration, clarification, shared interpretation, insight into differences of opinion, illustration and anecdote, explanation by gesture and expression of doubt; and if something is not clear you can go on until it is" (p. 29). For example, when a student begins discussing "Absolution" with instructor and peers, the student may understand the response and only need confirmation of it; on the other hand, a student may feel nostalgia, anger, etc., but may not know why. The linguistic exchange between student and instructor and student and fellow writers (either through formal oral assignments or informal conversation about the responses) can help clarify for the student the particular response. The student's goal throughout pre-writing is to reach the "self," to come to terms with life in accord with a particular subject introduced in the reading material; talk is a means of finding oneself. As Britton notes, talk is probably the most expressive of all activities.

The student during the pre-writing stage does not always elicit the feedback orally. Britton and Emig agree that some form of writing

will always occur during the incubation/planning period.[21] When the stimulus is the fictional narrative, using the written voice to discover what the narrative has generated in the reader can further the student's understanding of the material the student will eventually write about. This material deals closely with the experiences and ideas that the fictional narrative evokes in the individual student. The student's responses to each other's writing during the pre-writing stage can provide each with feedback on the written voice that conveys the student's developing ideas. The feedback received during the writing exercises can complement and/or confirm the feedback received during the classroom discussion. Every aspect of interpretation is an opportunity for the student to gain confidence about the writing subject and the written and spoken voice conveying that subject.

Public discourse and private discourse do not occur separately during pre-writing. The student alternates among these steps, depending on individual needs and instructor's guidance.[22] In some cases, as Britton notes, students may perform both forms of discourse while production is going on: "Writers then define and redefine the task, and plan ahead and sort out their ideas, while they are writing, and it's very difficult, retrospectively, to separate the three activities" (Development, p. 26). Only when the student is satisfied that the student has achieved all that is possible through exercising the voice does the student move into the production stage.

The reading and interpreting of fictional narratives can be an integral part of the pre-writing stage of the composing process. As the student reads and interprets, the student engages in an expressive

activity. This activity helps the student shape voice by calling on the student privately and publicly to reassess experiences and values evoked by the ideas discussed and experiences portrayed in the fictional narrative. This process of reassessment always occurs during the pre-writing stage in the composing process. When the fictional narrative is the stimulus, three factors influence this reassessment: the author--through the text--the student's experiential frame, and the presence of other evaluators. The author, through the text, stimulates and guides the reader to interpretation. The reader's experiential frame helps shape that interpretation and the presence of evaluators helps the reader confirm that interpretation. When the voice that has been activated and developed during the interpretation is comfortable to the student writer--when voice conveys material that is "right with the self"--the student is ready for production, the final stage in the composing process.

NOTES

[1]Louise Rosenblatt, Literature as Exploration, 3rd ed. (New York: Noble, 1976), p. 54. (Further references to this and other works in this chapter will be indicated by page number.)

[2]Hereafter referred to as the reader's experiential frame.

[3]See Rosenblatt's chapter "The Poem as Event" in The Reader (1978), pp. 6-21.

[4]Interpretation can occur during the actual reading of the text and after the text has been completed and the reader is contemplating the completed work. The reading process is here used to mean the reader's contact with the symbols of the text and the interpretation that occurs at any time during this process.

[5]Janet Emig, The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders (1971); James Britton, Development of Learning Abilities (1972).

[6]The next chapter discusses the reasons fictional narratives are particularly suitable to the composition course.

[7]Roman Ingarden, The Cognition of the Literary Work (1973); The Literary Work of Art, trans. George G. Grabowicz (Evanston: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1973); Thomas C. Pollack, The Nature of Literature (New York: Gordian Press, 1965); James R. Squire, The Responses of Adolescents While Reading Four Short Stories (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1964). Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Signs, trans. Richard McLeary (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1961).

[8]"Transaction designates, then, an ongoing process in which the elements or factors are, one might say, aspects of a total situation, each conditioned by and conditioning the other" (Reader, p. 17).

[9]Rosenblatt makes a very interesting distinction between text and poem, text and literary work:

> "Text" designates a set or series of signs interpretable as linguistic symbols. I use this rather round-about phrasing to make it clear that the text is not simply the inked marks on the page or even the uttered vibrations in the air. The visual or auditory signs become verbal symbols, become words, by virtue of their being potentially recognizable as pointing to something beyond themselves. Thus in a reading situation "the text" may be thought of as the printed signs in their capacity to serve as symbols.

> "Poem" presupposes a reader actively involved with a text and refers to what he makes of his responses to that particular set of verbal symbols. "Poem" stands here for the whole category, "literary work of art," and for terms such as "novel," "play," or "short story." This substitution is often justified by the assertion that poems are the most concentrated form of the category, the others being usually more extended in time, more loosely integrated. Especially in this century, with the novels of a Woolf or a Joyce, or the confessional poets, it is necessary to abjure such a distinction. I shall use the term "poem" to refer to the whole category of aesthetic transactions between readers and texts without implying the greater or lesser "poeticity" of any specific genre. (p. 12)

[10]The major point on which Rosenblatt and Ingarden disagree is the consistancy of the test:

> Ingarden, while applying the phenomenological approach of Husserl, rejects his transcendental idealism and claims that the literary work of art is neither "real" nor "ideal" (i.e., timeless and permanent). . . .as late as 1969, he still postulates the literary work of art as some kind of entity, having recourse to such terms as "essence" or "schematic entity" to characterize the work apart from its "concretizations." His analysis of the processes involved in the creation and reading of the text often present views with which I agree (e.g., on the indeterminateness of the text), but the argument is constantly vitiated by an instance on the postulated work as separate from its concretizations. (Reader, p. 107)

Ingarden believes these concretizations, which contribute to the meaning, remain unchanged over time. Rosenblatt believes that Ingarden's insistence on the text's concretizations imply a norm of adequacy or common denominator that leaves no room for the meaning to be shaped, changed or altered. (See Chapter V for more discussion of the indeterminacy theory.)

[11]The importance of the input of both the author and the reader through the text conflicts sharply with the theories of Norman Holland (1968) and E.D. Hirsch (1967). Holland in The Dynamics of Literary Response (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968) places the major responsibility for interpretation on the reader and minimizes the influence of author and text. Hirsch asserts that the author's meaning is in the text and the discovery of that meaning is the aim of interpretation. Furthermore, Hirsch argues, that meaning is constant (The Validity of Interpretation [New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1967]). Neither Hirsch nor Holland consider the possibility that both author and reader are involved in the interpretation; an acknowledgment of this point does not detract from the importance of either party in the interpretation act. When the reader comes to the reading act, the

author invites the reader to share in the discovery the author is about to make through the creation of the text, a creation finalized by the existence of an audience. The author also invites the reader to self-analyze and assists the reader (but does not dominate the reader) in the understanding of the text; the reader and writer are one in discovering the literary work. As each reader continues abstracting, interpreting and achieving self-understanding through the work, the author's influence lessens; the similarities among interpretations then dissolve. The meaning and importance of the text eventually rest with the reader.

[12]Maxine Greene in "Language, Literature and the Release of Meaning," College English, 41, no. 2 (1979), pp. 123-135, applies a provocative analogy to the influence of experience on the reader's interpretation. Greene says that encounters with literature are occasions for recovery of original landscapes and openings into new and possible experiences: "We have to submit ourselves in some sense to the guidance of the poet, as we select out aspects of our stored experiences, images, perceptions, and shape them in accord with the poem" (p. 135). Greene's point is that an encounter with literature is an exposure to the world of perception, the world of our senses. When we read, we accrue layers of meanings all rooted in our perceptual world.

[13]McLeary's definition, p. xii.

[14]The communication can and should be a combination of oral and written discourse. The student should see the voice developing in both discourse forms. (See Hawkes' "Voice Project," pp. 89-145.)

[15]In her outline of the dimensions of the composing process, Emig lists the "context of composing" (community, family, school) before the "nature of the stimulus." For this study, the context is a composition class.

[16]I use pre-writing to include both Emig's stages; pre-writing is the entire stage that precedes production.

[17]Britton points out that incubation, conception and production can occur concurrently:

> It is true, of course, that when a writer begins a task as soon as it is set, the conception and incubation processes are running concurrently with production. Writers then define and redefine the task, and plan ahead, and sort out their ideas, while they are writing, and it's very difficult, retrospectively, to separate the three activities. (p. 26)

[18]Emig finds fault with Britton's terms because they specify absolute states and do not indicate the relationship of the writing self to the field of discourse:

> Less satisfactory are the terms assigned to these modes and the implications of these terms about the relation of the writing self to the field of discourse. The terms are at once too familiar and too ultimate. Both poetic and communicative are freighted with connotations that intrude. Poetic, for example, sets up in most minds a contrast with prose, or prosaic, although in this schema the poetic mode includes certain kinds of prose, such as the personal fictional narrative. Second, they are too absolute: rather than describing two general kinds of relations between writer and his world, they specify absolute states--either passivity or participation. (p. 37)

[19]The instructor is also responsible for the stimuli since the instructor assigns the topic and reading material.

[20]The private and public steps, as Britton and Emig note, occur alternately throughout the pre-production stage.

[21]In some cases, as Emig notes, production stops for reformulation and more private and public discourse. In other words, pre-writing activities can occur after production has begun.

[22]Some very mature writers may collapse the pre-writing stage. The theory and methodology presented in this study deal with students in a beginning composition course. Though they may be at different levels in their writing abilities, their encounter with pre-writing resembles that which is discussed here.

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY FOR USING FICTIONAL NARRATIVES IN BEGINNING COMPOSITION

Theoretical Review

The proposed course is based on the theory that the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives in a composition course is one way of developing the student's voice in preparation for writing.[1] The act of reading (and subsequent interpretation) develops the voice because the reading process is a communicative one, involving an active response by a reader. In this active response, the reader interprets memories, experiences and ideas that the author has evoked in the reader through literary discourse. In the process of interpretation, the reader uses the voice to explore these memories, experiences, ideas. Using the activated voice, the reader communicates the exploration to the self and to others in hopes of validating the new self awareness he or she has reached through reading and interpreting the fictional narrative. In the proposed course, the student is ready for the production stage of composition when the student has validated this new self awareness.

The student's major goal in the proposed course is to discover and develop the voice. Voice is the medium writers/speakers use to transmit something of their interiority both to themselves and to others. According to John Hawkes' definition of voice, the medium reveals some-

thing of the writer's/speaker's self: ". . . the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality" ("Voice Project," 1966-1697, p. 95). The way one talks, the rhythm and structure of the words one uses indicate something about one's self; voice comes from the self. Voice emanates, as Walter J. Ong notes, from the individual's interiority (Barbarian Within, 1962). Voice is the exterior expression of an individual's interiority: "Voice is the least exterior of sensible phenomena because it emanates not only from the physical but also from the divided psychological interior of man" (p. 60). Because voice comes from the self, it assumes the characteristics of the self; when one speaks or writes, the self, or personality, is evident in the voice used.

Getting in touch with one's self, then, is the first step in developing the voice that communicates that self. One way students can explore issues close to the self is through expressive activity like reading and interpreting fictional narratives. Edward Sapir defines expressive activity as one involving the self; he further argues that any language activity is expressive:

> A further psychological characteristic of language is the fact that while it may be looked upon as a symbolic system which reports or refers to or otherwise substitutes for direct experience, it does not as a matter of actual behavior stand apart from or run parallel to direct experience but completely interpenetrates with it. . . . That language is a perfect symbolism of experience, that in the actual context of behavior it cannot be divorced from action and that it is the carrier of an infinitely nuanced expressiveness are universally valid psychological facts. (pp. 9, 11)

Since the reading of the fictional narrative is a language activity, it involves an expressive response. The student reader's linguistic

response is expressive because the text has prompted the student to explore the self. Louise Rosenblatt, in support of the expressive theory of literary response, views the text as the blueprint of the reader's experience:

> The reader's attention to the text activates certain elements in his past experience--external reference, internal response--that have become linked with the verbal symbols. Meaning will emerge from a network of relationships among the things symbolized as he senses them. (Reader, 1978, p. 11)

In literary response, then, the student works closely with issues and experiences from the student's past; the student works closely with the self.

The vision the author communicates during the literary discourse is the stimulus for the reader's self exploration. Using the text, the author's voice communicates the author's vision and experiences. The fictional narrative serves as the form of communication, the means by which the writer's voice is transmitted. In this communication process, the author is the speaker, the reader is the listener and the author's vision is the message the voice conveys. The speech act theory of literary discourse supports this communication property of literature. According to this theory, a speech act occurs whenever there is a speaker, a listener and the resolution of indeterminacies by means of specific conventions. Wolfgang Iser (1975) explains that literary discourse has these communicative qualities:

> These form the frame of reference within which the speech act can be resolved into a context of action. Literary texts also require a resolution of indeterminacies but, by definition, for the fiction there can be no such given frames of references. On the contrary, the reader must first discover for himself the code underlying the text, and this is tantamount to bringing out the meaning. ("Reality of Fiction," 1975, p. 13)

The reading of fictional narratives constitutes a speech act as the author transmits messages, through a voice, to a reader. In this communication process, the author's voice stimulates the reader's response.

As the receiver of the author's vision, the student reader makes contact with the writer's experiences and vision through the text. As a result, the text evokes experiences and ideas in the reader. As the reader is called upon, by virtue of the communication process, to respond to the author's/speaker's world, the reader's voice is activated. The reader's response is not directed back to the speaker (as in interpersonal speech acts), but outward to another audience. As the student evaluates the experiences and ideas evoked by the text, the student uses the voice to communicate the interpretation both to the self and others. Literary discourse prompts the reader to communicate both with the self and with others as the reader tries to understand what the text has evoked. As Louise Rosenblatt explains, "We are used to thinking of the text as the medium of communication. . . . Perhaps we should consider the text as an even more general medium of communication among readers" (Reader, 1978, p. 146). Literary discourse is only the beginning of many communicative situations involving the reader's voice.

During the reading/interpreting process, the student reader's exploration of self and the subsequent communication among readers involve the student reader's voice. This expressive, communication function of interpretation makes the process suitable for the pre-writing stage of composition. In pre-writing students explore the self, by

redefining systems of belief and by recalling and evaluating experiences. In this pre-production stage, the student's voice, which conveys the student's ideas and experiences, gradually develops to the point where the student is ready for production. Since interpretation of fictional narratives involves self-exploration and the development of voice, the process can serve a pre-writing function in composing.

The proposed course places the reading and interpretation of the fictional narrative in the pre-writing stage of composition. The course's methodology has two aims:

> (1) to engage students in the reading and interpretation of fictional narratives in order to activate and develop their voice in preparation for the major writing assignments.[2]
>
> (2) to focus student attention on the voice communicating to them through the fictional narrative and on the reasons their voice is responding.

Students fulfill these aims by reading and interpreting fictional narratives and completing selected oral and written exercises during the pre-writing stage of composition.

Because of the nature of the genre and the needs of the proposed course, the short fictional narrative is a more suitable stimulus than the long fictional narrative (novel or novella) in the pre-writing stage. The aims of the course stress considerable student exposure to a variety of fictional narrative voices. In order to comprehend the way different writers use voice, students should be exposed to many voices; since voice individualizes a discourse, no two voices are alike. In addition to sampling many voices, students also should read several narratives by the same writer so they can learn to

identify a particular voice. In a twelve or fifteen week course, students will have difficulty discovering a breadth of voices if they read longer narratives. Consequently, the short fictional narrative is more suitable in a twelve to fifteen week course; students can read a wide variety of short narratives during this time.

A second reason short fictional narratives are more suitable in the proposed course has to do with the short narrative's structure. Throughout the proposed course, students learn to identify voice properties of discourse, one of which is structure. The structure of a short narrative functions differently than that of a longer narrative, simply by virtue of the narrative's length. Since students in the proposed course produce written compositions shorter than ten pages each, their exposure to similar structures in short pieces is more practical. Mina Shaughnessy in a posthumously published interview in English Journal (1980) acknowledges the structural advantage of the short fictional narrative. According to Shaughnessy, the rhythm and structure of the short fictional narrative more nearly approximate that of the student's own writing. By rhythm, Shaughnessy means the pace and movement of the piece:

> The story is an excellent form for the basic writing student because it's short and it is much more tightly structured than the novel. You have to be constantly asking the student not just to get caught up in the narrative and the language, but to work also on the matter of structure. (p. 33)

In order to learn about structure as a voice property of discourse, then, students in the proposed course read short fictional narratives.

In the proposed course, the pre-writing stage is divided into two in-class activity sections. In the first part of pre-writing,

Interpretive Activity, students read fictional narratives outside of class and complete a series of in-class oral and written exercises related to the reading. These exercises develop the student's voice, activated by the narrative. At the same time, the students explore the narrative's voice and their own activated voice. The second part of the pre-writing stage, Voice Activity, tunes up the student's already stimulated voice through a series of in-class oral and written exercises. In these exercises, students use their voice to continue probing the experiences and ideas evoked by the text. In addition, students in these exercises continually define the voices developing in the class. The Voice Activity and the Interpretive Activity sections in the proposed course prepare the student for major writing assignments by stimulating and developing the student's voice.

During interpretive activity, students analyze the voice of the fictional narrative and their own developing voice; the instructor focuses their attention on the voice properties of the literary discourse and their own responses. Students identify the content conveyed by the narrative, the language and structure (style of that content) and the relationship of the three in the production of discourse rich in voice. Content, language and structure are all connected voice properties of discourse.[3] As Hawkes explains in "The Voice Project," the three are an intricate part of voice:

> Throughout all of our activities we were attempting to make the word "voice" meaningful and useful for the student and were attempting to clarify the implications and possibilities for this term as a teaching method. We wanted the student to know that the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality; that the personal intonation might well relate to the diction and rhythms of his writing. . . . (p. 95)

In order to understand how these properties individualize voice in a discourse, students compare the voice properties of narratives by different authors. Their purpose is to discover by what means and for what reasons voice individualizes discourse.

At the same time students identify the voice of the fictional narrative, they explore, in oral and written exercises, their voice that has been activated in response to the narrative. Classroom discussion centers around the question: Of what did this fictional narrative remind you? The discussion emphasizes the content, language and structure of the voice evident in the response. Students are encouraged to work closely with the self; they try to discover by what means and for what reasons they may have changed their views of themselves and the world as a result of exposure to fictional narratives.

Interpretive Activity is valuable to pre-writing because the literary text evokes something different in each student. These different responses account for the different activated voices. The indeterminacy of literature is one reason the text evokes somewhat different responses in different readers. According to the indeterminacy theory, as Wolfgang Iser (1980) explains, the text contains gaps or blanks that the reader must fill in from his or her individual perspective. Interpretation results when the reader fills in the gaps:

> The text is a whole system of such processes, and so, clearly, there must be a place within this system for the person who is to perform the reconstituting. This place is marked by the gaps in the text--it consists of the blanks which the reader is to fill in. They cannot, of course, be filled in by the system itself, and so it follows that they can only be filled in by another system. Whenever the reader bridges the gaps, communication begins. The gaps function as a kind of pivot on which the whole text-reader relationship revolves. Hence the structured blanks of the text stimulate the process of ideation to be performed by the reader on terms set by the text. (Act of Reading, p. 169)

The fictional narrative, he explains, has indeterminate meanings; the reader must use past experiences with life to determine the meaning. Since no two experiences are alike, no two interpretations will be exactly alike.

In addition to blanks, according to Iser, a literary text has negations which also require the reader's constitutive, communicative response:

> . . . the blanks leave open the connections between perspectives in the text, and so spur the reader into coordinating these perspectives--in other words, they induce the reader to perform basic operations within the text. The various types of negation invoke familiar or determinate elements only to cancel them out. (p. 169)

Even though the familiar or determinate elements are cancelled, Iser continues, what is cancelled remains in view; consequently, the reader alters perspectives on the familiar or determinate. The constitutive response to the negations is different, says Iser, for every reader. As a result of the negations and blanks in the literary text, therefore, each student's expressive response is different.

The literary text, according to Iser, depends on the reader's cocreative contribution. Because the reader's life experiences are crucial to the creative activity and because no two readers have exactly the same experiences, no two interpretations are alike. This quality of interpretation--that the process leads to a very individualized self exploration--makes it suitable for the pre-writing stage of composition. The students' interpretations of the fictional narratives involve an individualized self-correcting process; pre-writing necessitates such a process.

Complementing the Interpretive Activity section in the pre-writing stage of the proposed course is the Voice Activity section. The purpose of the oral and written exercises in this section is to further develop the voice activated during the reading and interpreting of the fictional narrative. The voice exercises involve students in (1) exploring their incubating ideas and experiences, (2) identifying the elements of their voices and others, and the voice properties of oral and written discourse produced in these exercises, and (3) comparing the oral and written voice. In this section, students orally discourse on persons, places and experiences from their past and present, produce short written pieces using different voices, and compare oral and written dialogues. These exercises from the Voice Activity section prepare students for production by developing their voices and teaching them the way voice functions in discourse.

Like the exercises in Interpretive Activity, those in this section are highly expressive, i.e., close to the self. In recalling places, persons, experiences and beliefs, students probe and review their past and present life, first orally and then in writing. Much of this probing is begun during the interpretive section; students continue the probing in the Voice Activity section by further incubating the ideas stimulated in the interpretive section. Students discuss, confirm and reject ideas with the intention of finally accepting them in preparation for major writing assignments.

Throughout this section of pre-writing, the writer's voice conveys the incubated ideas. In classroom discussion of the exercises, students identify the elements of that voice--personality and role--

and the voice properties--message and style--of oral and written discourse produced in this section. Students carefully trace the development of each other's voice by looking at these elements and properties. Eventually students learn to recognize the voices of their peers, i.e., they learn to identify the author of a piece of discourse by the elements of voice in the piece and the voice properties of the piece.

In addition to developing the student's voice, then, these exercises help students to define that voice. The exposure to first oral and then written discourse in this section assists students in understanding the meaning of the abstract concept voice. Hawkes in "Voice Project" (1966-1967) contends that students can more easily recognize voice by exposure to the oral voice:

> This kind of literal involvement with the language of others was limited to perhaps half of our students, but for these students the actual collecting of speech was a most important learning experience. The discovery of living tellers of folk-tales and the discovery of how language functions in this particular form, the collecting and study of individual stories and group dialogues of children which revealed subtleties, complexities, and beauties of language comparable to those in certain books or stories--all this was for our students actual, challenging, engaging.
>
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>
> . . . it is extremely difficult to help the student arrive at an actual comprehension of the writing voice as single, palpable, real. It is far easier to respond to the speaking voice, as something with which to work concretely. . . . (pp. 100, 92)

In line with Hawkes' theory, the students in the Voice Activity section of pre-writing work very closely with learning the way voice functions in written discourse by first learning the way it functions in oral

discourse. In studying the way voice functions, students again explore the elements of voice and the voice properties of discourse.

The pre-writing stage of the proposed course, then, stimulates and develops the student's voice; students read fictional narratives and complete a series of oral and written exercises that develop the voice stimulated during the reading. In a composition course that utilizes the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives, the students can learn that an author's voice emenates from the author's interiority and that the interpretation of the voice activates the reader's own voice and subsequent exploration of self. Using this activated voice, the students engage in a self-correcting process valuable to the pre-writing stage of composition.

Methodology

The proposed methodology has a three-part structure. Before each major writing assignment, students read fictional narratives and complete oral and written exercises related to those reading assignments. Following these exercises, students work through another series of oral and written exercises--voice exercises--that sharpen their spoken and written voice. These voice exercises complement the oral and written interpretive activity in the course. The three-part structure involves, then,

(1) reading fictional narratives (beginnings of interpretive activity),

(2) completing selected in-class oral and written exercises (interpretive activity) for each unit defined by the major writing assignment,

(3) completing in-class voice exercises (voice activity) selected to complement the interpretive activity.

The proposed course is structured around five units (anywhere from two to four weeks long). Each unit culminates in a major writing assignment: narration of experience, description of place, description of person, philosophy of life/issue paper, autobiography. (See Appendix A) The activity within each unit is defined by the major writing assignment (three to five typed pages).

The topic assignment for each unit is expressive, because the topic deals closely with the writer's self. By describing experiences, people, places, students look into their past and/or the world around them; students recall and evaluate the past and/or present. In the philosophy of life/issue assignment, students reassess an issue particularly relevant to them now or sometime in the past. They can regard the assignment as an argument paper, persuasion paper, change of opinion paper, etc. If they do not wish to deal with a particular issue, they can produce a philosophy of life paper that involves anything from an assessment of individual goals to the importance of responsibility and decision making in one's life. The purpose of this assignment is to place the student in the position of making a commitment to some idea, value or belief. In the final assignment, an autobiography, students synthesize the expressive thinking that has been going on all term. Through recollection of experience, people, places and evaluation of belief systems, students produce an autobiography (approximately ten pages in length); they are free to choose their own boundaries: childhood, adulthood, college life, freshman year, highschool.

The purpose of the pre-writing and production stages in each unit of the proposed course is to engage students in a self-evaluative, life-review process: because the self-evaluative process is expressive, the student's voice can develop throughout each unit. I use the term life review as Robert Butler does in "Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence of the Aged" (1963). In discussing this life review process in senior citizens, he defines the process as a self-evaluative one:

> In contrast, I conceive of the life review as a naturally occurring, universal mental process characterized by the progressive return to consciousness of past experiences, and particularly the resurgence of unresolved conflicts; simultaneously, and normally, these revived experiences and conflicts can be surveyed and reintegrated. (p. 66)

Students engage in life review whenever they participate in expressive activity, such as the reading and interpreting of fictional narratives--the pre-writing stage in the proposed course. Because voice reflects something of one's personality or sense of self and because the life review process involves evaluation of self, this self-evaluative process activates and develops the voice.[4]

During each of the "expressive" units, students engage in interpretive and voice activity. The Interpretive Activity section involves the reading and interpreting(through oral and written exercises) of fictional narratives. The Voice Activity section complements the Interpretive Activity section; in this section oral and written voice exercises further develop the voice that the text evokes in the reader. The interpretive and voice activities can develop the student's voice because in these activities students engage in self

exploration and communicate that exploration to the self and others.[5] Such activity prepares the students for the use of that voice in the production of the major writing assignment of each unit.

The units in the proposed course are not mutually exclusive; the activity sections of each unit and the units as a whole work together in developing the student's voice. For example, during the Interpretive Activity section of each unit, students identify the elements of the narrative voice and the voice properties of the narratives. After they have collected a variety of voice samples from different units, students compare the voices. The Voice Activity section of each unit exhibits the same interdependency. The exercises in this section are organized to move from spoken voice exercises (early units) to written exercises (middle unit) to those that emphasize the relationship between the spoken and written voice. Students' early exposure to the spoken voice can facilitate their understanding of the written voice.[6] A final indication that the units are not mutually exclusive is the flexibility of the major writing assignment. For example, a student may begin with the intention of writing a description of a person in Unit Three; if the product emerges as an experience paper, the instructor in the proposed course accepts the experience paper as fulfilling the assignment. The aim of the course is to encourage self exploration in writing, thereby developing the student's voice. The unit topics do not confine the student's voice. Any constraints upon that voice by forcing divisions among the units can only hinder the growth of the student's voice.

Interpretive Activity

Interpretive activity--the reading of fictional narratives and the interpretation of those narratives through oral and written in-class exercises--occurs before voice activity exercises in each unit and lasts from two to three days.[7] For each unit students read one or two narratives outside the class; the narratives are read over a three-day period and students spend approximately three class periods on oral and written interpretive exercises.[8] The aims of the Interpretive Activity section in each unit are the same: to stimulate and develop the student's voice by (1) making the student aware of the voice properties of fictional narratives and (2) developing the student's expressive literary response and calling attention to the voice that is conveying this response. In interpretive activity, students learn about voice while their own voice is developing, thus preparing them for the major writing assignment in each unit.

The first aim of the Interpretive Activity section in the proposed course is to provide students with the opportunity to identify voice properties of the fictional narratives read outside of class. Message and style (structure and language) are the two voice properties students identify in oral and written exercises. The message is the author's vision, as evidenced in the author's presentation of experiences, people and places. The structure and language of that message are also voice properties. The structure of the message refers to the order of the material presented; language is the diction used to convey that message. By identifying these voice properties, students learn the way to recognize voice in discourse and the way voice

properties distinguish the voice of one discourse from that of another.

The second aim of the Interpretive Activity section is to engage the student in a constructive response to literature that involves the use of the student reader's own voice. In an attempt to understand the meaning of the text, the reader partakes in a self-evaluative process that involves the reader's voice. During the reading process, the writer's voice presents to the student the writer's experiential frame; the writer's voice also evokes the reader's voice by stimulating ideas in the student. The reader uses the reader's voice to interpret, sort out, and evaluate these stimulated ideas. Louise Rosenblatt (Reader, 1978) explains the reading process as the reader's opportunity to self actualize, to reassess the self in terms of the ideas and experiences the author has evoked through the text:

> The text itself leads the reader toward this self-corrective process. . . . Under the magnetism of the ordered symbols of the text, he marshals his resources and crystallizes out from the stuff of memory, thought, and feeling a new order, a new experience, which he sees as the poem. This becomes part of the ongoing stream of his life experience. . . . (pp. 11, 12)

The reader's self-evaluation signals the presence of the reader's voice. In the proposed course, the "self-evaluative" aspect of the interpretive activity is begun outside the classroom as the students read selected narratives. The self-evaluation continues in the classroom during oral discussions and written exercises that deal with memories the narratives has evoked in the reader.

The student's identification of the voice the text has evoked in him or herself is also part of this second aim of interpretive activity.

Voice is present during any communication process: writing/speaking or listening/reading. The students' individualized voice is evident in the student's response to literary discourse. Students can learn the way voice functions as a communication medium, when they explore the voice properties of their own discourse in much the same way that they identify the voice properties of the fictional narratives.

These exercises in the proposed course help achieve the aims of interpretive activity. In these exercises, students prepare for the use of voice during the production of the major writing assignment. The three exercises develop the student's voice and focus student attention on his or her voice and the voice in the narrative:

(1) Oral Discussion Exercise--developed from questions pertaining to (a) the voice of the narrative and (b) the voice the narrative evokes in each student;

(2) Written Exercise #1--completed and discussed in class; involves students in interchanging the voice properties of one narrative with those of another;

(3) Written Exercise #2--completed and discussed in class, involves students in rewriting portions of a narrative using the voice from another narrative.

Oral discussions occur throughout the term in all five units. But in the first two units (narration of an experience and description of place) this discussion is the only interpretive activity in which the students engage. In these early units, the students are just learning about the way to recognize voice and the way to identify voice properties of discourse. By the third unit (description of person), students have read at least four short narratives, have been exposed to several different voices and have discussed the various voice properties of

these narratives. By the third unit, they are ready for Written Exercise #1 in which students experiment with switching voice properties of different narratives. After two units of this written exercise, students begin another, Written Exercise #2, in which they try to alter the entire voice, i.e., rewrite a portion of one narrative using the voice of another. The practice of switching voice properties and imposing the voice of one writer on the work of another encourages students to see the individual quality of voice and the ways voice properties function together in a particular discourse.

Oral discussions occur throughout the term and involve (1) the identification of voice properties of the narrative(s) read during each unit and (2) the identification and development of the voice that the text has evoked in the reader. In the first set of questions, the instructor asks the students to identify the whole voice and then the voice properties of the narrative (eventually students begin to ask each other these questions as the discussion takes on a seminar quality):

(1) Who is speaking to you in the narrative?

(2) Is the writer using a mask or a persona? Identify that persona.

(3) What is the attitude of the writer towards the material and towards the audience?

Gradually the questions move into an identification of specific voice properties of the discourse:

(1) What is the writer's vision? Belief system?

(2) How is the narrative structured?

(3) What is the relationship between structure and the writer's vision?

(4) Describe the writer's diction. Describe the perceptual powers (use of senses).[9]

In answering these questions, students first look at the writer's voice as a whole; they tell what they hear in the voice and identify the person behind the voice. Students then become specific by identifying the voice properties of the narrative. Finally, discussion questions focus student attention on the relationship among these properties. In this way, students can learn how the structure, language and content of one's writing are related to the voice.

A second set of discussion questions develop the voice the text has evoked in the reader; these questions also require the students to identify that voice:

(1) When you finished reading the narrative, how did you feel?

(2) Have these feelings changed since you read (reread) the narrative? Are they changing now as we discuss these feelings?[10]

(3) Do the experiences, person, place, beliefs in the narrative remind you of anything in your own life?

(4) Do you have a new perspective on that experience, person, place, belief, as a result of the reading?

(5) Can you hear the voice of your peers in their oral responses to the narrative? Describe that voice.

The questions elicit expressive responses as each student begins to explore his or her sense of self and the world. The aim of this part of interpretive activity is to allow students to verbalize the self-evaluation that occurs during interpretation and to identify the voice conveying that self-evaluation.

In both parts of these oral discussions, the instructor shapes the questions to fit the unit's major writing assignment, but does not confine the student to incubating ideas related only to the unit's topic. For example, in unit one (narration of an experience), the instructor encourages students to pay close attention to the way the writer's voice conveys the experiences and what experiences have been evoked in the students as a result of the encounter with the text. The oral discussions emphasize the unit's topic, but do not limit the students to a discussion of experience. The instructor does not control the reader's response. The text assigned for that unit may evoke memories of places as well as experiences; the major writing assignment (an experience paper) may emerge as a place description. In this case, the student may have learned about an experience, but stored that knowledge for later use. James Britton in Development of Writing Abilities (1969) emphasizes that incubated ideas can be set aside: "Sometimes a writer is able to make use of what has been incubated for some other purpose" (p. 26). Interpretive activity should guide the development of the student's voice without hindering that development.

Oral discussions of the fictional narratives occur throughout the units as students work closely with the assigned texts. The student's voice continually develops as a result of this exposure to new voices in each unit. By the third and fourth units (description of person and philosophy of life/ issue paper), students are ready to work on in-class Written Exercise #1 that involves rewriting portions of a fictional narrative using a voice property from another fictional narrative. Students complete this exercise after the oral discussion

of the narrative in each unit. Following the written exercise, students discuss the results.

In Written Exercise #1 students are free to choose from any voice in the present or past units; they are also free to select the voice property with which they will experiment. In the following sample, Doug selected what he called the "free-flowing language" of James Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues" and rewrote a few paragraphs of Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers" using Baldwin's diction. Both stories involve an experience. "Sonny's Blues" narrates an experience of one individual with his brother over a period of time; "The Killers" narrates the experience of a young man one evening in a strange town:

"The Killers" (Original)

> The door of Henry's lunch-room opened and two men came in. They sat down at the counter.
> "What's yours?" George asked them.
> "I don't know," one of the men said. "What do you want to eat Al?"
> "I don't know," said Al. "I don't know what I want to eat."
> Outside it was getting dark. The streetlight came on outside the window. The two men at the counter read the menu. From the other end of the counter Nick Adams watched them. He had been talking to George when they came in.
> "I'll have a roast pork tenderloin with apple sauce and mashed potatoes," the first man said.
> "It isn't ready yet."
> "What the hell do you put it on the card for?"
> "That's the dinner," George explained. "You can get that at six o'clock."
> George looked at the clock on the wall behind the counter.
> "It's five o'clock."
> "The clock says twenty minutes past five," the second man said.
> "It's twenty minutes fast."
> "Oh, to hell with the clock," the first man said, "What do you have to eat?"

Doug's Version

As the door of Henry's lunch room opened, two men came in and sat down at the counter. George, the manager, seemed disinterested as he asked them what they wanted.

"I don't know," one of them said looking at the menu. Turning to his friend, Al, he asked, "What do you want? Al responded that he didn't know.

It was getting dark outside. As the streetlights came on, the men at the counter continued to read the menu. Nick Adams watched them curiously from the other end.

"I'll have a roast pork tenderloin with apple sauce and mashed potatoes," the first man asked.

When George told him it wasn't ready, he became angry: "What the hell do you put it on the card for?"

"That's the dinner; you can get that at six o'clock," George explained looking at the clock on the wall behind the counter. "It's only five o'clock now."

The second man asked him why the clock said twenty minutes past five and George said the clock was twenty minutes fast.

George's response really angered the first man who screamed, "Oh, to hell with the clock. What do you have to eat?"

In the discussion that followed, students learned why the "free-flowing" language was a suitable voice property of Baldwin's narrative and not Hemingway's. Hemingway's short metallic diction is particularly appropriate for his theme of life's ironies. Baldwin's free-flowing language is appropriate for his sympathetic portrayal of Sonny. After reading Doug's selection, one student noticed that "'The Killers' had lost its voice." The short, metallic diction of "The Killers" appropriately conveys the irony and helplessness the narrative had evoked in the students. When asked why he chose these particular narratives and the voice property of diction, Doug noted: "Frankly, I wanted to see how much diction contributed to the voice of 'The Killers.' It certainly is a unique way of writing. But I really felt like I was forcing Baldwin's words on Hemingway's ideas. It felt so awkward."[11]

After two units of experimenting with voice properties, from different narratives, students can begin to understand what is involved in producing a discourse rich in voice. The diction must fit the message and structure of the discourse. Each property is an instrument of the other in the production of a prose unique to a particular writer. All these properties are outward signs that a voice is present beckoning the reader to respond.

Written Exercise #2 is similar in purpose to the first written exercise; in this exercise, the students rewrite a few paragraphs of one narrative using the total voice of another narrative; students change diction, structure, author's attitude towards the material, i.e., every voice property identifiable in the narrative. Students perform this exercise two or three times in the last unit; and, as in Written Exercise #1, they work with this exercise only after discussing the unit's fictional narrative(s). Since students must deal with so many voice properties at once, this second exercise is more difficult than the others. Students are prepared, however, because they have already read several narratives (more than one by the same author) and experimented with a single voice property in the previous unit.

In the following sample of Written Exercise #2, Sue is successful in capturing Sherwood Anderson's attitude and vision when using Anderson's voice,as heard in "Discovery of a Father" and "In Want to Know Why," in her rewrite of portions of "A Tree, A Rock, A Cloud," by Carson McCullers:

"A Tree, A Rock, A Cloud" (Original)

The old man stood in the open doorway. "Remember," he said. Framed there in the gray damp light of the early morning he looked shrunken and seedy and frail. But his smile was bright. "Remember I love you," he said with a last nod. And the door closed quietly behind him.

The boy did not speak for a long time. He pulled down the bangs on his forehead and slid his grimy little forefinger around the rim of his empty cup. Then without looking at Leo he finally asked:

"Was he drunk?"

"No," said Leo shortly.

The boy raised his clear voice higher. "Then was he a dope fiend?"

"No."

The boy looked up at Leo, and his flat little face was desperate, his voice urgent and shrill. "Was he crazy? Do you think he was a lunatic?" The paper boy's voice dropped suddenly with doubt. "Leo? Or not?"

But Leo would not answer him. Leo had run a night cafe for fourteen years, and he held himself to be a critic of craziness. There were the town characters and also the transients who roamed in from the night. He knew the manias of all of them. But he did not want to satisfy the questions of the waiting child. He tightened his pale face and was silent.

So the boy pulled down the right flap of his helmet and as he turned to leave he made the only comment that could not be laughed down and despised:

"He sure has done a lot of traveling."

Sue's Version

The old man stood in the doorway; he was framed against the gray lamp light of the early morning and looked shrunken, seedy and frail. His smile was bright as he reminded the young boy that he loved him. He nodded as he said this. The door closed quietly behind him.

The boy did not speak for a long time as he sorted out the old man's story. As he thought, he pulled down the bangs on his forehead and slid his grimy little forefingers around the rim of his empty cup. He pleadingly turned to Leo and asked:

"Was he drunk? A dope fiend?

"No," said Leo.

The boy looked at Leo and his flat little face was desperate. He was afraid to say what he thought. Was the old man crazy? Was he a lunatic? The paper boy's voice dropped suddenly with doubt. "Leo?"

Leo did not answer him. He had run the cafe for fourteen years and had seen all the town characters and transients who roamed the night. He knew the manias of them all. But he did

> not want to satisfy the boy's questioning. He was silent.
>
> The boy thought a moment more and pulled down the right flap of his helmet. As he turned to leave, he took one last look at Leo; his face showed a mixture of pain and sympathy. The little boy felt weighed down by what he just realized. He left the diner wondering if life was always so lonely.

In the discussion that followed, Sue explained her choice and analyzed her finished product. The only voice property she found considerably different was each author's attitude towards experience; each differs on the way innocence fares in the wake of experience. According to Sue, both writers are sensitive to the harsh experiences of youth. She argued, however, that Anderson believes the individual shows a strength following that experience--a self-awareness. In addition, she found the diction and structure similar in both narratives: both writers wrote linguistically simple and slow-paced narratives. McCullers, however, uses more dialogue, according to Sue. In rewriting portions of McCullers' narrative using Anderson's voice, then, Sue gave the main character a strong self-awareness by the end of the narrative. She also removed some of McCullers dialogue, replacing it with Anderson's introspective prose. Even though she changed only two voice properties, Sue began the task of looking at voice as a whole and comparing the narratives in terms of the voice heard in both.

In the Interpretive Activity section of each unit, then, students learn about voice properties as the narrative stimulates and develops their own voice. The discussions and written exercises complement each other in preparing the students for the major writing assignment in each unit. In this writing assignment, the students use the voice that the fictional narrative has stimulated and the interpretation developed.[12]

The fictional narratives used in each unit of the proposed course were chosen on the basis of two criteria: the strength of the narrative voice and the narrative's appropriateness for discussion in more than one thematic unit. By "strength of voice," I mean the accessibility of the voice to students enrolled in a beginning composition course, i.e., comparatively inexperienced readers. In other words, the students should be able to recognize the voice easily even before they fully understand the implications of the concept. For example, the complexity of voice in John Barth's or Jorge Louis Borges' narratives can hinder a young writer who has had little exposure to the written voice. In these narratives, the advanced syntactical and structural devices can confuse the young writer. If students are to learn the voice properties of discourse, they should be able to identify these voice properties readily in all narratives read in the course. Narratives such as Ray Bradbury's "Night Meeting," John Cheever's "The Country Husband" and Albert Camus' "The Guest" lend themselves to such identification.

In selecting narratives with strong voices, I included those with third-person points of view. Third-person narratives have speaking authors just as do first-person narratives. James Moffett in Teaching the Universe of Discourse (1968) disregards the traditional divisions and categorizes narratives by the distance between speaker and audience; these categories acknowledge the existence of a speaker in all narratives:

> For the sake of parsimony, the things that make for variation in discourse can be put as a matter of time and space. (1) How "large" in time and space is the speaker, the listener, the subject? (2) How great is the distance between them? (3) Do two or all of them coincide? Since these questions relate directly to the "removal" of phenomena from time and

> space (the degree of particularity or generality), by asking them we may easily relate "persons" (I, you, it) to levels of abstractions. (p. 32)

Once students understand that differences in point of view are only differences in distance between speaker and audience, they will be able to accept the implied speaking voice in third-person narratives. Consequently, the list of suggested narratives contains those with a range of distances between speaker and audience.

A second criteria for the selection of the narratives was the narrative's suitability for discussion in more than one thematic unit. The narratives can provide continual stimulation of ideas long after they have been read, if they are appropriate for a discussion of experience, person, place, autobiography and issues. John Cheever's "The Country Husband" is a good choice for the proposed course because students can see the narrative as (1) a study of Francis Weed's experience with a mid-life crisis, (2) a description of the people in middle America, and (3) a description of a suburban town, etc. The narrative lends itself to many of the proposed units; consequently students and instructors can work with the narrative after the unit in which they first read and discussed the narrative.

Appendix B contains a list--by no means exhaustive--of narratives suitable for the proposed course. The narratives are organized under the suggested thematic units in which the students first read them. Some are repeated under other units. I selected each on the basis of feasibility of identifying voice and usefulness in more than one unit. All have been tried during interpretive activity in the proposed course.

Voice Activity

Throughout the Voice Activity section of each unit, students are exposed to a wide range of in-class voice exercises (oral and written) which complement interpretive activity. The early voice exercises sharpen the spoken voice by allowing students to verbally test their incubating ideas and to develop new ones. The oral exercises also focus student attention on the voice properties of spoken discourse. The oral exercises include Oral Reading and One-Word Experience Exercise (Unit One), Place Exercise (Unit Two) and Person Exercise (Unit Three). The written exercises, Letter Exercise and Issue Exercise, occur in the middle of the course (Unit Three); in these exercises, students experiment with role and its influence on voice. The last two exercises, Dialogue and Eavesdropping (Unit Five), combine the spoken and written voice; in these exercises students learn how to write dialogues rich in voice. The voice exercises occur after the interpretive activity in each unit. Their main purpose is to continue developing the student's voice which was activated during interpretive activity. The second aim of these exercises is to introduce the students to the concept of voice as it is heard first in spoken and then in written discourse; students can then learn how voice functions in all discourse.

The voice exercises help develop the voice activated during the interpretive section of each unit by allowing students to continue the exploration of self begun during interpretation. These exercises, like those in the Interpretive Activity section, are very expressive, i.e., dealing with issues close to the self. Throughout these exercises, students explore their experiences and belief systems. The instructor

coaches them to use their voices throughout this self-evaluation;they do this by working closely with their senses (sight, smell, hearing, tasting) in an attempt to crystallize their incubating ideas in preparation for the major writing assignment.

In addition to aiding in the student's self-correcting process, these voice exercises focus student attention on the way their developing voice functions in all discourse activity, spoken and written. Students learn to recognize the voice properties of spoken and written discourse; they learn some of the things that condition voice (role and audience). Since the written voice is a complex concept, students can learn more easily about their voice through exposure to that voice in spoken discourse. John Hawkes depended heavily on the spoken voice in his Voice Project because he felt that students would have less trouble identifying voice properties of spoken than of written discourse:

> . . . it is extremely difficult to help students to arrive at an actual comprehension of the writing voice as single, palpable, real. It is far easier to respond to the speaking voice, and yet within the limitations of an ordinary classroom even the speaking voice, as something with which to work concretely, is hardly available. In other words, until recently it had not occured 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 that many-sided relationship. (p. 92)

In accord with Hawkes' conclusion, the Voice Activity section begins with spoken voice exercises, moves to written voice exercises, and ends with exercises that focus student attention on both the spoken and written voice. Students study the voice properties of spoken and written discourse and the function of role and audience in the voice heard in both forms of discourse. Through these exercises, students

can begin to see that the voice of their spoken discourse is similar to that of their written discourse; only the vehicle conveying the voice differs.

During the Voice Activity section of each unit, students complete specific voice exercises. Though the particular unit shapes the focus of these exercises, the exercises do not confine students to a specific thought process. The One-Word Experience Exercise, for example, guides student thinking around experiences (Unit One), the Place Exercise (Unit Two) around places, the Person Exercise (Unit Three) around persons, etc. However, like the exercises during interpretive activity, these do not confine the students to the unit's topic. The purpose of the exercises is to expand the student's voice, not limit it. Consequently, during the exercises in Unit One, for example, the instructor coaches each student to see the experience (recalled by the exercise) as an encounter with people, places, issues; in Unit Two, the instructor encourages students to recall experiences, people and issues associated with the place recalled. The instructor coaches the student's voice beyond the limits of the topic. In this way, students can choose from a variety of incubating ideas for their major writing assignment.[13]

Oral Reading and One-Word Experience Exercises are two spoken voice exercises useful in Unit One (narration of experience). The purpose of Oral Reading is to show students that two voices--the writer's and reader's--can be heard when someone reads aloud a piece written by another. Walter J. Ong in The Barbarian Within (1962) explains the presence of these two voices:

> Speaking and hearing are not simple operations. Each exhibits a dialectical structure which mirrors the mysterious depths of man's psyche. As he composes his thoughts in words, a speaker or writer hears these words echoing within himself and thereby follows his own thoughts,as though he were another person. Conversely, a hearer or reader repeats within himself the words he hears and thereby understands them, as though he were himself two individuals. (p. 51)

The Oral Reading Exercise is the first occasion in which the students hear their voice as something different from the voice evident in the material they read.

The instructor chooses a narrative with a strong voice, one students will not read in their out-of-class assignments.[14] The instructor selects two readers from the class (or students will volunteer). One student reads a portion of the narrative aloud for about fifteen minutes and a discussion follows. During the discussion, the class listens for the writer's voice (message, diction, structure) and the reader's voice (intonation, pauses, emphasis). After the reading, the instructor asks the students to identify the writer's message, attitude towards audience and the movement of the piece--movement refers to the internal rhythms of the writer's discourse (slow, staccato, fast-paced). Students then identify the reader's attitude towards the material; they cite specific examples of this attitude: high pitch vs. low pitch, pauses, emphasis, intonation, etc. Finally the student reader analyzes the reading and tries to provide reasons for the pauses, emphasis, intonation, etc., used. The exercise is then repeated with a different reader and a different passage from the same narrative (to avoid possible imitation of reading style). The same discussion is repeated after the second reading.

In the discussion that follows both readings, students notice the presence of two voices: the writer's and the reader's. The students can see that neither of the two readings is like the other, because no two voices are alike. Each reader perceives the narrative differently and, therefore, each reads it aloud differently. The intonations, for example, of each reader vary. The first introduction to the concept of voice is a very easy one for the students. They may not fully understand the voice properties of discourse; but they know voice exists, because they can hear it.

The One-Word Experience Exercise is another spoken exercise that can be used in the first unit.[15] Adapted from John Schultz's story workshop exercise, the One-Word Exercise is a very expressive one in which the instructor coaches the students to probe immediate and/or past experiences. Schultz views the exercise as drawing directly upon "physical voice," as

> reaching immediately past superficial, direct associations to get a response from deeper levels of association. The participants do not deny their direct associations or their use but reach past them. ("Story Workshop," p. 157, 155)

The exercise is self actualizing for the students as they probe their experiences and beliefs. Since the exercise occurs after the interpretive activity, the reading experience may condition the recollections. It is not crucial that the recollections be the same as those during interpretation. What is important is that the voice activity continues the self evaluation process begun during interpretive activity.

In the One-Word Experience Exercise, students build ideas from words and images. The exercise begins as the instructor asks each student

to give a word. In the succeeding rounds, students explain what the word evokes in each of them, what it makes them feel, smell, hear and taste: "'See what each word gives you to see! Now listen to your voice!'" ("Story Workshop," p. 156). During each round, student responses are all single words until the final round when the instructor asks students what experiences the word makes them see. The instructor regulates the number of rounds until the experiences begin to crystallize for the students. In the last round, students identify the experience they see and the people and background of that experience. The students then discuss each other's experiences and the meaning of the experience for them, now and when it occurred.

The One-Word Experience Exercise can become confusing with more than fifteen students. In this case, the instructor can ask students to jot down words as they come to the students. When it is their turn to speak, the students can refer to their writing for the words recalled while others were speaking. The exercise, however, does not have to operate in a sequence of rounds; students can volunteer or the instructor can call on students out of sequence. According to Betty Shiflett's explanation of the One-Word Story Workshop Exercise, calling on students out of sequence demonstrates "to the student that he does not need to prepare his response ahead of time; in other words he does not need to 'plan everything' in order to respond at his best level" (p. 151).

The Place and Person Exercises (Units Two and Three) operate in a manner similar to the One-Word Experience Exercise. In these exercises, students choose a place (or person) that is familiar. The students then travel with their inner eye through the place (or over the shapes and

features of the person) and describe what is seen. Students can volunteer their images or the instructor can call on them in or out of sequence. Students pay close attention to their senses as their images take shape. In order to help each other shape the images, students pose questions throughout the exercise:

(1) What do you see?

(2) How does it make you feel?

(3) Are you reminded of any experiences?

In answering these questions, students work towards a detailed description of the place (or person) and any feelings or experiences associated with that place (or person). By the end of the exercise each student has moved from a vague image to a description rich with feeling and voice.

The One-Word Experience and the Place and Person Exercises allow students to see theirs and other voices develop. Students "tune" each other's voice by stimulating each other's ideas. Students also encourage their peers to reject ideas they are not ready to explore. The student who goes through the process of rejecting ideas is more likely to find one that is comfortable, one the student is ready to communicate in spoken or written discourse. If a student's idea changes midway through the exercise, instructor and students coach that student through the whole process again, from word to idea to complete description. These spoken voice exercises in each unit are not over until students are satisfied with their incubating ideas and the voice expressing those ideas; they are then ready for the production stage.

Spoken voice exercises are part of the first three units; these exercises sharpen the student's spoken voice. Students complete two

written exercises (Issue and Letter) in the fourth unit. These exercises further develop the student's voice while teaching students about the function of voice. One of these exercises, the Issue Exercise, is directly related to the unit's topic: philosophy of life/issue. Both exercises help students to shape their voice and to learn the importance of role and knowing your audience in the production of a prose rich in voice.

In the Issue Exercise, students continue incubating ideas (stimulated during interpretive activity) in preparation for the major writing assignment; they also learn from the exercises about the elements of voice and the voice properties of argument/persuasion/philosophy of life papers. Throughout the exercise, students work with ideas they may later use in the major writing assignment. In some instances, the reading assignment has already crystallized an idea they intend to use; in this exercise, then, students further explore that idea. The Issue Exercise also emphasizes the ways voice functions in argument/persuasion/philosophy of life prose. Students discover that role shapes the voice; they discover the importance of attitude towards subject and audience in the production of an argument/persuasion/philosophy of life paper with an identifiable voice.

The Issue Exercise begins as the instructor provides the students with a sample position paper (a past student paper with an identifiable voice serves as a good sample). The instructor provides the students with a list of issue and philosophy of life topics;[16] they select one from the list (or one of their own choice) about which they have strong opinions. Using the sample's voice--beliefs, attitude towards subject

and audience, language and structure--students write approximately 300 to 400 words on the chosen topic. In their written product, students use the language and structure readily evident from the sample piece. The writer's beliefs on the chosen topic and the role the writer would assume for the topic is more difficult to determine. Discussion follows completion of the exercise as students look at the elements of voice in and the voice properties of the finished product.

A persuasion paper I received in an out-of-class assignment for beginning composition has yielded positive results as the issue exercise's sample. Entitled, "Sex is Passé," the paper features very identifiable voice properties; the persona is interesting, the structure is filled with surprising twists, and the writer exhibits a strong commitment to his subject and a knowledge of his audience. In general, Jim's (the author's) voice is evident from the effusive ego that permeates every statement. The paper begins by emphasizing the seriousness and importance of the subject and Jim's qualifications to pursue the topic:

> Simplicity is the earmark of both common sense and the finest creative thought. Philosophers and plain folks alike recognize that the simplist solution to any problem is the best solution. As a citizen and an intellectual, I feel a duty to help solve society's problems. This spring, one problem in particular has become so pervasive that I have taken it upon myself to find an answer. After devoting many hours of study and reflection to the problem, I feel, with modest pride, that I have hit on an insightful formulation of the problem, and a simple, direct solution.
>
> This solution comes just in time, for the problem is a serious one. It is more time-consuming than any term paper, faster growing than grade inflation, more worrisome than any career decision. I am referring, as you may have already surmised, to the problem of our endless preoccupation with obtaining sexual fulfillment.

He continues, through a language rich in specifics, to outline the problems presented by lack of sexual gratification in our society:

> . . . And when the students leave the class, their problems multiply. A student stays cooped up in his (or her) room until the heat becomes unbearable. He goes outside to cool off, but encounters there the tanned, scantily clad bodies of his fellow students, which serve only to raise his temperature more. If the student goes back to the dorm or apartment, there is still no escape. The television commercials all try to sell products by titillating the viewer with lurid fantasies: "If you buy our mouthwash (perfume, razor blades, shampoo, catfood, whatever) this and this and this will happen to you. . . " Gossiping friends are no distraction from the subject; their conversation seems to exist entirely of who did what to whom, or wanted to do what to whom, or frantically tried to do what to whom. If the student retreats to the library, the proximity of warm young bodies serves to dangle temptation in his or her face; and even in the secluded areas of the library, tasteless, stimulating graffiti dogs the student with sex, sex, sex. The only places left to go are the crowded bars and restaurants, where the spectacle of other students oggling each other desperately is scarcely uplifting.

and the possible solutions:

> Most students, unaware that there is a sure-fire and simple way out of these difficulties, try to solve the problem of sexual preoccupation by going on dates--a pathetic error that, like struggling when trapped in quicksand, only makes matters worse. . . . One way out of this uncertainty is to form a relationship. Unfortunately, this immediately entangles helpless individuals in all kinds of difficulties. Summer break, career goals, and graduation threaten ongoing relationships, as does the temptation of 48,000 panting young people flaunting themselves in the immediate vicinity. . . . The facts stare us in the face: the more you try to satisfy sexual cravings, the more miserable you become. The only solution, as I see it, is for students and other regular people to give up sexual behavior entirely. Sex for regular people is rapidly become passe; sex should be left to the professionals, who are much better paid and better qualified.

The solution Jim ultimately chooses is not surprising; throughout the piece, his mask or persona is that of one who "doth protest too much":

> I suppose a small minority of backward individuals will resist my proposal. I was talking to my friend Neil last night, who had the temerity to argue that the advantages of actual sex make up for the disadvantages. . . . This is certainly a reactionary position. Yet, some impulse--no doubt, scientific objectivity--moves me to consider giving his method a trial. I am only taking a few classes this summer, and I was looking for an extra project anyway. So, just to be fair, I have decided to dedicate my summer to trying Neil's approach. If you would like to know the results of my research, feel free to look me up this fall. Or, if you don't have anything to do this summer . . .

From start to finish, this humorous persuasive paper is rich in voice.[17] Students can hear the aggressive voice in Jim's paper; his language is specific and forceful and the structural twists prepare the students for the final solution. Active student response is one indication the piece is filled with voice: some readers are angry, others entertained; some women claim his male chauvinism is detestable; other women wonder if I still have his name, address and phone number. From this sample, students can learn the importance of the "right" persona or role (one that fits the subject); the necessity to be committed to one's subject; and the value of detailed language in creating an identifiable voice. They can also learn how crucial voice is in eliciting the reader's active response.

The sample paper, "Sex is Passé" can stimulate many in-class position/philosophy of life papers rich in voice. "The Trials of Short People" is one interesting product of a student's exposure to this sample. Vicki, the author, found her voice in the imitation of Jim's.[18] Her paper is filled with concrete language and a structure that supports her argument. Her voice, like Jim's, is aggressive and interesting. That voice clearly reflects Vicki's foreceful, vibrant and somewhat political personality.

Vicki's two-page in-class paper developed into her four-page typed major writing assignment for the unit. The early paragraphs of the major assignment were written during the in-class issue exercise. Like Jim, Vicki begins her major paper by emphasizing the serousness of her topic and her qualifications to explore it:

> Handicappers, Blacks, Mexicans, women or any other minority group continuously complain about being discriminated and rightfully so. I believe one of the biggest minority groups being discriminated against, whom you seldom hear about, is short people. They do not demonstrate for their rights or advertise their plight. They just passively face the consequences of being short.
>
> It seems short people have just grown accustomed to the fact that they will never be able to sit in a chair like "normal" people. Chair seats are always too high to have their feet flat on the floor. If they can touch the floor at all, it is usually just with the tips of their toes, which does not make sitting for long periods of time very comfortable. If they happen to be sitting at a table, it is twice as awkward because the surface of the table is almost level with their necks.

She continues to study the problems using concrete diction and employing a tone of resentment:

> Most people do not find grocery shopping a strenuous task. They probably don't even consider all the obstacles that prevent short people from enjoying shopping. Anything above the fourth shelf is almost inaccessable. Short people are forced to perform acrobatics while in the store by jumping up and down and trying to knock a box off the fifth shelf in hopes of catching it when it drops. . . . Most people don't look forward to going to the dentist for obvious reasons, such as the pain involved or the amount of money it will cost. Short people detest going to the dentist because it is such a challenge trying to get all the way up into the chair. . . . Most people consider driving a car a leisure activity, but for short people it is almost strenuous. The seat never goes forward far enough to comfortably reach the gas pedal. . . . What most taller people do not realize is that when they are walking with a short person, they need to slow down. It is not uncommon to see a tall person striding along with a short person running beside them.

Though her solutions are scarce and the paper doesn't end with the strength of voice that Jim's does, Vicki's overall attempt at producing persuasive prose rich in voice was successful. Student responses again certified that success. As one student said, "You know I never realized how low dentist chairs were."

The Issue Exercise provides students with an opportunity to experiment with and discover voice elements--personality and role--and voice properties of discourse--beliefs and style--as they did in the interpretive activity. A second exercise of Unit Four, the Letter Exercise, is another opportunity for students to work with the elements of voice and voice properties of discourse. The Letter Exercise can operate in several ways. In one method, discussed in Chapter II, students produce two letters, each containing the same information but addressed to two different audiences. In this exercise, students find themselves altering role or persona as the audience changes; they also regulate the language and amount of information each audience receives. In the discussion that follows, students discover that in both letters, the voice alters to accommodate the change in audience; the role the writer in each letter assumes is the major element of voice that changes.

In another letter exercise that achieves similar results, students write a letter to someone with whom they are angry; the time limit is 15 minutes. The instructor informs students that the letter will not be mailed. Students have no trouble with this topic. They vehemently vent their frustrations at parents, the university, teachers, the U.S., dormitories, etc. After students complete this part of the exercise, the letters are read aloud and discussed. Students identify

voice by looking at the personality behind the letter, the attitude towards the material and the language and structure of the letter. In addition, they describe the role or persona of the piece.

In the second part of the assignment, the instructor informs the students that the letter will now be mailed. They are given another 15 minutes to alter the letter, if they wish, because their audience has now become real, palpable. Most students eliminate information and alter the persona. When asked to justify the changes, in the discussion that follows, students point to the undesirable consequences now that an audience will receive the letter. Perhaps the receiver will misunderstand or completely reject the writer; according to the students, they may quickly lose the cause for which they are angry. The students find a compromise voice in the mailed letter; they make their point without alienating their audience. During discussion, students recognize that role is again the element of voice that alters to accommodate the audience.[19]

The following sample letters indicate a voice change (change in persona, role) from Letter #1 to Letter #2; in the second letter, the writer realizes that the addressee will now receive the letter. The change in attitude towards audience, from anger to desperation, influences the role chosen for the second letter:

Letter #1

Dear Mom and Dad:

I have just heard that my wisdom teeth have to come out. This will cost several hundred dollars. I have no money. I also have an extension on my tuition since I can't pay that either.

I think it's lousy you pay for John's tuition and cut off my funds. And now I hear you are going on a cruise. Shit. How can you go on a cruise when I've got a financial crisis. I can't take this anymore. My job barely pays for my living expenses. I have no credit to borrow. Student loans are scarce. And you say I can't come home if I quit school. Well if I don't quit school, I'll be kicked out for failure to pay my debts.

The least you can do is help me out instead of going on that goddam cruise.

Lynn

Letter #2

Dear Mom and Dad:

I hope this reaches you before you leave because I am in a financial bind. I am overdue on tuition, my wisdom teeth need pulling and the only money I have is what I made at the store. This barely pays for my living.

It looks like if I don't get some money soon, MSU won't let me stay. Also the dentist says my teeth are imbedded and they have to be pulled right away. Loans are scarce here and I can't put in more time at work.

Please help soon.

Lynn

Letter #1 rambles and is filled with angry statements and innuendos. Two pieces of very condemnatory information stand out in the first letter: (1) John has money from their parents, Lynn does not and (2) her parents are using what money they do have to go on vacation. The voice is that of an angry individual who sees her role as a very condemnatory one; her criticism is much more forceful than her plea for more money. Letter #2, on the other hand, is less alienating. The tone is desperate but not angry. The prose is more controlled and logical; the writer does not ramble as in the first letter and the two pieces of

condemnatory information are missing. The voice is that of a desperate individual who sees her role in the letter as pleading for help. Lynn admitted that she was still angry when she wrote the second letter; but she realized that a letter like the first would only anger her parents. As a result they might not respond to her need for money. She believed that a less aggressive letter would produce the desired results. Lynn changed her persona, her role and therefore her voice to accommodate her audience.

By Unit Five (autobiography) students have studied the elements of voice and the voice properties of spoken and written discourse throughout the Voice Activity section. In the remaining voice exercises, students look at the way spoken and written voices are related. At the same time, they again study the connection between voice and personality, and voice, message and style. The major exercises of this unit are the Dialogue and Eavesdropping.

The Dialogue Exercise involves two activities: tape recording and inventing. A few days before the scheduled dialogue exercise, students tape-record a conversation between themselves and a family member, friend or other acquaintance. (They do not inform the other member of the conversation that it is being recorded until afterwards.) The conversation should contain some substantial material, not just idle chit chat. Students transcribe one or two typed pages of the conversation and bring both tape and transcription to class on the day of the Dialogue Exercise. In the first 15 minutes of the in-class exercise, students write another dialogue from memory or invent one that could have taken place between themselves and another individual. Their only

restriction is that the dialogue must be different from the one recorded. After the students complete their dialogue, the instructor selects (or students will volunteer) dialogues for class discussion. Tapes of the recorded dialogues and transcriptions are presented to the class and also discussed. All dialogues are explored for their "believability": students describe the voices heard and they identify personalities behind the voices and the message and style of the voices.

The students' comparison of the recorded, transcribed and in-class dialogues often reveals a lack voice in the in-class dialogues and to a lesser extent in the transcribed dialogue. For many students, this is the first time they have written dialogue; some resort to clichés and stereotypical situations: female student meets male student; a dorm conversation; a comparison of class grades, etc. They do not yet see the importance of language and structure in the creation of written dialogue with a voice as rich as that created for spoken dialogue. Consequently, their first attempt at dialogue is often voiceless.

The sample dialogues below are from the first round of the exercise. Both present a stereotypical situation; the diction in both is flat and uninteresting. In general, the dialogues fail to move in any productive direction. Consequently, the dialogues are voiceless:

Dialogue #1

K. Hi Al.
A. Hi! What's new?
K. I talked to Mom today and she said we are not going to Florida this winter.
A. Why?
K. Too cold. She'd rather go this spring.
A. What else is going on with the family?
K. Dad is out of town and Melanie still hasn't gotten paid yet.

A. How is rooming with Carol? Interesting, dull, boring, rowdy?
K. Al, she's weird! She is acting different than last year. She is having Suzy up this weekend and Allison, you know I can't stand her!
A. Sleep over at the house. You will have to sleep on the floor because I'm not giving up my bed and I can't ask Calahan to sleep on the floor although she would. The house will be up early because of the game, but please don't wake me up.

Dialogue #2

No #6 - Hey, what are you gonna do your paper on?
Me - I think I will do it on inequality in America.
No #6 - Say what? Shouldn't it be about equality in America?
ME - No. The problem is that everyone talks about equality, but no one practices it.
No #6 - Okay, if we don't have equality, what do we have?
Me - Inequality, the total opposite.
No #6 - You're kidding, how can that be?
Me - Very easily, because I think that total equality would be absurd or ludicrous, plus the fact that most people don't want equality of other people, specifically those who are already tasting the fruits of wealth. They figure if they are equal with everyone else, then the whole concept of wealth, power, dominance is shattered.
No #6 - So, what does that mean?
Me - What it means is that we will not have equality in this country as long as inequality prevails.

In the above dialogues, the speaker's lack of attitude towards subject and the use of cliché statements result in the absence of persona, or voice. Also, the authors are not using language, punctuation and structure to help convey the voice. Both dialogues need personality, need voice.

The transcribed dialogues in the exercise reveal more voice because the dialogue situations are less stereotyped; the students decided to tape the dialogues on the basis of their informative quality. But their first attempt at transcription results in a written dialogue that lacks proper punctuation, pauses, intonations, emphasis. The

transcription also lacks parenthetical descriptions to replace the interpersonal exchange that accompanies spoken dialogue. In the sample below, the situation is interesting, but the personality behind the voices, particularly the father's, is difficult to identify:

Dialogue #3

- Hi Dad, how are you?
- Good, how are you doing? Are you studying?
- No. I'm not studying today, I don't feel like it.
- What's the matter with you? Are you sick or what?
- Well Dad, I got fired from my job yesterday.
- Why, what did you do wrong?
- I don't know, he said he didn't like my attitude. He said it didn't look like I cared about my job.
- Did you ask him to give you one more chance?
- No, after he told me I didn't care about my job. I called him an asshole and broke the lamp on his desk
- Why do you have such a temper? You have to learn to control it.
- I tried but he made me do it. What could I do. I didn't want to stand there and listen to his bullshit.
- But you have to learn to control it.

The transcriber does not indicate any pauses and does not punctuate the dialogue for emphasis or intonation. In addition, the transcriber does not use any parenthetical descriptions to assist in identifying the speakers. Consequently, the father's attitude towards his daughter and the issue they are discussing are not clear. We can tell that he is upset and perhaps angry by the situation, but we are not sure of the degree or direction of that anger. In the transition from spoken to written dialogue something of his voice has been lost.

The loss of voice in the transcribed dialogue does not mean that the written and spoken voices are different. The voice one uses to speak is the same as the voice one uses to write. The vehicle transmitting the voice changes. In spoken dialogue, sound and interpersonal gestures

carry the speaker's voice. In written dialogue, the textual symbols are the vehicle conveying the written voice. Louise Rosenblatt in Reader (1978) defines the text as a series of signs which can be interpreted as linguistic symbols. The textual marks (punctuation, spaces, words) are not simply ink spots on the page. They are visual and auditory signs that "become words, by virtue of their being potentially recognizable as pointing beyond themselves" (p. 12). In written dialogue, then, the textual symbols must carry the speaker's pauses and convey the speaker's intonations and emphasis. If the textual symbols do not fully represent the linguistic exchange, the text will be voiceless. A word for word transcription of a spoken dialogue is not a guarantee that voice will be present. The transcriber of spoken dialogue must work with the textual symbols giving them the interpretive potential of linguistic symbols. In this way the voice is not lost in the transition from spoken to written dialogue.

The students experience with all the dialogues in the first round of the Dialogue Exercise emphasizes the importance of individualizing dialogues, of shaping textual symbols: language, structure, punctuation, to replace the spoken symbols of intonations, pauses, emphasis. Students also realize that they can replace interpersonal gestures of linguistic exchange with brief descriptions before or after the written lines of dialogue. They are now ready to product written dialogue with a voice.

In the second round of the exercise, students are free to rewrite the transcribed dialogue or in-class dialogue, or produce a new one. The dialogue below was written in the second round by the author of Dialogue #2:

Dialogue #4

- Brian, it's time to go to school.
- I can't mom, my leg is too hemorrhaged. Please bring me an ice pack, pills and call the paramedics to do my shot. I just can't handle doing my own shot today.
- Brian, your leg is not that bad. I want you to get dressed and do a shot, and go to school anyway. If it gets bad in school, I'll bring you back home.
- Maaaammm! (Stomping, slamming of doors, cussing)
- Brian you always seem to have a miraculous recovery just about the time the school bus pulls up after school and the boys want you to play ball.
- Can I help it if I have great recuperative powers, Mom?
- Brian, you will have to go to school if I have to hog tie you in a wheelchair. You can be in pain there just as well as at home. And besides, someday you'll have a job to go to and you'll have to learn to function. Get your priorities straight. (Brian goes to school, mother collapses on couch in a wreck feeling guilty.)

- - - -

- How was your day? How's your leg?
- Great, no problems. I'm going to the ballfield now.
- Maybe you ought to lay down for a while and give your leg a rest.
- Mom, would you quit making a big deal about it. I'm OK!

Dialogue #4 is particularly successful in creating a voice because Judy, the author, uses language, structure and punctuation to give personality to the written speech. She uses parenthetical descriptions to facilitate identification of her speakers. In addition, she chooses a very immediate and important subject to her: raising a hemophiliac son. Her work in this exercise convinced her of how much that experience was typical of her life over the past ten years. She used this dialogue in the beginning of her autobiography that traced her own life from the birth of her hemophiliac son to her return to college ten years later.[20]

The Eavesdropping Exercise is very similar to the Dialogue Exercise. The major difference in the Eavesdropping Exercise is that

the students record conversations of which they are not a part. Neither of the two voices in the dialogue is their own. The purpose of this exercise is to show students the connection between voice and personality, and voice, message and style. In addition, students again see how much the written voice operates through textual symbols. Students record a conversation and transcribe one or two typed pages; copies of the conversation are made for the entire class and the tapes are brought in. The first part of the class hour is spent evaluating the voices in selected (or volunteered) transcribed conversations. Throughout the discussion, the transcriber who has witnessed the personality of the speakers, keeps silent. Some of the questions asked about a particular conversation include

(1) What are the speaker's attitudes towards the topic being discussed?

(2) Describe the relationship between the speakers.

(3) Describe the personality behind each voice.

(4) Identify the rhythm of the words. What do rhythm and attitude tell you about the speaker's personality?

(5) Identify the diction. What does that tell you about their personalities?

(6) Compare the way the speakers relate stories and incidents (style of the narrative activity).

After these discussions, the tapes for the discussed, transcribed conversations are heard and the same discussion follows, this time with the transcriber; the same questions regarding personality, relationship, language and attitude are addressed. The students then compare the voices heard on the recorder with those in the transcriptions. The transcriber is involved in the discussion at this point in order to

verify the students' conclusions. Since many students learn from the Dialogue Exercise how to produce written dialogue with voice, the eavesdropping transcriptions are often richer in voice than the dialogue transcriptions. The transcription below indicates how one student learned the way to transcribe the spoken voice:

Dialogue #5

- Troy, Troy Wendell.
- Yes sister.
- Come here . . . Were you one of the boys that pulled that mean prank on Mr. Tenasiff?
- Why no! What prank was that?
- Troy, it seems Mr. Tenasiff's car was placed on the school's lawn.
- (Trying not to laugh.) No sister I don't know anything about it.
- Do you realize that he cannot get the car off the lawn? Somebody, a group, must have picked the car up and put it there.
- (Amused) Well Sister Agnes, I don't know what to tell you. I was at baseball practice with the other guys. We were all there.
- What would you say if I told you that one of the other boys has told us all about it?
- (Sensing the coercion) Sister, I don't know a thing about it.
- We'll see. I think we'll call your parents. You've been involved in things like this before.

The transcriber has shaped punctuation and included parenthetical statements to account for the absence of physical sounds and the interpersonal gestures of the speakers.

Students complete the Dialogue and Eavesdropping Exercises close to the end of the term. By this time, students have had much practice identifying elements of voice and voice properties of discourse. These exercises solidify their maturing voice and their understanding of the function of voice. The knowledge of voice that students bring to the Dialogue and Eavesdropping Exercises results in exciting and animated discussions. Students regard the exercises as a game: Can you identify

the person behind the voice? These last two exercises leave them contemplating, among other things, a very important element of voice: personality. When the term started, personality was one of the first elements of voice they learned to recognize.[21]

Interpretive activity and voice activity occur in each unit of the proposed course and prepare students for the major writing assignment of each unit. The exercises in the two activity sections prepare students by teaching them about voice, by stimulating and developing their own voice and by providing them with an opportunity to incubate ideas their voice will communicate. Their developing voice communicates these ideas to the self and others throughout the pre-writing exercises. When students are satisfied with these ideas and the voice conveying them, production of the major writing assignment in each unit is possible.

The major writing assignments and accompanying workshops are another opportunity for students to communicate and test the developing voice. Following each assignment, students break up into small workshop groups and discuss each other's papers.[22] As in the Interpretive Activity and Voice Activity sections, the main topic of discussion is the voice; students address questions similar to the following:

(1) Do you sense a personality behind the voice?

(2) Describe that personality.

(3) Explore the other elements of voice in the piece. What is the writer's role, persona? What is the writer's attitude towards subject and audience?

(4) Why do you think the writer assumes this particular role and attitude?

(5) Define the writer's belief system as evident from the paper.

(6) Does style--language and structure--fit the voice you hear?

(7) What suggestions would you give the writer to strengthen the voice?[23]

As students grow accustomed to each other's developing voice, the workshops become more productive, i.e., useful in developing the student's voice and teaching them about voice.

Interpretive activity, voice activity and the major writing assignment/workshop can contribute to the growth of the student's voice. Since the growth of the written voice is the ultimate aim of the proposed course, an interesting exercise to conclude the term is one in which students describe the voices of their fellow students. By this time, students have discussed each other's voice during the two-part, pre-writing stage of each unit and during the small group workshops on the major writing assignments. To focus the discussion, students break up into their small workshop groups (four or five students) and begin defining the voice of each group member; they try to come to some concensus on this definition. Students perceive the exercise as an opportunity to synthesize everything they have learned. The following list of responses was gathered from one group workshop of beginning composition:

Denise: Voice -- personable, forceful, precise, narrative
personality - pleasantly domineering, political and social
message (belief system) - political or social
style - simple, relaxed, narrates experiences in all assignments

Tom: Voice -- witty, inviting, informative
personality - quiet but witty, sometimes cynical
message (belief system) - family oriented
style - sophisticated, complex, detailed, creative.

Jim: Voice -- domineering, intellectual, cocky
personality - intellectual, political, cynical opinionated
message (belief system) - political or social
style - logically detailed, authoritative

Vicki: Voice -- pleasant, vibrant
personality - effusive, inquisitive, opinionated
message (belief system) - political, social
style - fast-paced, detailed

As they work through this exercise, students realize that one element of voice, role or persona, will alter given the conditions of a particular discourse: subject, audience, etc. But the students vehemently support the group's overall definition of its members' voices. After this exercise, students often admit that they could not have completed it in the beginning of the term. Deep inside each one of them in the beginning of the term was a voice, but each voice had yet to be discovered and developed.

NOTES

[1]As in earlier chapters, I use the term reading process to mean the act of reading and the interpretation of the text. (All references in this chapter will be indicated in the text by title and/or page number.)

[2]The course is divided into five units, each culminating in a major writing assignment. (See Appendix A)

[3]See Chapter II for a discussion of the elements of voice and the voice properties of discourse.

[4]See John Hawkes, "The Voice Project" (1966-1967) in Writers as Teachers/Teachers as Writers, pp. 89-145.

[5]See Chapter II, pages 45 to 79, for an explanation of the communication process.

[6]The Voice Activity section begins with spoken voice exercises and moves to written voice exercises because of the feasibility of identifying the spoken voice. Students, unfamiliar with the concept of voice, can more easily discover voice in spoken than in written discourse. The movement of exercises from spoken to written helps students identify voice and see the connection between spoken and written discourse. (See Chapter II, pages 45 to 48.)

[7]I don't mean to imply that interpretation stops after a specific length of time; what stops is the classroom-generated activity involving that interpretation.

[8]See Appendix B for a full list of these narratives. The narratives were selected during five years of experimenting with and rejecting many on the basis of poor student response.

[9]See Betty Shiflett, "Story Workshop," College English (1973) for a discussion of perceptual powers. According to Shiflett, perceptual powers refer to the writer's ability to use sights, sounds,smells, tastes in writing (p. 153).

[10]Students read one or two narratives over a three-day period; the instructor encourages students to reread the narratives.

[11]I gathered the student responses in these exercises from a questionnaire (Appendix C) distributed to one writing class in the Fall of 1979 at Michigan State University. I took the samples of student in-class assignments from the following writing classes: Writing Workshops (Michigan State University), Fall/Winter 1976-1977 and Fall 1979; Short Story and Freshman Composition (Lansing Community College), Spring 1980; American Thought and Language I (Michigan State University), Fall 1981.

[12]Each student's interpretation of the narratives is going to affect the results of the written exercises. The class will be in general agreement on the diction and structure of the narratives; but each reader's interpretation of the author's vision is going to vary. Since so much of the text's meaning depends on the cocreative ability of the reader, the class will and should have varying interpretations of the text.

[13]In the last major writing assignment, autobiography, students explore experiences, persons, places, issues. While the final product in the previous units may diverge from the unit's topic, the final product in the last unit is always an autobiography. There is enough breadth in this assignment to allow the student's voice to take many directions.

[14]Philip Roth's "Conversion of the Jews" is an appropriate narrative for the Oral Reading Exercise. The narrative features a twelve-year-old boy confused about his religion. Students can readily hear the writer's voice when the narrative is read aloud. Roth's piece is a tender,humorous story that many students who are just beginning to question institutional and familial values find appealing.

[15]The Oral One-Word Exercise resembles free writing. Ken Macrorie in Telling Writing (New York: Hayden Book Company, 1970) explains that in free writing "You're being asked to move far away from English and all that fearful nervous act of trying to say what the teacher said or what he wants you to say. Speak for yourself here" (p. 14). Free writing, like the One-Word Exercise involves no pressure; students let their minds go and try to honestly discover their imagination.

[16]Suggested topics: runing, religion, Greek life, dieting, U.S. intervention in third world countries, Gay life, sexual harrassment, single parenthood, ERA. Topics should be kept very current.

[17]See completed paper in Appendix D.

[18]James Britton in Language and Learning (1970) discusses the value of voice imitation and the results for one of his students:

> Looking at her world through Dylan Thomas' spectacles was a way eventually of extending her view of it: as the balance righted itself, she found her own voice again, but richer for the experiment of using his. Trying other people's voices may for the adolescent be a natural and necessary part of the process of finding one's own. (pp. 261-262)

(See Vicki's completed paper in Appendix E.)

[19]The letters exhibiting the least amount of change were those written to company complaint bureaus. The students explained that they were not concerned with the possibility of alienating an audience they would never meet. Furthermore, many students argued that the angry tone

in their company letters was the only means of effecting a response. Their failure to change the letter, then, indicates their awareness of the way the relationship between letter writer and receiver can influence the role or persona chosen.

[20]All exercises, even those not directly related to the unit's topic, provide students with an opportunity to incubate ideas they may use in the major writing assignment.

[21]Students also learn that dialogue can be a writing tool. At this point in the course, students are preparing for their autobiography; after the Dialogue and Eavesdropping Exercises, many students eagerly insert dialogue throughout their autobiography. Some ambitious students will write the entire autobiography in dialogue. (See Appendix F)

[22]Ken Macrorie in Telling Writing (1970) refers to the workshop group as the helping circle. He believes that the helping circle can contribute to the writer's growth:

> One of the best ways to build [critical] standards is to sit with five to ten persons who discuss each other's writing, which they read aloud. Then the novice critic can judge his responses against those of his companions. In their faces he can see which writing holds or loses them, makes them laugh or smile. In weeks and months of such sessions, he develops bases for judgment, and all the while his own writing stands in his mind, receiving a silent, secret criticism. . . . Then he takes it to a group of other beginning writers and reads it aloud to them. He listens to what they say. He tries to hold their responses in mind without accepting or rejecting them instantly. At home a day later, he reviews the criticism, follows the suggestions he thinks helpful and ignores those he finds invalid. (pp. 65, 67)

[23]Students can revise their work at any time throughout the course. The only required revision assignment is the autobiography. Since the early assignments are so closely related, what a student cannot accomplish in one assignment can be accomplished in another. For example, if a student is weak on detail in the first major writing assignment, the student can work on that detail for the next assignment, description of a place. Students can also reuse ideas that perhaps did not work in an earlier assignment. Ideas from the experience assignment can easily carry over to the paper or person assignment. Finally, students can use all or parts of earlier major assignments in their autobiography, the last major assignment. Throughout the proposed course, then, students have several opportunities to rework their material. Reworking/refining material is the purpose of revision.

CONCLUSION

Underlying all that I have written is the conviction that reading fiction can be integral to the composition course. Students can learn about voice and the way their own voice can develop by reading and interpreting fictional narratives. The reading and interpreting of the narratives can provide students with opportunities to witness the voice of a writer and the ways it functions. Through exposure to numerous fictional narratives, students can learn that voice individualizes one piece of discourse from another. Students also can learn the importance of structure and language--voice properties of discourse--in the production of discourse rich in voice. In the process of identifying the writer's voice during interpretation the student's own voice is stimulated and developed. The writer's voice calls upon the reader to respond. The reader's interpretive response involves a self-assessment; the reader uses the voice to communicate to the self and to others this new self awareness.

Since reading and interpreting fictional narratives can stimulate and develop the student's voice, the activity can legitimately be part of a composition course. The goal of the proposed course is the development of the student's voice through the student's exposure to the fictional narrative. The Interpretive Activity and Voice Activity sections of the proposed course can aid in achieving this goal.

The Interpretive Activity section is based on the theory that literary discourse is a speech act, and that the reader is on the receiving end of a conscious attempt to communicate experience and beliefs. In this section, the reader responds to the narrative through various in-class oral and written exercises. During this response, the reader reassesses the self by looking at the relationship of past experiences to those presented in the text. Crucial to this reassessment is the student's communication of the knowledge acquired during interpretation. The student reader uses the voice to communicate to the self and to others the new self awareness reached during the process of reading and interpreting the fictional narrative.

Because voice is so important to the proposed course, the Voice Activity section tunes up the voice which has been activated during the Interpretive Activity section. Through a series of oral and written exercises, students use their voice to further incubate ideas stimulated during the interpretive activity section. The Voice Activity section is based on the theory that the writer's discovery of voice is an important step in the writer's growth. Since voice conveys something of the writer's personality, a discourse rich in voice is one that is peculiar to that individual. The Voice Activity section gives students the opportunity to discover their own personalized voice.

The Interpretive and Voice Activity sections of the proposed course have served a pre-writing function. I have experimented with the proposed course in four composition classes; I have arrived at the exercises and strategies presented here as a result of trial and error, and reviewing student responses to the course. Student reaction to the proposed course has been extremely positive. In the four classes on

which this study is based, students felt that the fictional narrative voice was an important addition to the many voices they learned to discover around them. By reading fictional narratives, the students learned that the presence of voice signals good writing; discourse should be rich with the writer's personality. Their interpretations of the fictional narratives revealed to them that they had experiences, opinions and a voice that could convey both.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SYLLABUS

I. Weeks One and Two

Narrate an Experience (3-5 typed pages)

Days 1-3 -- Fiction narrative readings and exercises
Days 4-5 -- Oral Reading, One-Word Experience Exercise
Day 6 -- General Workshop on major writing assignment

II. Weeks Three and Four

Describe a Place (3-5 typed pages)

Days 1-3 -- Fiction narrative readings and exercises
Days 4-5 -- Place Exercises
Days 6 -- Small Group Workshop on major writing assignment

III. Weeks Five and Six

Describe a Person (3-5 typed pages)

Days 1-3 -- Fiction narrative readings and exercises
Days 1-4 -- Person Exercises
Day 6 -- Small Group Workshop on major writing assignment

IV. Weeks Seven and Eight

Philosophy of Life/Issue Paper (3-5 typed pages)

Days 1-3 -- Fiction narrative readings and exercises
Days 4-5 -- Letter Exercise and Issue Exercise
Day 6 -- Small Group Workshop on major writing assignment

V. Weeks Nine through Twelve

Autobiography, Parts I and II (7-10 typed pages)

Days 1-3 -- Fiction narrative readings and exercises
Days 4-5 -- Dialogue Exercises
Day 6 -- Small Group Workshop on Part I

Days 1-2 -- Fiction narrative readings and exercises
Days 3-4 -- Eavesdropping Exercises
Day 5 -- Small Group Workshop on Part II
Day 6 -- Final Voice Exercise

Last assignment due during finals week - Revise Autobiography

APPENDIX B

SHORT FICTION NARRATIVES

Experience

Sherwood Anderson, "I Want to Know Why"
"Adventure"
"Discovery of a Father"

Willa Cather, "Paul's Case"

F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Absolution"

E.M. Forster, "The Celestial Omnibus"

Ernest Hemingway, "The Killers"

James Joyce, "Araby"

Carson McCullers, "A Tree, A Rock, A Cloud"

Katherine Mansfield, "The Garden Party"

Frank O'Conner, "First Confession"
"Guests of the Nation"

Philip Roth, "Conversion of the Jews"

John Steinbeck, "The Chrysanthemums"

John Updike, "A & P"

Robert Penn Warren, "Blackberry Winter"

E.B. White, "The Second Tree from the Corner"

Place

Elizabeth Bowen, "The Happy Fields"

Ray Bradbury, "Nigh Meeting"

John Cheever, "The Country Husband"

Wulliam Faulkner, "Dry September"

Ernest Hemingway, "Soldier's Home"

John Updike, "A & P"

Tennessee Williams, "The Field of the Blue Children"

Persons

Sherwood Anderson, "Discovery of a Father"
"The Egg"

James Baldwin's, "Sonny's Blues"

Henrich Böll, "Christmas Every Day"

Elizabeth Bowen, "The Happy Fields"

John Cheever, "The Country Husband"

Anton Chekov, "The Lament"

Henry James, "Four Meetings"

Dave Madden, "No Trace"

Katherine Mansfield, "The Young Girl"

Herman Melville, "Bartleby, the Scrivener"

Eudora Welty, "A Worn Path"

Philosophy of Life/Issue

Ilse Aichinger, "The Bound Man"

Henrich Böll, "Christmas Every Day"

Arna Bontemps, "A Summer Tragedy"

Albert Camus, "The Guest"

William Faulkner, "Dry September"

E.M. Forster, "The Machine Stops"

Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery"

Franz Kafka, "A Hunger Artist"

William Somerset Maugham, "Rain"

Carson McCullers, "A Tree, A Rock, A Cloud"

Joyce Carol Oates, "How I Contemplated the World from the Detroit House of Correction and Began my Life Over Again"

Frank O'Connor, "Guests of the Nation"

Philip Roth, "Defender of the Faith"

Alan Sillitoe, "The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner"

Lionell Trilling, "Of this Time, of that Place"

Autobiography

James Baldwin, "This Morning, This Evening, So Soon"

F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Winter Dreams"

Ernest Hemingway, "Big Two-Hearted River: Parts I and II"

James Joyce, "The Dead"

Rudyard Kipling, "Baa, Baa Black Sheep"

James McPherson, "Gold Coast"

Joyce Carol Oates, "Four Summers"
"How I Contemplated the World from the Detroit House of Correction and Began my Life Over Again"

Katherine Anne Porter, "The Downward Path to Wisdom"

James Thurber, "University Days"

Suggested Texts: Fiction 100
Norton Anthology of Short Fiction

APPENDIX C

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

Please include additional comments.

I. Voice

a) Did you know how to identify voice when the term started?

b) Define voice.

c) Were the narrative readings helpful in understanding voice? If so, Why?

II. Narratives

a) Did you read all the narratives for the class? Yes___ No___
If you answered no, why?

b) The following list includes the narratives we read this term. Please refer to the list when responding to the questions below.

(list)

1. In which narratives is the voice easily identified?

2. Which narratives stimulated ideas for major writing assignments? In what way?

3. Did the narrative readings teach you about voice properties of discourse? For those in which you answered yes, specify the properties.

4. Which narratives helped you to critique the voice in your classmates papers?

c) Was the function of the narratives in the course apparent from the start? Yes___ No___. Please give a reason(s).

d) Check one (or more) of the following:

____I would like to see more narratives read in the course. Please specify choices.

____I would like to see different narratives read in the course. Please specify which ones you would cancel and for what reason.

____I would not like to see any narratives read in class. Please specify the reason.

e) Was the connection apparent between the narrative(s) and the writing assignment each week? Please answer "yes" or "no" for each narrative and give a reason(s) for your answer.

(list) Yes___ No___

III. Interpretive Activity

a) Were the class discussions after each narrative helpful? Why or why not?

b) Defend your choice of narratives for Written Exercise #1 (switching voice property). What did you learn from the exercise?

c) Defend your choice of narratives for Written Exercise #2 (rewriting a portion of a narrative using the voice of another). What did you learn from the exercise?

d) Please comment on the order in which you were given the Interpretive Activity exercises. Any suggestions?

IV. Voice Activity

a) Were the writer's and reader's voices readily identifiable in the Oral Reading Exercise? Why or Why not?

b) What do you feel was the function of the One-Word Experience, Person and Place Exercises? Were they successful in helping you incubate ideas? Please comment on each exercise separately.

c) What do you feel was the function of the Letter Exercise? What did you learn from the exercise?

d) What do you feel was the function of the Issue Exercise? What did you learn from this exercise?

Please comment on the usefulness of the sample.

e) What did you learn about the spoken and written voice from the Dialogue and Eavesdropping Exercises?

f) Please comment on the order in which you were given the Voice Activity exercises. Any suggestions?

Final Assessment

a) Do you think you have discovered and developed your voice as a result of the Interpretive Activity? Yes___ No___ Voice Activity? Yes___ No___. If you answered "yes" to either part of this question, please check one or more of the following:

___I learned that voice is evident in all forms of discourse.

___I learned the function of role or persona in the creation of voice.

___I learned the function of structure and language (style) in the creation of voice.

___I learned the function of the writer's personality and belief systems in the creation of voice.

b) Please record the results of the final Voice Exercise (defining the voices of members of your small group workshop).

(Note--Students keep a portfolio of their Interpretive Activity and Voice Activity exercises and their major writing assignments; this portfolio also includes comments (theirs and theirs peers) on the writing material. This portfolio is useful in completing the questionaire.)

APPENDIX D

SEX IS PASSE
(Student Paper)

Simplicity is the earmark of both common sense and the finest creative thought. Philosophers and plain folks alike recognize that the simplest solutions to any problem is the best solution. As a citizen and an intellectual, I feel a duty to help solve society's problems. This spring, one problem in particular has become so pervasive that I have taken it upon myself to find an answer. After devoting many hours of study and reflection to the problem, I feel, with modest pride, that I have hit on an insightful formulation of the problem, and a simple, direct solution.

This solution comes just in time, for the problem is a serious one. It is more time-consuming than any term paper, faster growing than grade inflation, more worrisome than any career decision. I am referring, as you may have already surmised, to the problem of our endless preoccupation with obtaining sexual fulfillment.

This problem can be seen everywhere. Since we are in a university situation, let me draw my examples from M.S.U. In the classroom, the students cannot concentrate. At the beginning of the period, the students resolve to put on an expression of reserve and mild intellectual interest. But before the period is half over, self-control visibly deteriorates. People's eyes begin to wander, and the atmosphere of the classroom thickens. Even the professor, when he turns from the blackboard, can be observed

to have slightly bulging eyes. By the time the class is over, a hefty portion of the class has lost any vestige of academic detachment; the only reason their tongues are not hanging out is a tightly clamped jaw.

And when the students leave the class, their problems multiply. A student stays cooped up in his (or her) room until the heat becomes unbearable. He goes outside to cool off, but encounters there the tanned, scantily clad bodies of his fellow students, which serve only to raise his temperature more. If the student goes back to the dorm or apartment, there is still no escape. The television commercials all try to sell products by titillating the viewer with lurid fantasies: "If you buy our mouthwash (perfume, razor blades, shampoo, catfood, whatever) this and this and this will happen to <u>you</u> . . . " Gossiping friends are no distraction from the subject; their conversation seems to exist entirely of who did what to whom, or wanted to do what to whom, or frantically tried to do what to whom. If the student retreats to the library, the proximity of warm young bodies serves to dangle temptation in his or her face; and even in the secluded areas of the library, tasteless, stimulating graffiti dogs the student with sex, sex, sex. The only places left to go are the crowded bars and restaurants, where the spectacle of other students oggling each other desperately is scarcely uplifting.

Most students, unaware that there is a sure-fire and simple way out of these difficulties, try to solve the problem of sexual preoccupation by going on dates--a pathetic error, that, like struggling when trapped in quicksand, only makes matters worse. A typical student couple on a date, though laboring to have fun, are obsessed by doubts and fears

concerning sex. She is wondering: "What if he doesn't ask me?" He is wondering "What will she say if I ask her?" And, with more anxiety: "What will my friends say if I don't ask her?" If they manage to overcome these distractions and resolve to have sex, they have worse problems. They both pray that the other has had a lot of experience (so that he or she will be capable), and they are both hoping that the other has not had a lot of experience (so that he or she will be uncritical.) If lust overrides these and other doubts, and they actually accomplish something, there is no respite for anxiety. If she is old-fashioned, she wonders: "Does he still respect me?" If she is modern-minded, she wonders: "Is he getting dependent on me?" He, meanwhile, is wondering: "What kind of obligation have I gotten myself into?" and "Did I waste my $2.95 on the Hite Report, or what?" And they both can stare at the ceiling pondering questions like "Was I good enough?" "Was it good enough?" "What would Mom/Dad/Sister/Roommate/Family Dog say?" "Why does a part of me persist in thinking sex is icky?" "Is one enough? Is three too many?" And so on ad nauseum.

One way out of this uncertainty is to form a relationship. Unfortunately, this immediately entangles hapless individuals in all kinds of difficulties. Summer break, career goals, and graduation threaten ongoing relationships, as does the temptation of 48,000 panting young people flaunting themselves in the immediate vicinity. Pursuing other relationships fosters jealousy; renouncing other relationships fosters resentment. The burgeoning divorce rate shows us that marriage is an unreliable cement for relationships, even if the couple is willing to get married. Worse, statistics show that even people who stay married

are plagued with increasing dissatisfaction, infidelity, sexual failure, and general round-the-clock wretchedness.

The facts stare us in the face: the more you try to satisfy sexual cravings, the more miserable you become. The only solution, as I see it, is for students and other regular people to give up sexual behavior entirely. Sex for regular people is rapidly becoming passé; sex should be left to the professionals, who are much better paid and much better qualified. Although this idea seems a little extreme on the face of it, it has numerous advantages. And, if you care to look, you can see that it daily is gaining adherents; sex by professionals alone is the wave of the future.

Professional sex objects--actors, actresses, models, and the like--have none of the weaknesses and doubts that torment regular people. They are uniformly healthy and attractive, and they bloom with self-confidence. Unlike you and me, they have script-writers who ensure that they are always successful. The romantic music comes in at just the right time; they never misplace essential birth control paraphanalia at a crucial moment; they are never troubled by obnoxious suite-mates who, a thin wall away, applaud when they are done. In a word, they are free, free of the responsibilities and galling imperfections that sex, for regular non-fictional people, always entails.

Now, one might wonder if the cost of giving up these problems is to give up sexual gratification--but this is not at all necessary. There is a splendid alternative to real sex: easy, painless, hassle-free vicarious sex. Movies, novels, T.V. shows, girlie and guyie magazines, and all the other media that represent professional sex objects is a limitless source of this vaciarous satisfaction. And, as millions of

people already know, this is a perfect source for a wonderful sex life. With vicarious sex, there is no worrying about clinging dependency, no struggling to be adequate, no lonely hours spent searching for a partner, no inhibiting commitment, no sticky aftermath, no huddled masses yearning to be free. The sooner the rest of us join the millions already having vicarious sex as a substitute for real sex, the sooner we will be free, comfortable, and satisfied.

True, procreation will be inhibited. But the birth rate in this country is declining any way. This is sensible, because the underdeveloped countries are having enough children for the whole world. But if people turn out to really miss having children, technology will soon be advanced enough so that sex will not be necessary for reproduction. Probably the task would be taken over by a large corporation--General Motors, or maybe Burger King--and the production would be a lot more efficient than our current cottage-industry techniques. Moreover, the product, being more standardized, would doubtless fit into modern society better.

I suppose a small minority of backward individuals will resist my proposal. I was talking to my friend Neil last night, who had the temerity to argue that the advantages of actual sex made up for the disadvantages. I told him that his kind belonged with outmoded species in the lower left-hand corner of the evolution charts. He replied that they would be perfectly content, as long as it was a dark corner. Ha ha ha. This heavy-handed humor served only to add weight to my argument, but Neil refused to be quenched. He said that taking sex too seriously was part of the problem--clearly an anti-intellectual prejudice. He

tried to turn back the hands of time, suggesting that vicarious sex should be resisted. He even wanted to blame it for part of the problem, accusing it of making people feel inadequate. He went on to suggest that, since practice makes perfect, the real solution to our problems is to vigorously pursue sex. He pledged himself to start that very day.

This is certainly a reactionary position. Yet, some impulse--no doubt, scientific objectivity--moves me to consider giving his method a trial. I am only taking a few classes this summer, and I was looking for an extra project anyway. So, just to be fair, I have decided to dedicate my summer to trying out Neil's approach. If you would like to know the results of my research, feel free to look me up this fall. Or, if you don't have anything to do this summer . . .

APPENDIX E

THE TRIALS OF SHORT PEOPLE
(Student Paper)

Handicappers, Blacks, Mexicans, women or any other minority group continuously complain about being discriminated against and rightfully so. I believe one of the biggest minority groups being discriminated against, whom you seldom hear about, is short people. They do not demonstrate for their rights or advertise their plight. They just passively face the consequences of being short.

It seems short people have just grown accustomed to the fact that they will never be able to sit in a chair like "normal" people. Chair seats are always too high to have their feet flat on the floor. If they can touch the floor at all, it is usually just with the tips of their toes, which does not make sitting for long periods of time very comfortable. If they happen to be sitting at a table, it is twice as awkward because the surface of the table is almost level with their necks.

Most people do not find grocery shopping a strenuous task. They probably don't even consider all the obstacles that prevent short people from enjoying shopping. Anything above the fourth shelf is almost unaccessable. Short people are forced to perform acrobats [sic] while in the store by jumping up and trying to knock a box off the fifth shelf in hopes of catching it when it drops. When glass objects are on the

higher shelves, short people are out of luck if they can't find a friendly person to get it down for them. I have learned from experience that it is not healthy to climb up on the shelves no matter how badly an item is needed.

In the past few years more and more bathrooms have been built to accommodate handicapped people in wheelchairs. Why can't they make toilets a little lower to accommodate short people? Most people would not believe how uncomfortable and awkward it is for short people to relieve themselves on some toilets. I am sure I do not have to go into detail.

Most people don't look forward to going to the dentist for obvious reasons such as the pain involved or the amount of money it will cost. Short people detest going to the dentist because it is such a challenge trying to get all the way up into the chair. It always amazes me how casually the dentist will say, "Just have a seat, and I will be right with you." "Just have a seat!" Who is he trying to fool anyway. Most people can just walk over and gracefully boost themselves into the chair, but not short people. We have to stand against the opposite wall and get a running start to be able to leap into the chair.

Most people consider driving a car a leisure activity, but for short people it is almost strenuous. The seat never goes forward far enough to comfortably reach the gas pedal. Just be thankful for bucket seats, otherwise tall passengers would have to suffer the consequences of riding with their knees under their chin.

Simple tasks such as changing a lightbulb can even be dangerous for a short person. Most people can usually reach a light fixture while

standing flat on the floor, or they may have to use a chair if it is an unusually high ceiling. Short people not only have to drag a chair over to stand on, but a stool as well to put on top of the chair. This tends to get a bit tricky.

Short people are almost always discriminated against in sports such as basketball and volleyball. What recruiters do not realize is that a short person could be an asset to a basketball team. Because they dribble the ball so close to the ground, it makes it harder for the taller players to steal. In volleyball, short people can get to the ground quicker to return spiked balls that often get by the taller players.

When short people attempt to buy clothes, it is a joke. Everything is always too long, and by the time it is shortened, the style could be ruined. There is a benefit to this, though. By the time a woman cuts the extra two feet off the bottom of her dress, she has enough left over to make a matching skirt. There is always enough material left over from blue jeans too for patches.

What most taller people do not realize is that when they are walking with a short person, they need to slow down. It is not uncommon to see tall persons striding along with a short person running beside them. If short persons do not look like they can follow very well while dancing, it probably is not because they are a lousy dancer, but because the other person's steps are too big. It only takes a second to notice the length of someone's legs. If they seem a little short, slow down and take smaller steps, it will be greatly appreciated.

Restaurants are an absolute health hazard to short people. Those two-way swinging doors with the little window at the top are designed for tall people only. The windows are too high for short people to look through and they cannot be seen from the other side either.

I do not think it is too unreasonable to ask people who design homes to keep short people in mind. It has become second nature for short people to jump up on the counter to get things off the top shelves in the kitchen but it is still an inconvenience. Even opening and closing drapes is an effort for short people. They have to drag a chair all the way from the kitchen just to reach the cord. I know of several people who will never experience the pleasure of closing a garage door. There is no reason why these things cannot be lowered just a little to accommodate more people.

Being short is not all bad and certainly nothing to be ashamed of. Society could help a lot, though, by taking short people into consideration once in a while. Just lowering things a few inches can make a lot of difference. Things that tall people take for granted such as reading the books from the top shelves in the library, short people may never experience if something is not done soon.

APPENDIX F

MY LIFE--A FIRST HAND STORY
(Student Paper)

"Excuse me! Are you okay? You must pardon my bumping you. You see, I'm drowsy because Kathy neglects me and frankly, I'm bored. I'm only her left hand. But then, being a right hand and not belonging to Kathy, you obviously don't know how it feels to be forgotten."

"Huh? Forgotten? Un--no, I guess I don't."

"I swear that Kathy Olson just doesn't care what happens to me. Here I sit in her lecture, practically falling asleep because she's not using me. I'm not as young as I once was, you know. You've got to give me a little exercise now and then. But try to tell her that. Of course, I shouldn't complain now that she's resting me. She's been wearing me out for over eighteen years. And when you're a hand, that's pretty darned old! Eighteen years I've worked for her. I've given that girl the best years of my life--and look at me! Scarred, dried, scaley, and shriveled! I suppose I should give her a pat on the back--I mean she does put hand lotion on me about twice a month, or whenever she thinks of it!"

"What? Scarred and scaley, you say. Heh--you really do look like you've gone through some pretty rough times. What's that girl's name again? Kathy? You really are messed up!"

"Messed up? Ahem. Well, uh, yes I am. Actually, it all started when I was very young. I really don't remember much of my baby life. There were, of course, the usual thumb-sucking, rattle-strangling, and crib-banging. But you expect that, right?"

"Did you say something?"

"Crib-banging and thumb-sucking, I said. I'm sure you had those problems!"

"Huh? Oh yeah, crib-banging. Did you say you got scarred and dried from that?"

"On no. When I was three or four, that kid thought she should have been a boy so naturally I'm the one who suffered. I used to live in the sandbox. Not that I have anything against sand, mind you. But wet sand? Forget it! I used to bake for hours in that summer heat while Miss Tomboy nearly wore my skin away packing mudpies. Naturally, the more she slapped me against that dirty stuff the more the sand hardened on me. I am the last one to be vain, but really, that filthy dirt marred my youthful appearance. (Sigh!) Then came the cars and trucks stage. I dug for hours in the dirt and built nothing bug roards, tunnels, and overpasses. My fingernails and palms got so caked with dirt she used to clench me and hide me behind her back so her mother wouldn't yell at her. She nearly cut off my oxygen supply a couple of times--I could have suffocated! She just has no consideration for me! Hey are you listening?"

"Yeah--no consideration."

"That's right! None! I used to get so dizzy, I would just spin for hours on end."

"From being clenched?"

"Oh no, when I was five I used to go to North Hill Elementary School for a half-day. I really moved in the world. Ha! I got dizzy from making those asinine rings through red and yellow colors. I believe the art is called fingerpainting. Every Friday afternoon I used to have to grind myself to the bone racing through those paints. I think if I were human I would have severe migraine headaches. She pressed me so darned hard that those colors wore into the prints of my fingers! And that putrid-smelling soap the teacher slapped on me afterwards--Yuk, I'm repulsed just thinking about it."

"Hey, but things must have gotten better. Kids usually grow out of the fingerpainting stage fast."

"Oh yes! Besides, kindergarten only lasted for a half day, weekends off too. But Kathy still stayed a tomboy. That child loved sports. In the winter, some hills nearby froze so naturally our heroine trudged over to skate. I didn't mind--after all. I was snug inside a pair of warm mittens. Ah, I remember them well. They even had a string running from mitten through jacket to mitten! Naturally, that darned Kathy neglected me, and a mitten always fell off. But it wasn't lost. At least her mother thought of me! I must admit I felt pretty secure. How was I supposed to know that horrible dog was going to be there? He had the nerve to grab my mitten right off me! Naturally when that wretched animal took off with the mitten, he took everybody with him--Kathy, the string running through her jacket, the other mitten, and most importantly, ME! I get goose bumps just thinking about it. That mutt must have dragged me across the ice forever. Brrr! All that crashing across the bumpy surface. I could have died of frostbite! That's

a very traumatic experience for a five-year-old hand, you know. I say . . . ."

"I heard you! But really, come off it. You can't blame Kathy for what heppened. I mean, it wasn't her fault."

"No, but what happened when she graduated from kindergarten certainly was! When Kathy started first grade at St. Andrew School, I started really getting abused. She was a teacher's little helper. You know what that means! For hours I stayed after school folding paper, tracing, cutting, and God knows what else. You know, making bulletin boards. I dug for straight pins to hang my creations so long I lost almost all my feeling in my fingers. I wouldn't have minded so much if I could have just washed up and gone home afterwards. But it never failed! Those Sisters always plastered a bright red, gold, or silver star on me "in gratitude" for my work. Some gratitude! I'll admit those shiny stars were attractive. But that stick-um glue was enough to wear away my soft skin and rip off my fine hairs! No wonder I'm practically bald now! Of course, I really can't complain as much as my partner can."

"You're sure doing a good enough job of it!"

"Did you say something?"

"Huh, me? Nah, you must be hearing things."

"Hearing things, indeed. Anyway, as I was saying, Kathy really wrecked her right hand. She used to pinch her pencil so darned hard. Well--look--you can still see the callous she's made on her third finger. I said, you can still see the callous on her finger!"

"Hmmm? Oh yeah, some callous. Hey, I really think her right hand has gotten it worse than you."

"Why I never! How can you say such a thing! I should have known I couldn't get much sympathy from you--a right hand. I suppose you never played the piano--of course not! You don't look frazzled enough. Well, let me tell you. Kathy's piano teacher always thought I was a little slower. How she could think such a thing is beyond me! Anyways, the teacher told her to drill each hand separately. Of course my partner picked up the music faster than I did. That other hand got to play the melody. I was stuck with playing chords and dancing all over the keyboard. For five years I wore myself out. And what did I learn? Only how to get exhausted. And Kathy's parents paid for that! It really didn't make much sense to me. But then, neither did those other lessons."

"Huh? Are you still complaining about the piano lessons?"

"Oh no. I was talking about those darned swimming lessons I had to take. I was only seven years old. What did her instructor expect? An olympic swimmer? Not that I didn't like water--I loved to splash around. But really, the dead man's float and the dog paddle! No wonder I couldn't pass the beginner requirements. It wasn't worth it. I must have laid out in the sun for hours--and that chlorine didn't help any either! Needless to say, I looked like five long prunes. That's how I became shriveled. Even now when I take a bath, I get shriveled very fast. I don't know--I think it's those swimming lessons that are to blame!"

"What?"

"Hey, I'm not bothering you, am I?"

"Well . . ."

"Oh good! I was just saying how those swimming lessons caused me to dry and shrivel."

"Swimming lessons, you say? Then that's really not Kathy's fault either. If you ask me, I think you're using her as a scapegoat."

"Oh no I'm not. She knew darned well she could h ve just said, 'No, I don't want to learn how to swim.' Her parents gave her a choice. But do you think she did? Well, do you?"

"Uh, no--guess not."

"You bet your cuticles she didn't. And that's another thing--cuticles. When I was about nine, she developed the terrible habit of nail -biting. She was such a little worry wart. So again, I suffered. It wouldn't have been so bad if she just bit my nails. Those can always grow back fast. But she always had to do those things big! She not only chewed my nails. She nibbled at the skin around the nails. Ugh--such ugly hangnails. And then do you think she could just leave me alone? Heaven forbid. Pick, pick, pick! That's all she did! My fingers got so infected a few times. She practically burned me to death with that orange liquid junk and then she slapped bandaids all over me. It felt good for awhile. But, as usual, Kathy soon forgot about me. The bandaids got old and they ripped and shriveled me."

"Hey, do you mind if I ask you a personal question?"

"What?"

"If you and Kathy get along so terribly--I mean if she's never considerate of you--well, how have you two lived together for as long as you have?"

"Hah, hah, hah. What a question! I guess--hah--you could say we've become kind of attached. Hah, hah."

"No really. I mean if you wanted, you could just act paralyzed or something. You know, stop working."

"Stop working? On Kathy? Hey, listen, we're two of a kind. We have to stick together. Even if she does tend to complain sometimes just for the sake of complaining. You know, talk only to hear her voice. Now when I complain about something, I really 'constructively criticize' it."

"Oh yeah--I can see you've been doing that all along."

"You're darned right. Really, the idea of quitting on Kathy is too preposterous. Now where was I? Ah yes, the nail-biting stage. Fourth grade. Ugh--that was the year she decided to turn into Susie Girlscout. Can't say I loved building trailmarkers with stones. Kind of went back into the dirt, shovel, and digging days, you know? Then came the artist badge. Were you ever a girlscout? Oh no, suppose you weren't. Well, she couldn't just paint and sketch. She made block-prints. And string designs. And she made paint out of food-coloring and buttermilk. Buttermilk! Of all the things! Hey, are you listening? You know how much that stuff stinks! You do know how much it stinks, don't you? Don't you? Hey, where are you? Buttermilk, I said. They make pancakes with it? Are you still there? Hey. Where are you? Did you leave? Of all the nerve!! Are you gone . . .?

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