

PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AND AUTHOR IDENTITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA:  
BEING AUTHORS AND TEACHING AUTHORIZING

By

Sarah M. Galvin

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AND AUTHOR IDENTITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA: BEING AUTHORS AND TEACHING AUTHORIZING**

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Social media are some of the most used digital composition tools by both youth and adults yet authoring in digital spaces remains undervalued and digital literacy education remains misaligned with workplace needs and expectations. Using a multiple case study design ( $n=3$ ) to explore the authorship of pre-service English/ELA teachers on social media and how it impacts their composition instruction, this study forefronts social media as a critical space for authoring that should be considered in the context of education. Multiple interview sessions and composition artifacts (e.g., social media posts, course assignments, creative writing) were used to gather stories of the pre-service teachers' authorship experiences and their approaches to composition instruction. This study speaks to the need to reconsider what counts as valuable literacies; pre-service teachers' frequent authoring on social media cannot be siloed away from the authorial identities they bring into their classrooms and their classroom instruction. Final analyses offer implications for future research at the intersection of authorship theory, social media, and pre-service teachers' education, as well as implications for revised authorship theories and practical implications for supporting pre-service teachers as authors and composition instructors.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	v
LIST OF FIGURES .....	vi
KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS .....	vii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	6
New Literacy Studies.....	6
Authoring, Authorship, and Authorial Identity .....	8
Spaces for Authoring.....	16
Social Media as a Composition Space .....	17
YouTube .....	19
Instagram.....	19
Snapchat.....	19
Facebook.....	20
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW & RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	23
Authorial Identity in Higher Education.....	23
Authorial Identity in Secondary Education.....	26
Authorial Identity and Social Media .....	27
Authorial Identity, Teachers, and Instruction .....	28
Research Questions.....	31
CHAPTER 3: METHODS .....	33
Methodology .....	33
Participants and Case Selection .....	34
Procedure and Data Sources.....	38
Initial Survey .....	39
Composition Artifacts .....	42
Interviews.....	46
Data Analysis.....	51
Researcher Positionality .....	60
Trustworthiness and Quality.....	62
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS .....	65
Individual Case Findings: Caspar .....	65
Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media .....	66
Practicing Authorship on Social Media .....	67
Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction .....	70

Individual Case Findings: Emma .....	74
Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media .....	74
Practicing Authorship on Social Media .....	76
Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction .....	79
Individual Case Findings: Jessie.....	83
Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media .....	84
Practicing Authorship on Social Media .....	85
Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction .....	88
Cross-case Analysis.....	93
Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media .....	93
Practicing Authorship on Social Media .....	96
Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction .....	103
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....	111
Self-identifying as an Author .....	113
Autobiographical and Discoursal Selves .....	117
Confidence and Value .....	125
CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION .....	130
Implications.....	130
Theory.....	130
Research .....	134
Teaching .....	137
Limitations.....	141
Conclusions .....	143
APPENDICES.....	146
Appendix A. Initial Survey .....	147
Appendix B. Interview Guide.....	150
Appendix C. Codebook .....	154
REFERENCES.....	162

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1.</b> Data collected per case .....	38
<b>Table 2.</b> Summary of data collection .....	39
<b>Table 3.</b> Data analysis steps.....	54
<b>Table 4.</b> Excerpt of transcript with codes .....	56
<b>Table 5.</b> Adding audience to authorship theories.....	133
<b>Table 6.</b> Sample question 5 prompt from initial survey.....	148
<b>Table 7.</b> Interview guide.....	150
<b>Table 8.</b> Codebook.....	154

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1.</b> Summary of authorship frameworks.....	14
<b>Figure 2.</b> Slides from Caspar's Street Fighter vs Mortal Kombat PPT.....	67
<b>Figure 3.</b> Caspar's BLM Facebook post.....	70
<b>Figure 4.</b> Emma's herpes PSA Instagram story .....	76
<b>Figure 5.</b> Emma's Instagram story supporting community college .....	79
<b>Figure 6.</b> Emma's multimodal choice project assignment directions .....	83
<b>Figure 7.</b> Jessie's album cover artwork.....	85
<b>Figure 8.</b> Jessie's Instagram post capturing memories in a new city.....	88
<b>Figure 9.</b> Jessie's Black lives and language matter lesson summary.....	91
<b>Figure 10.</b> Jessie's language and power lesson summary .....	93
<b>Figure 11.</b> Emma's Instagram post meeting a pig .....	95
<b>Figure 12.</b> Jessie's Pinterest for her novel character Sloan.....	97
<b>Figure 13.</b> Book post from Jessie's Instagram reel .....	98
<b>Figure 14.</b> Caspar's Snapchat memes.....	99
<b>Figure 15.</b> Caspar's Twitter post about teachers' pay .....	101
<b>Figure 16.</b> Emma's graduation post on Instagram.....	103
<b>Figure 17.</b> Emma's teacher identity self-reflection visual .....	106
<b>Figure 18.</b> Excerpt from Emma's philosophy of teaching infographic.....	109
<b>Figure 19.</b> Review of authorship framework summary (Figure 1) .....	112

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

BLM	Black Lives Matter
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELA	English Language Arts
ISTE	International Society for Technology in Education
LGBTQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other sexual orientations and gender identities
NCTE	National Council for Teachers of English
NLS	New Literacy Studies
NMC	New Media Consortium
PPT	PowerPoint presentation
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RQ	Research question
SABAS	Student Attitudes and Beliefs about Authorship Scale
SAQ	Student Authorship Questionnaire
SPED	Special Education

## INTRODUCTION

Envisioning an author, some might picture a lonely figure—likely impassioned by some overwhelming emotion—furiously spewing words onto a digital or hardcopy notebook page. The work is frustrating and strenuous, possibly crumpled papers or empty coffee cups litter their surrounding area. After years of work, a finished product is published, and the author is revered and respected for such an accomplishment.

Unfortunately, this version of an author, while a common trope in film and television, does not represent the vast majority of authoring (i.e., *creating*) involved in many daily activities. Even though as children we readily integrate various forms of communication (e.g., speech, gesture, drawing) into our creative work (Dyson, 2001; Kress & Bezemer, 2009), as adults, we privilege and isolate writing text as a specific communication skill most associated with authoring. Authoring, however, need not be restricted to the production and publication of text. Certainly, writing text is one type of authoring, but in today's 21st-century world, we take on the role of author through creating content in various forms and modalities. For example, online we can design, construct, and share text, images, interactive presentations, videos, audio recordings, and products made of varying combinations of formats. Social media, in particular, are online platforms where billions of individuals author content (Clement, 2020). Young people are especially active on social media. Ninety percent of Americans ages 18-29 use at least one social media site (Pew Research Center, 2019), and 81% of teens 13-17 years old use social media, 73% logging on multiple times per day and accessing multiple platforms (2.4 platforms on average) (Rideout & Robb, 2018). The wide range of skills—or *literacies* (Lankshear & Knobel, 2008)—now commonly utilized in digital



spaces to create and share content suggests our conceptions of authoring should be evolving along with technological advancements.

Unsurprisingly, authoring via digital literacies is now one of the skill categories most coveted for workplace success (Adams Becker et al., 2017; Oberländer et al., 2020). According to Adams Becker et al. (2017), university graduates surveyed indicated the largest digital literacy skills gap they faced was the ability to create, produce, and develop content with digital tools (p. 6). Furthermore, the researchers found a positive correlation between digital literacy training and occupational success, noting that in some cases the training was from self-taught experiences online (p. 8-9). Employers' expectations about the literacy skills of their workers continue to increase, yet their potential applicants' preparation remains statically weak (Murray & Perez, 2014; Oberländer et al., 2020; Raish & Rimland, 2016).

Although for well over a decade of standards have established the development of students' digital literacies as an important part of K-12 education (e.g., Common Core State Standards, P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning, International Society for Technology in Education Standards), classroom learning does not seem to be transferring to the needed workplace competencies (Adams Becker et al., 2017). In the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English and Language Arts, adopted in 41 states, K-12 writing goals include the incorporation of digital tools starting as early as kindergarten and progress to using the internet to "produce, publish, and update" compositions throughout the writing process (CCSS Initiative, 2020). P21's Framework for 21st Century Learning, utilized in 21 states, focuses on "work, life, and citizenship" skills needed to be successful after graduation, covering many 21st century skills, such

as creativity and innovation, productivity, and accountability, but notably emphasizing information, media, and technology skills (P21, 2019). The International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) standards (ISTE, 2020) for students also follow this trend, boasting "transformative learning with technology" as their theme. Rather than organizing by core content, ISTE uses broad verbiage to describe students designing, building, curating, and evaluating as part of a learning process embedded in the affordances of technology. Similarly, ISTE's standards for teachers (2020) underscore that educators, too, need to develop digital literacies: they outline how teachers should see themselves as life-long learners of technology, constantly seeking professional development, collaborating with others, self-reflecting, and evolving their use of technology to meet students' technology education needs and prepare them to be digitally literate citizens. Regardless of this available range of comprehensive digital literacy standards, there remains a disconnect between their stated goals and expectations and practical outcomes in workforce preparedness (Oberländer et al., 2020).

This disconnect also carries over for individuals who pursue higher education. Although college students are known to complete a wide range of compositions—mostly using technologies—(WIDE, 2010) and are assumed to have high levels of digital literacy when entering a college or university, often their skills fall below professors' expectations (Coldwell-Neilson, 2018). Higher education institutions are also less uniform and consistent in their approaches to digital literacies—rather than following a set of standards widely used across institutions, schools design and implement their own approaches to varying degrees of success (Adams Becker et al., 2016). In the New

Media Consortium's (NMC) Horizon Project Strategic Brief on Digital Literacy (2016), a call to action was issued to address this problem, stating, "it is no longer enough for learners to simply know how to use a technology; they must be able to apply it imaginatively to perform a task or produce an object that would otherwise not be possible without the technology" (p. 3). The researchers offer recommendations to higher education institutions, including focusing their digital literacy initiatives around supporting students as the creators and makers of content (rather than consumers) and increasing their partnerships and collaborations with libraries, museums, government, industry, and other groups interested and invested in improving digital literacy education.

Although emphasizing that there is still a critical need to improve how colleges and universities integrate digital literacies through students' application and creative, innovative use of technologies, NMC's Horizon Project Digital Literacy Impact Study (2017) does acknowledge that higher education already has some positive impact on graduates' workplace preparedness—74.6% of recent graduates surveyed indicated they received moderate to advanced training in "conceptualizing, analyzing, and evaluating a subject or issue in order to inform an educated perspective" and 69.7% reported receiving moderate to advanced training in "using technology and digital environments to work with peers to collaboratively generate an idea, content, media, or product" (Adams Becker et al., 2017, p. 5).

Despite the commitment and continued efforts to improve digital literacy development in K-12 schooling and higher education today, significant work on many fronts is still needed in order to best prepare young people for the online authoring skills

employers desire. One possible approach is to consider how to better prepare educators to support the development of digitally literate authors in their classrooms. Pre-service teacher education and experience have been documented as an effective way to shape the skills, beliefs, and practices new generations of teachers bring to their classrooms in a variety of other contexts (e.g., Larose et al., 2009; Maheady et al., 2007; Wubbels & Korthagen, 1990), but considering pre-service teachers as authors of 21st-century content, how their digital authorship influences their teaching, and what implications this may have for potential training or support needs is not yet well-understood (e.g., Cremin & Oliver, 2017).

In light of these trends, this study offers new insights into our understanding of authoring in the 21st century. Focusing on the social media authorship of pre-service teachers and how authoring on social media may impact their pedagogical approaches to composition, I draw attention to the unique affordances of social media and how such platforms are shaping not only what it means to be an author, but how authoring is supported in the classroom. More specifically, I explore pre-service teachers' authoring as a way to explore not only how authorship happens differently across contexts, but also how authorship might inform classroom instruction. Do pre-service teachers' identities as authors on social media shape their approach to composition instruction? What role might authorship play in the classroom and in teacher education programs to support digital literacy and digital authoring pedagogies? This study contributes to these conversations.

In the next section, I begin with the introduction of my theoretical framework to unpack and define the key terms and theories surrounding *authoring* and *authorship*.

## **CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study uses a theoretical framework built from three core theoretical perspectives. In the first section, I introduce New Literacy Studies which conceive of literacies as multivarious, expressions of identity, and socially situated. Second, I describe two theories of authorship that elaborate on the relevant aspects of the particular identity—being an author—that constitute the focus of the study. Lastly, I define composition spaces, or the places where authoring happens, and describe social media as the composition spaces that will be the focal point of this study.

### **New Literacy Studies**

Broadly, this study is situated in the paradigm of New Literacy Studies (NLS), a large umbrella topic in literacy research that captures a shift from describing literacy as a purely cognitive process to one that is foundationally sociocultural (Gee, 2015). From this perspective, literacy is not only understood as a series of mental representations, but rather as the confluence of “relationships” that connect individuals and their thoughts and feelings with others and the various physical, social, and cultural layers of their worlds (Gee, 2015, p. 372). Literacy is fully contextualized—its meaning and significance are born from the circumstances of its use. For instance, school literacy practices are valuable in the context of being successful in school, but writing an exemplary essay for history class is not a valuable literacy in the context of social interactions on Instagram. Although current social structures tell us that literacy valued in school is inherently more important than literacy valued elsewhere, such as on social media, the ubiquity and pervasiveness of social media use challenge this norm (Perrin & Anderson, 2019). NLS allows space for what counts as valuable literacy to be

expanded based on a “full range of cognitive, social, interactional, cultural, political, institutional, economic, moral, and historical contexts” (p. 2).

Alongside NLS, this study aligns with the *new literacies studies* movement, which pluralizes literacies in order to represent the inclusion of proficiencies beyond reading and writing as types of literacy practices (e.g., media literacy, information literacy, visual literacy). Of particular interest in this study is the consideration of digital literacies (e.g., those required to use social media) compared to other literacies. Digital literacies are frequently cited new literacies intended to represent all proficiencies necessary for the effective use of any digital tools or resources. Understanding these specific proficiencies continues to challenge researchers as technology continually develops, and therefore, the savvy needed to make use of digital affordances constantly evolves (Pangrazio, 2016). It is common for social media, for example, to rise or fall in popularity quickly, meaning the literacies users need to navigate new or changing platforms must be developed just as rapidly.

Within NLS’s sociocultural perspective, literacies are both expressions of identity and social practices. Individuals use literacies to communicate who they are to various audiences, and they make their identity presentation choices based on their surrounding social context. As Gee (2008) theorized, literacies are not so much a “way of doing,” but a “way of being” (p. 5, 156). In other words, literacy happens differently depending on your audience and how you want to present yourself to that audience. Authoring, then, is a form of identity enactment; we make certain choices (e.g., word choice, rhetorical strategies), and as part of the communication process, we are performing our identities (Collier, 2010; Hyland, 2002; Moje et al., 2009; Tang & John, 1999). Gee’s (2008)

Discourse theory supports this idea, suggesting that individuals carry multiple “identity kits” that are collected and applied as needed to enact specific identities in various situations (p. 155). Goffman’s (1973) seminal identity theory is also relevant here; he argues that we, as actors, perform different versions of ourselves to manage different social interactions. In other words, the range of literacies we select for use at a given time varies depending on the social situation (Street, 2003, 2009). For example, the literacies employed by a student to present a certain identity during an interaction with their instructor will be different from the literacies that student uses to present a different identity during an interaction with their friends. No matter the form of interaction (e.g., face-to-face conversations, digital messages), it is the social context that prompts the integration of identity work with literacy (Collier, 2010; Moje et al., 2009). In the following section, I discuss one specific type of identity work embedded in literacy, authorship (i.e., authorial identity).

### **Authoring, Authorship, and Authorial Identity**

Defining the term “author” seems straightforward; in everyday contexts, authors are writers, and professional authors write and publish as their careers. However, when reframing literacy as *literacies* and thinking of literacies as a form of identity work and social practice, the boundaries defining the concept of author become less clear. While writing is traditionally considered the literacy of composition (i.e., authoring) and reading the literacy of consumption, we now understand literacies of composition and consumption to include much more than the production and interpretation of written words. Individuals author written, visual, auditory, and multimedia products for audiences to read. From this perspective, *authoring* is synonymous with *composing*.

Throughout this paper, I use the terms *authoring* and *composing*, interchangeably to represent the process of creating through any type of literacy. I avoid using *writer* or *writing* unless using them in reference specifically to writing text, to minimize connotations of literacies as restricted to the written word.

Furthermore, the current study assumes an understanding of *author* that ascribes to the ideology of NLS, embedding identity expression and social practice into every act of authoring. To be an author, one's identity work must reflect this belief (e.g., you hold personal values and make identity presentation choices that support your authorial identity). Due to this bond between "author" and individual identity, it is impossible to fully separate a person from their compositions. There are always remnants of the author's self in their texts. Similarly, when authoring, one's social context is always relevant and informs authoring choices. For example, I see myself as the author of my academic writing—my academic compositions are reflections of my personal beliefs and ideas about the research topic at hand. I also make choices about what and how to compose depending on my specific audience—Am I writing for a colleague? A journal? A conference presentation?

In contrast to this, other literary theories offer alternate interpretations of "author." Barthes (1967, 2010) separated meaning-making from the author, placing the power with the reader to make interpretations. Barthes (1967) argued that the author's identity and messages to readers are not pertinent to their compositions; the reader creates meaning based on their own thoughts and perspectives rather than by trying to understand the author and guess their intended meaning. Foucault (1979) also problematized the idea of the author as a person, asserting that authors should serve



only a functional role in supporting the existence of compositions. The author's identity and intentions for a work distract readers from focusing on an evaluation of a composition's content. While naming authors can serve a purpose, such as protecting ownership (e.g., copyright) or verifying the merit of a piece, understanding authors' unique identities and experiences otherwise detract from reading and appreciating compositions (Foucault, 1979, 1998). Foucault's (1979) and Barthes' (1967) theories minimized the person behind the title of *author*, instead valuing readers' interpretations of de-contextualized compositions. Although the divergence of author and individual is relevant when studying online spaces rife with anonymous contributors and frequent content appropriation, this study proposes instead to focus on the points of intersection between identity, literacies, and social context. As Yagelski (2000) described, a true Writer (i.e., Author) (as opposed to lowercase "writer" [i.e., "author"]) knows more than *skills* and *mastery of language*, claiming an intangible ability to conjure *pure expression* and *inspire ideas* (p. 34-5). In other words, being a true author requires the genuine expression of the self and communication of ideas to an audience. Literacies facilitate the author's expression and communication, while identity and social context inform the author's choice of content.

Thus, *authorship* can also be termed *authorial identity* and understood as the composer's understanding of themselves as an author. More specifically, *authorial identity*, or *authorship*, encompasses beliefs related to *self-identifying as an author* (i.e., acknowledging one's self as an author and taking ownership of one's work), *valuing authoring* (i.e., understanding composition as an important skill worth developing), and *claiming self-confidence as an author* (i.e., feeling capable as an author and recognizing

one's ability to communicate a unique voice and unique ideas) (Cheung et al., 2017). Cheung et al. (2017) explored the concept of authorial identity by studying undergraduate students' perceptions of academic text writing experiences and habits of plagiarism. Using quantitative Likert-scale surveys, Cheung et al. (2017) measured *self-identification as an author* through prompts such as, "I feel like the author of my work" and "I feel that I own my written work." *Valuing writing* was investigated through prompts such as, "It is important to me that my essays are well written," "Academic writing is an important skill," and "It is important to me to keep developing as an academic writer," and *confidence as authors* was captured using prompts such as, "I have my own style of academic writing," "Academic writing allows me to communicate my ideas," and "I feel in control when writing assignments."

A strength of Cheung et al.'s (2017) theory is its extensive and collaborative item generation process: the three aspects of authorial identity (i.e., self-identifying as an author, valuing authoring, and confidence as an author) were developed based on suggestions and interviews with multidisciplinary academics and students. Cheung et al.'s (2017) framework was designed to be an updated and refined version of (Pittam et al., 2009) Student Attitudes and Beliefs about Authorship Scale (SABAS) by addressing concerns of internal consistency and comprehensiveness of the items in the SABAS tool. Cheung et al. (2017) developed their survey—the Student Authorship Questionnaire (SAQ)—using a larger pool of potential items and taking extra steps to ensure the reliability and validity of the model (e.g., chi-square goodness of fit test, test-retest reliability). Cheung et al.'s (2017) authorship tool was developed for quantitative authorship measurement; while its confirmed reliability and validity make it effective as a

quantitative tool, its weakness lies in its inability to capture the socially situated nuances of authorship based on individuals' unique lives, experiences, and perspectives. The three aspects of authorial identity offer rich opportunities for adaptation and in-depth qualitative exploration. For example, Cheung et al.'s (2017) SAQ does not reveal the contextualized stories and narratives behind *how* and *why* authorial identities are developed.

Another relevant authorial identity framework comes from Ivanič's (1998) work on what she calls *writer identity*, developed based on her qualitative research on students' academic writing in higher education settings. Although Ivanič chose to use the word *writer* instead of *author*, her theory is not specific to written language, and for clarity throughout this paper I will reference authorial identity to mean both Ivanič's (1998) and Cheung et al.'s (2017) work. Ivanič (1998) defines three aspects of a particular author's identity at play during the composition—the *self as author*, *autobiographical self*, and the *discoursal self*—and places them within the author's socio-cultural context, what Ivanič (1998) calls the possibilities for selfhood. The *self as author* embodies individuals' self-positioning as an author: to what extent do individuals consider themselves to be authors and to what extent do they present themselves as such. This aspect is connected to the author's sense of authority in their composition and what Ivanič (1998) calls "authorial presence" (p. 26). How strongly does the writer claim ownership of and confidence in the ideas they present? Do they speak for themselves in a unique voice that contributes unique ideas? Ivanič's (1998) *self as author* not only directly aligns with Cheung et al.'s (2017) *self-identification as an author*, but also Cheung et al.'s (2017) depiction of *self-confidence as an author*—it can be understood as a combination of

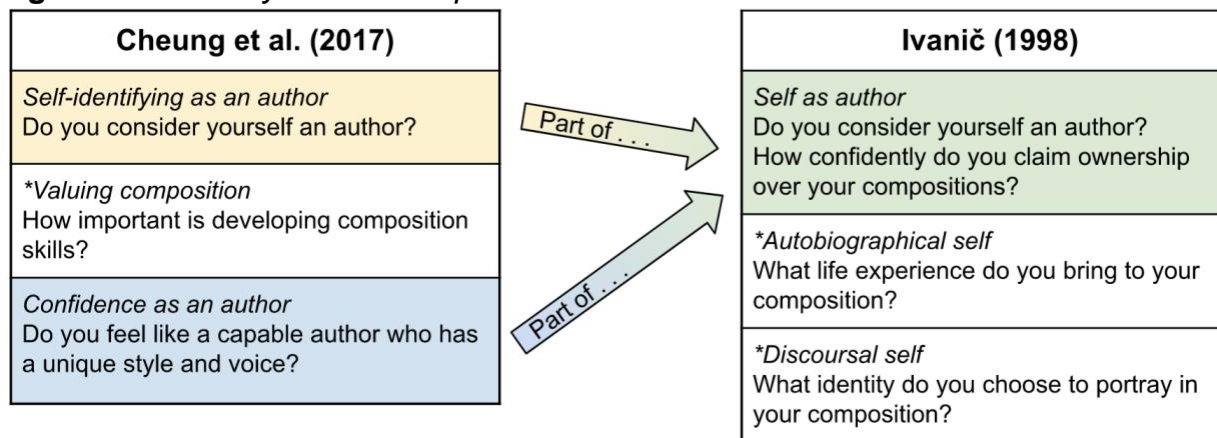
both. (See Figure 1 below for a visual representation of this theoretical overlap.) The *autobiographical self* represents the identity an individual brings to their composition based on their own life experience: the self behind the identity presented in text—as Ivanič (1998) describes, their “roots” (p. 24). Importantly, the autobiographical self is not an objective, static, true self, but rather the self that is constantly shaped by life experiences and represents one’s “current way of being” (p. 24). This self is an authentic “self-portrait” of the person, rather than an altered image purposely chosen to be portrayed (Ivanič, 1998, p. 24). The *discoursal self*, then, is the identity the writer chooses to portray in their work. This self represents the impressions of themselves the author consciously reveals in their text.

A strength of Ivanič’s (1998) theory is its acknowledgment of the autobiographical self alongside the discoursal self. By not assuming that an author’s lived experiences are reflected in the self they portray through their compositions, the framework leaves deliberate room to examine how the author’s identity entwines with their creations. Audiences may or may not know the author personally, and the author may or may not be trying to replicate their autobiographical self through their work. Ivanič’s (1998) framework facilitates a close look at how identity management practices impact authoring. One weakness of Ivanič’s (1998) theory, however, is its development prior to the existence of social media. Ivanič conceived of her three selves thinking specifically of adult academic writers, and although the selves are not otherwise genre nor form specific, she does consistently use the terms *writer*, *writing*, and *writer identity*, rather than broader terminology, such as *author*, *authoring*, and *authorial identity*. Her concepts—if not her terminology—seem inclusive of all literacies because of their focus

on various selves rather than particular aspects of composing, but applying her theory to social media, unique composition spaces she could not know would exist, may mean elements of her framework will be challenged or stretched in directions she could not have predicted.

See Figure 1 for a summary of Cheung et al.'s (2017) and Ivanič's (1998) authorial identity frameworks and how the pieces of their theories are related. Each theory's three parts are outlined in their separate boxes. Arrows drawn from two pieces of Cheung et al.'s (2017) framework to one piece of Ivanič's (1998) framework visually mark how Ivanič's (1998) *self as author* encompasses both of Cheung et al.'s (2017) *self-identification as an author* and *confidence as an author*. The figure highlights how the theories overlap at the intersection of those three elements, but also that each brings additional, unique elements to the study's framework (i.e., Cheung et al.'s [2017] *valuing composition* and Ivanič's [1998] *autobiographical self* and *discoursal self*).

**Figure 1.** Summary of authorship frameworks



Note: \*indicates authorship aspect that is not shared across theories.

Bringing Ivanič's (1998) and Cheung et al.'s (2017) theories together allow me to combine their strengths to better counter their weaknesses and to compare and contrast the affordances and constraints of each as they are explored in new contexts. Neither

framework has previously been applied to the social media use of pre-service teachers, but Cheung et al.'s (2017) carefully validated list of authorship aspects in combination with Ivanič's (1998) depiction of layered identities (i.e., the coexistence of the discursal and autobiographical selves) facilitates an in-depth look at the nuances of *how* and *why* participants author and practice authorial identities on social media from multiple perspectives. For example, Cheung et al.'s (2017) theory helps me home in on the role of *confidence* and *compositional value* during authoring, while Ivanič's (1998) theory helps me understand the authors' choices of self-presentation in their work (i.e., discursal self). Juxtaposing both theories uncovers how each captures pre-service teachers' authorship on social media differently and perhaps how the two theories challenge or enhance each other when applied to this new context. Are there connections or disparities between how *valuing composition* (Cheung et al., 2017) and the *autobiographical self* (Ivanič, 1998) align in participants' authoring? Using both Ivanič's (1998) and Cheung et al.'s (2017) authorial identity frameworks enriches the opportunities for comparisons within and across participants' authorship experiences. Extending applications of these theories to contexts such as social media also offers new insights into how authorial identity frameworks function for various types of authoring and may point to new theoretical connections or needed theoretical expansions. Before moving to a review of the literature, I next elaborate on how the context of social media and conceptualizing a range of spaces for authoring inform my study.

## Spaces for Authoring

As established above, context is inseparable from authoring; the settings or locations (i.e., spaces) where authoring occurs are part of that context. Lefebvre (1991) theorized *spaces* as inherently socially situated: “[s]paces are built, experienced and represented by people and their social institutions” (Nichols, 2013, p. 178). Attention to spatial contexts is a growing area of literacy research (Mannion et al., 2007; Nichols, 2013; Steinkuehler et al., 2005). For instance, the Literacies for Learning in Further Education (LlLFE) project spent three years exploring college students’ literacies as socially situated in places; they conceived of literacies as “not static or bounded spatially or temporally” (Mannion et al., 2007, p. 15). As part of this larger project, the researchers found that having students map out when and where they used various types of literacies powerfully impacted their perceptions of what literacy is and how often various practices are used across many places and spaces. Students came to recognize that their literacies included more than reading and writing and happened more frequently than they realized throughout their days (Mannion et al., 2007).

In the current study, I define *composition space* as the wide range of digital and non-digital locations and situations within or during which literacies take place. Understanding that individuals exist across various spaces and thus so do their literacies (i.e., literacies are contextualized as theorized through NLS [Gee, 2015]), I have bound the cases in this study by individual participants—inclusive of all their literacy spaces—to better capture any fluctuations, transformations, or overlap between the multiple authorial identities participants may practice when moving through locations or situations. Within this, social media will act as one type of space common among all

participants. For example, individuals may have composition spaces related to location (e.g., classroom, work, home) and other composition spaces related to situations not bound to physical space (e.g., social media platforms or a journal that can be composed in while in various locations). Thus, location and situation may or may not overlap as part of composition spaces (e.g., composing in a journal while sitting outside under a tree compared to using the journal to take notes while in a business meeting), suggesting nearly endless possibilities for what individuals use and identify as composition spaces.

The purpose of this study is not to map every composition space for each participant, but rather to use the concept of composition space to understand how pre-service teachers conceive of authorship on social media as it fits within their unique world of composition spaces. I found in my practicum study of undergraduate students' authorial identities on social media that often participants described their composition on social media in comparison to their other types of compositions (e.g., contrasting the amount of effort put in or pride taken in social media composition compared to composition for classwork) (Galvin, 2019). The context of other composition spaces is also likely to inform my interpretation of participants' authorship on social media in this study and is therefore important to note before talking directly about social media as the focal composition space of this research, as I do in the next section.

### **Social Media as a Composition Space**

Social media are platforms where youth and young adults are frequently using new literacies to author. The types and purposes of social media are vast, and although the term *social media* can have fluid meanings in the vernacular, here I reference boyd



and Ellison's (2013) definition: social media are networked communication platforms. Their list of defining features of social media also acts as the inclusion criteria for platforms in the proposed study. Social media include (boyd & Ellison, 2013, p. 158): (1) "uniquely identifiable profile" creation; (2) the public availability of users' connections (e.g., friend list) for others to view and traverse; and (3) the ability for users to "consume, produce and/or interact with streams of user-generated content" (e.g., newsfeed, Twitter feed) based on users' platform connections.

These aspects of social media reflect Humphreys' (2016) classification of such platforms as somewhere in-between interpersonal and mass communication models (p. 8). Social media simultaneously function as spaces for interaction with close friends (the interpersonal model) and as spaces situated within a wider, public audience (the mass communication model). For example, a user on Facebook might compose a special birthday message to a friend and post it on his friends' Timeline: this is both a personal communication (i.e., a note to a friend) but also a potentially widely seen post amongst the user's and friend's connections. Similarly, a user's tweet may be addressed to one friend by mentioning his Twitter handle, but the tweet itself might still be viewed by the user's followers which could number in the thousands. Numerous privacy settings on each platform extend the user's control over the audience of their posts, complicating how literacy and identity function in spaces designed for expansive social interaction. Add the entanglement of identities across multiple platforms, and understanding the layers of identity work employed on social media becomes an overlapping web of literacies.

To illustrate the intricacies of literacy and authorial identity on social media, the four most popular social media used by teens and young adults (ages 13-29) (Clement, 2020; Perrin & Anderson, 2019) are first briefly described, followed by a discussion of how the platforms facilitate complex authorship practices.

## **YouTube**

YouTube functions as a video-sharing platform. Users can create their own channel, like a profile page, where personal information and uploaded videos can be shared. Others can subscribe to various channels to follow their updates or choose to browse all YouTube videos using the search function. Viewers can leave comments, as well as “like” or “dislike” videos.

## **Instagram**

Instagram allows users to create a profile with a picture and brief text description, find people to follow, and accumulate their own followers. Followers see the user’s posts, which are combinations of photos, text, and hashtags. Users can also post stories, visible for 24 hours on their timeline, that are constructed of photos and/or 10-second videos. Followers can react to posts by clicking the “like” symbol and/or leaving public comments for the poster.

## **Snapchat**

On Snapchat users can send posts, or snaps (text, photos, or 10-second video clips), privately to individuals or post them as a “story,” a collection of edited photos and/or 10-second videos, for friends to view within 24 hours. Editing options for photos and videos enable users to customize their posts, including adding text. Snapchat is

particularly known for snaps' short lifespan. Snaps can only be viewed once within 24 hours before they disappear.

## **Facebook**

Facebook also has a “story” feature, but users have further control over a profile page, where personal information, pictures, and media can be posted. From these profiles, individuals interact and connect, creating lists of friends that can view their profiles. Users can make broad posts to their entire friend network (i.e. standard post on one's profile), they can post publicly but towards a particular friend (i.e. posting on a friend's profile), or they can post privately to an individual through Facebook's direct messaging feature. Individuals can reply with text or react to posts by clicking a “like,” “love,” “laughing,” “amazed,” or “angry” emoji.

These, and other social media, have features that facilitate uniquely complex literacies and authoring. For example, they have seemingly simple networking and sharing functions (e.g., following others on Twitter, posting a picture to Instagram); however, elaborate literacy and authorial identity practices can emerge in the extensive list of features and settings users control. Users may or may not be able to see who views their various posts, and the influence of positive or negative feedback, such as “likes,” or lack thereof, in a public forum has led to obsession and addiction, shown to impact self-esteem and life satisfaction (e.g., Balakrishnan & Griffiths, 2017; Burrow & Rainone, 2017; Fox & Moreland, 2015; Hawi & Samaha, 2017; Toma & Hancock, 2013). Engaging with an interactive audience is a central purpose of social media—intended to help users connect with others and socialize. The significance of audience

on social media promotes complex motives for and perceptions of posts; social media offer a unique type of authorship not experienced offline nor in other online formats.

NLS, authoring, and social media come together to frame the unique phenomenon of authorship on social media. Social media, as composition spaces, heighten both the significance of identity and the social aspects of literacy practices. When all shared content is associated with a personal profile that is viewed (i.e., judged via feedback, interactions, or network connections) by potentially large audiences, users' identity choices as the authors of their content are not only inextricable from their social media literacies but the core of the composition processes on these platforms. Similarly, social media are highly social spaces where audience interaction is often immediate and conversational (i.e., author and audience can repeatedly respond to each other in real time). These affordances mean any non-private contributions on social media require careful attention to social practices—some posts go viral (i.e., become exceptionally popular and drawing widespread audience engagement), while others go unacknowledged because of small audience exposure or low audience interest. Combining NLS with authorship theories provides a lens through which social media compositions can be examined not just as pieces of media, but as content situated within the lives and experiences of the authors and existing in the context of the active communities and networks built within digital spaces. The current study aims to apply that type of in-depth look at what it means to be an author on social media platforms; I focus on pre-service teachers' authorial identities on social media as compared to other spaces and consider how their authorship may shape their approaches to composition instruction.

Next, I introduce prominent trends and research related to authorial identity and social media and outline gaps in the literature that this study will address.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW & RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Limited work has explored authorial identity, mostly during academic writing in higher education, but expanded applications of authorial identity frameworks may bring new insights to our understandings of literacies and authoring, particularly in spaces like social media, where composition practices are still being explored. The current study begins such an expansion by utilizing authorial identity in an unexplored context: pre-service teachers' authoring on social media.

In the following sections, I elaborate on what is known about authorial identity in the context of higher education, secondary education, social media, and teachers' instruction. The discussion of authorial identity research in higher education summarizes the core of what is known and what has been studied—college and university populations in the context of academic writing. In the section describing literature on authorial identity in secondary education, I focus on emerging trends in the limited research that highlight what we know of the role of authority identity in youths' composition experiences. The last two sections outline how the lack of attention to authorship on social media and the authorship practices of pre-service teachers specifically in the current literature constitute the gap my work aims to address.

### **Authorial Identity in Higher Education**

Most research on authorial identity can be found in the context of academic writing in higher education (e.g., Bird, 2013; Everitt-Reynolds et al., 2018; Hyland, 2002, 2010; McKinley, 2018; Vassilaki, 2017). McKinley (2018) for instance, used aspects of Ivanič's (1998) work in combination with appraisal theory to explore the authorial identity of an undergraduate Japanese EFL (English as a foreign language) student. Based on

the student's struggles during the study, he concludes that teaching students about different writer identities and how to write emphasizing different selves (e.g., autobiographical, discursal) may help them better understand and meet their instructors' expectations. In another example that utilized Ivanič's (1998) framework, Bird (2013) tracked the development of authorial identity evident in university students' essays throughout her course. She wanted to encourage students' academic writer identities and found that shaping her curriculum around teaching the elements of authorial identity (e.g., writing assignments that connect to students' personal ideas or feelings so that they practice bringing their personal identities into their work) improved students' authorial identities by the end of the course. Everitt-Reynolds et al. (2018) completed interviews with graduate students regarding their authorship and noted that while the participants linked their authorial identities closely to their professional identities, they also minimized their personal selves (e.g., past experiences, personal views or opinions). They learned through their academic programs to "remove" themselves from their writing and instead only express their own ideas "covertly" as was common practice for their disciplines (Everitt-Reynolds et al., 2018, p. 163).

Similarly, research using Cheung et al.'s (2017) theory focuses on academic authoring. Kinder and Elander (2012) and Ballantine et al. (2018) both used the Student Authorship Questionnaire (SAQ) (Pittam et al., 2009), the parent tool from which Cheung et al.'s (2017) survey was developed and the only form of the framework that was available prior to Cheung et al.'s (2017) publication. Kinder and Elander (2012) used the SAQ to compare dyslexic and non-dyslexic university students' authorship during academic writing and found that dyslexic students scored lower in their overall

understandings of authorship and in their confidence as writers. Ballantine et al. (2018) also did a comparison study, looking at Chinese university students' authorial identities as measured by the SAQ compared to the results in Pittam et al.'s (2009) study with university students in the UK. The authors concluded that no significant differences in authorship were found between the groups.

Recently, Cheung et al. (2018) completed a qualitative study exploring academics' understandings of authorial identity in academic scholarship through a series of interviews with university scholars. They described their interview protocol as "informed by literature on authorial identity," including Pittam et al. (2009) and Ivanič (1998) in their list of literature used. Their interview protocol included items that frame aspects of authorial identity theory as open-ended questions related to academia, such as, "In what ways do you think your sense of yourself as an author is important in your own academic writing and publications?" and "In what ways do you think the author's presence in the text is important when you are reading articles written by other academics in publications?" (p. 1483). Cheung et al. (2018) identified several themes in what the scholars considered to be aspects of authorial identity (the first two of which align with Cheung et al.'s [2017] framework): being confident as a writer, placing value on one's writing, taking ownership of one's writing, using creative and critical thought processes to compose, and writing intentionally to communicate with a specific audience.

Regardless of the specific frameworks used, current literature on authorial identity has given extensive attention to academic writing within higher education. While it is true that scholarly composition skills in higher education are typically highly coveted



and even considered essential to academic success, authorial identity need not be restricted to this context. Other forms of authorship are valuable, and in the remaining sections of my literature review, I introduce what limited research has been done to understand authorial identity in other contexts relevant to this study: secondary education, social media, and teachers as authors.

### **Authorial Identity in Secondary Education**

At the secondary level, research on students' authorial identity is underdeveloped. However, within the existing literature, two themes are notable: students value having authorial identities and authorial identities are challenging to support in the classroom setting. For example, in Bickerstaff's (2012) study of nine adolescents, she found that the students felt restricted and were therefore reluctant authors in the classroom but had expressive and well-developed identities as authors outside of the classroom (e.g., as poets or lyricists). School composition did not meet their interests and was not engaging. Similarly, in Pytash (2016) work, teens used various types of out-of-school authoring (e.g., personal journals, poetry, song writing, social media) to communicate feelings and identities that were not otherwise recognized or respected in the classroom (e.g., share anger or present themselves as a poet). In school, however, the students did not engage in authorial identity work during their English classes because the tasks were not as "meaningful and relevant" (Pytash, 2016, p. 314). In contrast, authorial identities were developed during school by high school students in Vetter's (2011) study, but only after the implementation of weekly creative writing prompts and workshop-style activities. One potential barrier to students' authorial identity growth in school may come from their complicated feelings of agency

and ownership over their work as learners when composing for their authoritative, knowledgeable teachers (Jones & Beck, 2020). Although further exploration of how and why secondary students' authorial identities shift and manifest differently across spaces and contexts is needed, it is clear that composition is an important form of identity expression for youth; authoring is a vehicle for creative communication and a way to empower youth with their own voice and identities (e.g., Moje et al., 2009).

### **Authorial Identity and Social Media**

Applications of authorial identity theories in the context of social media have not been established in the literature. Although understanding social media as spaces for identity work is represented in a large body of work (e.g., Davies, 2012; Gleason, 2018a; Greenhow & Robelia, 2009; Yang & Bradford Brown, 2016), attention to *authoring* in particular has lagged. Regardless, the significant role identity practices play on social media suggests new types of identity frameworks, such as authorial identity, are relevant. I began exploring this connection through my practicum project and found that authorship theory highlights the complexities of composing on social media. In my prior study, undergraduate students described how their confidence as social media authors, self-identification as social media authors, and the value they placed on their social media compositions varied across platforms and the personal and social contexts surrounding their posting habits. Similarly, their navigation of self-presentation and how they managed their audiences' perceptions were complicated and nuanced (Galvin, 2019). This work is not yet published but strengthens the foundation for how I hope to build social media and authorial identity research.

Most extant literature related to authorial identity on social media tends to frame identity more generally, rather than looking at authorship specifically (e.g., Buck, 2012; Davies, 2012; Gleason, 2018b; Yang & Bradford Brown, 2016). For example, Davies (2012) concluded that 25 high school and college students' Facebook usage influenced—and was influenced by—their offline lives; she pointed to “the embeddedness of technology in everyday life and the blending of online and offline spaces to . . . show how Facebook not only reflects life but affects it too” (p. 28). Similarly, Gleason (2018b) followed three youth as they explored, developed, refined, and solidified their own unique feminist identities on Twitter over the course of multiple years. The participants created unique tweeting styles, voices, and interests that reflected their personal beliefs; Twitter provided a unique space for the young people to use composition for self-discovery. In Wargo's (2017, pp. 575–576) case study of LGBTQ+ youth, he found the participants created content to express who they were “on their own terms,” giving them the power to control the narrative communicated to others about themselves and to “be known differently.” Social media are not used just to develop identities and connect with audiences but to creatively project and define identities for others to see and recognize. Whether by supporting the exploration of self or facilitating carefully crafted self-presentations, social media provide spaces for complex identity work through the creation of content.

### **Authorial Identity, Teachers, and Instruction**

Research on pre-service and in-service teachers' identities as authors stems from the classic assertion that to *teach* writing, teachers should *be* writers (e.g., Emig, 1971; Graves, 1983). Despite important work debating the merits of this notion over the

decades (e.g., Robbins, 1996; Root & Steinberg, 1996), some recent efforts to explore *teachers as writers* (e.g., Dawson, 2011; Whitney et al., 2012, 2014), and the growth and success of the U.S. National Writing Project—a national non-profit organization supporting teachers’ development of writing pedagogy—the depth of attention scholarship has given to teachers and pre-service teachers as writers, or composers in any form, is nascent (Cremin & Oliver, 2017). Although the current study focuses on pre-service teachers, in this section I highlight literature surrounding both in-service teachers’ and pre-service teachers’ authorship in order to best present an overview of how authorship and composition instruction intersect within the field’s limited research.

Traditionally, reading has been privileged over authoring in literacy education (Brandt, 2015; Gardner, 2018), and although this trend may be shifting towards acknowledging the importance of composing in the 21st century workforce (Brandt, 2015), in the classroom, teachers’ perceptions of composition and their own identities as authors remain undervalued. Most English/ELA teachers do not see themselves as authors and are instead more likely to claim a passion for reading (Cremin & Oliver, 2017; Gardner, 2018). In Gardner’s (2014) survey of pre-service elementary teachers, less than one third of the respondents reported having positive feelings towards writing and half reported never gaining any pleasure from writing.

In their recent review of literature on teachers as writers, Cremin and Oliver (2017) conclude that relatively little is known about how teachers’ authorial identities impact their composition pedagogy or students’ composition outcomes. However, multiple studies in Cremin and Oliver’s (2017) review found that pre-service teachers explained the origins of their authorial identities and their perceptions of their own

authoring skills as due to the influence of past teachers and their literacy education in school (e.g., Morgan, 2010; Norman & Spencer, 2005; Street, 2003). Cremin and Oliver (2017) also found that teachers' perceptions of their literacy education seemed to align with their confidence as authors: teachers who did not claim identities as authors described their experiences composing in school as prescriptive and formulaic rather than creative and recursive.

In general, current research suggests that teachers who claim identities as authors provide more engaging and motivating composition instruction (Cremin & Oliver, 2017). Teachers who have a personal interest in authoring are better able to adapt and enrich their composition curricula through sharing their experience, examples, and expertise (e.g., Street, 2003; McCarthey et al., 2014). There is also evidence that teachers' identities as authors not only inform but are complicated by the classroom context. For example, elementary teachers in Cremin and Baker's (2010, 2014) studies felt tension and stress when writing in front of students—while their classroom authoring was still a *personal* expression, it was also a *professional* demonstration. Relatedly, Woodard (2015) found that there were tensions between teachers' personal authorship and their teaching. The writing teachers used their personal authoring experiences to shape their instructional choices, they also restricted how they adapted their teaching based on their curricula and standards, leaving out content, genres, or ideas that were important to them as authors personally. Although further research is needed, the extant literature suggests that teachers' authoring identities and practices outside of the classroom are relevant to what students experience inside the classroom.

## **Research Questions**

Given what is known and remains to be explored surrounding pre-service teachers' authorship and its impact on their approaches to composition instruction, the current study aims to address the following two gaps in the literature: (1) understandings of how pre-service teachers practice authorial identities on social media; and (2) connections between pre-service teachers' authorial identities on social media and their pedagogical approaches. First, this study seeks to expand our understanding of how pre-service teachers conceive of and practice their authorial identities on social media—an essential first step before it is possible to draw implications for instruction. In general, pre-service teachers' authorship across spaces is under-explored, but especially on social media, where young adults—such as most pre-service teachers—spend significant time and practice authoring daily, it is essential that authorship be investigated. Social media are spaces that critically shape and inform pre-service teachers' authorial identity development and therefore cannot be ignored as part of understanding pre-service teachers as authors. Second, by making connections between pre-service teachers' social media authorship and their pedagogical approaches, I am contributing to the foundation of knowledge needed to better tie pre-service teachers' authorship to students' development as authors. We first need to establish how pre-service teachers' authorial identities inform their composition instruction, and then connections to how students' authorial identities are impacted by the pre-service teachers' instruction can be drawn.

Ultimately, as a composition space frequently accessed and relevant to the authoring experiences of both pre-service teachers and students—and in line with

current standards for students' and teachers' digital literacies development—social media need to be integrated into authorship research. This study forefronts social media as critical spaces for authoring that are not yet fully understood, but also situates the importance of this work within education. School literacies cannot continue to be separate from the practical and personal literacies—such as those used on social media—that define composition in the 21st century and are preferred forms of authoring of today's youth. Students need literacy education that prepares them to be life-long authors across spaces and contexts, and therefore, teachers must be prepared to facilitate students' growth as authors beyond the scope of academic writing. As one step towards this goal, the current study explores how pre-service teachers' conceptions of and authoring on social media may contribute to the broader authorship goals in the classroom. I address the following questions:

1. How do pre-service teachers conceive of being an *author* on social media?
2. How do pre-service teachers practice authorship on social media?
3. How are pre-service teachers' practices and conceptions of authorship on social media evident in their approaches to composition instruction?

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

In the previous chapter, I outlined the landscape of relevant literature, contextualized the inspiration for my research questions, and laid important theoretical groundwork critical to understanding my study design. In this chapter, I describe my methodology approach and detail the methods and procedures used to gather and analyze my data. I also include a researcher positionality statement and a description of how I addressed trustworthiness and quality throughout the study.

### Methodology

Adopting a case study methodology, this study aligns with the interpretivist paradigm (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Glesne, 2016) in aiming to explore the phenomenon of authorial identity on social media in the context of each pre-service teachers' perspective and practice, including in-depth looks at individual teachers' (n=3) experiences and the common themes and differences across them (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). My research questions focus on the participants' realities and lived experiences as authors on social media, and a multiple case study design allows me to explore and describe the *how* and *why* of their social media authorship (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Yin, 2017)). In particular, an *interpretivist case study* emphasizes the meanings made and demonstrated by the participants (Stake, 2005), and in this study I examine how the pre-service teachers understand and demonstrate their own meanings of authorship on social media. An interpretivist case study methodology supports a detailed look at a "very particular context" (i.e., the unique authoring of unique individuals on social media) and the inevitability of the "messy complexity of human experience" (Dyson & Genishi, 2015, p. 9, 3). Indeed, my methods for this study remained open and adaptable to the



uniqueness of each participant; I could not have fully predicted what emerged throughout the data collection process, but the gradual discovery and evolution of the cases as outlined in my data analysis process is a core characteristic of interpretivist case study work (Stake, 2005).

Next, I will describe my participants and case selection decisions, followed by an overview of my procedures and data collection. I then elaborate on my analysis and coding process and provide a summary of the positionality that I brought to this study. Finally, I address how I have considered trustworthiness and quality throughout my methods.

### **Participants and Case Selection**

This study focused on the cases of three pre-service teachers specializing in secondary English education, who also had active presences on social media (i.e., had contributed on at least one social media platform at least three times per week in the recent past, as determined by an initial survey [see Initial Survey below]). In accordance with university policy, this study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) as part of the Human Research Protection Program and by the Teacher Preparation Committee, which reviews all proposed studies involving students in the university's teacher preparation program. All participants signed informed consent documents, were given a description of the study upfront, and were made aware of their right to voluntarily end participation at any time.

Data collection took approximately five months and was facilitated through a large Midwestern university during the 2020-2021 school year. Participants were a sample of active social media users selected from a cohort of approximately 30 pre-

service teachers in the university's teacher education program. I gained access to these teachers through my service as a Teaching Assistant for courses in Literacy Education. This cohort was in their fifth and final year of the program, at which point they had completed their undergraduate degrees in English and were completing their fieldwork as student teachers. In addition to being active on social media, this population had recent immersion in the study of English, in their development as academic writers, and in their pedagogical training preparing them for their field experience. Thus, they were well-positioned to generate data on connections between authorial identities on social media and pedagogical approaches.

I purposefully selected potential cases (i.e., individual participants) to ensure rich data collection based on preliminary insights gathered from an initial survey (Appendix A) distributed to all students in the pre-service teacher cohort described above. The survey was adapted from Cheung et al.'s (2017) SABAS tool and Ivanič's (1998) framework and asked pre-service teachers about their current activity on social media, their conceptions of authoring on social media, and their self-described approaches to instruction (see initial survey procedure described below). Ten surveys were completed, and nine individuals indicated an interest in participating in the interview portion of the study. Of the nine interested individuals, six met my participation requirements, including regular social media use, and all six agreed to complete 4-5 interview sessions with me. Over the course of the Fall 2020 semester, I held 4-5 interviews with each of the six participants lasting between 1-1.5 hours each and scheduled 1-2 weeks apart of the course of the semester (see Table 2 Summary of Data Collection and

interview procedures described below) and collected a range of their composition artifacts (see composition artifact collection procedures described below).

To determine which of the six interviewed participants presented the most viable cases and richest data for deeper investigation, I evaluated each based on the survey results and analytic memos I wrote for each interview. I sought cases with some variation in social media use and other perspectives shared to provide unique points of composition during cross-case analysis, but I also prioritized choosing pre-service teachers with well-developed ideas about authorship and composition instruction. I purposefully selected the most data-rich cases to ensure that I could explore each research question in-depth with each participant and fully illuminate the unique ideas and stories they each had to share (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake, 2005). I used the questions below, which reflect the data needed to answer each of my research questions, to guide my evaluations and rank each potential case:

1. What social media were used and for what purposes? (RQ1, RQ2)
2. To what extent did they consider themselves authors on social media, and how did they define authorship on social media? (RQ1, RQ2)
3. To what extent did they provide detailed stories about their authoring on social media and their selected social media artifacts? (RQ2)
4. To what extent did they have thoughtful and nuanced ideas about composition instruction and their teaching artifacts? (RQ3)

Three cases emerged as those with robust and diverse perspectives about social media, authoring, and composition instruction such that I felt I could fully explore all research questions through each. Below I briefly introduce each participant (all names

are pseudonyms) and their identities relevant to their social media use, authorship, and stories shared during our interviews. Table 1 provides a summary of all data collected for each case (see Table 2 for a general summary of the data collection process).

**Caspar** (he/him) was a young, white man who identified as being part of the LGBTQA+ community. His most used social media were Twitter, Reddit, Facebook, and Snapchat, and he was a self-proclaimed media critic, who loved both critiquing popular media and finding ways to bring media into his secondary English classroom.

**Emma** (she/her) was a young, white woman who was a proud, open-minded feminist glad to have escaped her small, closed-minded hometown. Her most used social media were Instagram and Snapchat, and she strongly advocated for everyone having their own voice and stories to tell, whether on social media or in her secondary English classroom.

**Jessie** (she/her) was a young, white woman who identified as part of the LGBTQA+ community. Her most used social media were Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest. As an aspiring novelist and amateur digital artist, Jessie brought her creative energy into her secondary English and Special Education (SPED) classroom. She emphasized creative writing and wanted all students to recognize their compositions as valuable and worthwhile.

**Table 1. Data collected per case**

Participant	Data Collected			
	Interviews	Social Media Artifacts	Teaching Artifacts	Other Composition Artifacts
Caspar	5	Total: 6 Twitter (2) Reddit Facebook Snapchat (2)	Total: 3 3-week unit plan* 2-day lesson plan* Unit brainstorming document*	Total: 5 Poem PowerPoint Memes (3)
Emma	5	Total: 5 Instagram (4) Snapchat	Total: 5 Teacher-identity reflection Course paper on education inequity Infographic of teaching philosophy 4-week Unit plan* Student materials for project*	Total: 3 Handwritten notes Brainstorming list/web Instagram
Jessie	4	Total: 4 Instagram (2) Twitter Pinterest	Total: 4 1-day lesson plan (2)* 2-day lesson plan* Philosophy of teaching statement	Total: 3 To-do list Handwritten notes Digital artwork

Note: \*Indicates an instructional plan for a future lesson/unit that was not yet taught at the time of interview.

### Procedure and Data Sources

As mentioned above, data collection included the use of an initial survey, followed by the gathering of artifacts and conducting multiple interview sessions with each participant. The survey (Appendix A) and interview guide (Appendix B) were developed to outline the connections between the prepared interview prompts and the research questions (Anfara et al., 2002, p. 31). Below I describe each data source and the procedures for data collection. See Table 2 for a summary of data types and collection procedures.

**Table 2. Summary of data collection**

<b>Data Type</b>	<b>Collection Procedures</b>
Initial survey	<p>Invitation and link to survey sent electronically to prospective participants in Fall 2020 semester</p> <p>Informed selection of potential cases; six participants selected for interviews and artifact data collection based on this data</p>
Interviews	<p>Semi-structured (Interview Guide in Appendix B)</p> <p>4-5 sessions per participant (1-1.5 hours each)</p> <p>Scheduled 1-2 weeks apart</p> <p>Six participants completed the interview portion of the study; three were selected as the final cases for in-depth analysis</p>
Social media artifacts	<p>3-5 per participant</p> <p>Selected and electronically submitted (e.g., email, shared Google folder) by the participant 24 hours before relevant interview</p> <p>Six participants completed the artifact portion of the study; three were selected as the final cases for in-depth analysis</p>
Artifacts from other spaces	<p>3-5 per participant</p> <p>Selected and electronically submitted (e.g., email, dropbox) by the participant 24 hours before first interview</p> <p>Six participants completed the artifact portion of the study; three were selected as the final cases for in-depth analysis</p>
Artifacts on composition instruction	<p>3-5 per participant</p> <p>Selected and electronically submitted (e.g., email, dropbox) by the participant 24 hours before first interview</p> <p>Six participants completed the artifact portion of the study; three were selected as the final cases for in-depth analysis</p>

### **Initial Survey**

Preliminary data to inform case selection was gathered from potential participants enrolled in an English education teacher preparation program through a short electronic survey at the beginning of the semester. The survey consisted of 11 questions total and included: (1) demographic information; (2) information about the pre-

service teachers' current social media use; (3) information about their authorial identities on social media (e.g., to what extent they self-identify as authors, value their compositions, and have confidence as authors on social media); and (4) information about their approaches towards teaching composition (e.g., ideals, goals, strategies). See Appendix A for the complete survey.

The survey protocols were drafted in consultation with prominent methods texts (Dillman, 1978; Fowler, 2009) and adapted from the similar SABAS survey designed and validated by Cheung et al. (2017). Careful thought was given to maintaining specificity and clarity through simple question structure and purposeful selection of language that is understandable and relatable to participants (e.g., I do not use the terms like *authorial identity* or refer to their social media contributions as *compositions*. Instead I ask them about social media by asking them about their *posts*.) (Dillman, 1978; Fowler, 2013). Additionally, for several questions I followed Cheung et al.'s (2017) Likert-scale survey structure, adapting word choice to reflect this study's focus on social media and composition rather than academic writing. For example, one of Cheung et al.'s (2017) Likert-scale statements, "I feel like the author of my academic assignments" was adapted to "I feel like the author of my social media posts" in this study. Next, I describe the content of the survey in more detail, but the complete survey protocol can be found in Appendix A.

After entering basic demographic information, participants were asked to select from a list of social media that they have used in the past year and how frequently they have used each. All participants selected for interviews indicated an active social media

presence (i.e., contributing to at least one social media platform three times per week over the past three months) to ensure rich and robust data collection.

The next section asked participants to answer a series of Likert-scale questions paired with open-response follow-up prompts based on Ivanič's (1998) (i.e., autobiographical self, discursal self, and self as author) and Cheung et al.'s (2017) (i.e., self-identifying as an author, valuing authoring, and confidence as an author) authorial identity frameworks. The questions addressed authorial identity on social media. Participants responded to statements such as, "I think of myself as the author of my social media posts," "I have my own style and voice when composing on social media," and "Composing on social media is an important life skill" with a Likert-scale selection ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." For each, they also had an open-response prompt that asked for an example or further explanation of their choice.

The combined Likert-scale and open-response approach was selected based on my implementation of a similar survey protocol in my practicum study (Galvin, 2019). In the earlier study, preliminary authorial identity indicators were gathered solely from Likert-scale questions adapted from Cheung et al. (2017). However, I found informed case selection was difficult without any insight into the participants' reasonings behind their answers. For example, participants' responses to the Likert statement, "I consider myself the author of my social media posts" did not reveal any of the nuances in how each individual understood the term *author* and how that understanding directed their response to the statement. Two students who agreed with the statement "I consider myself the author of my social media posts" on the survey later elaborated distinct and



dissimilar ideas about what counts as authoring, making their initial Likert statement responses seem like inaccurate representations of their actual perceptions of authorship. I, therefore, revised my survey protocol to include fewer Likert-scale questions and instead supplemented each statement with an open-response prompt so that I had more insight into the participants' ideas and perspectives that shaped their Likert-scale answers.

The final section in the initial survey asked participants to briefly describe an important aspect, strategy, or philosophy that defines their approach to composition instruction. This prompt gave me an idea of how they think about composition in their classrooms and helped me select participants with diverse teaching perspectives.

The survey responses informed the selection of potential cases, but my main data collection for each case came from two sources: composition artifacts and interviews.

### **Composition Artifacts**

Before beginning the interviews, I began digitally collecting participants' *composition artifacts*. Collection of the artifacts began prior to the start of the interviews and continued throughout the interview sessions until all required items were collected and discussed. Once selected for the interview process, the pre-service teachers were emailed directions explaining the artifact collection procedures. The directions included definitions and descriptions of the three categories of artifacts to be collected (i.e., social media artifacts, teaching artifacts, other composition artifacts) and listed examples of each (see more detail below). Participants were directed to select artifacts they had already made (or were currently finishing) so that no items were created specifically for

this study. Instructions for how to capture artifacts (e.g., how to screenshot, screen record, scan images) were offered but no participants required them. For submission, participants were given various options (e.g., email, dropbox, shared drive, mailed flash drive), but all selected to either share items via a Google folder or email items to me directly. Participants submitted artifacts to me at least 24 hours prior to the interview session in which they were to be discussed so that I could review them in preparation for our conversation. Upon completion of data collection, all artifacts were removed from online spaces, stored offline, and de-identified to protect the participants' privacy.

I gathered between 9-15 artifacts from each participant: 3-5 artifacts representing their authorship on social media; 3-5 artifacts representing the range of their authorship in other spaces (e.g., schoolwork, journals); and 3-5 artifacts exemplifying their approaches to composition instruction. I was able to meet that goal for all six potential cases (see the exact number of artifacts collected for each of the three cases in this study in Table 1). *Composition artifacts* in all three categories (i.e., social media, authorship in other spaces, and composition instruction) were defined as any compositions created by the participants for any purpose and in any form or combination of modalities. Examples of composition artifacts the pre-service teachers shared included: written and multimedia projects from their coursework, lesson plans and materials, notes and lists, artwork and creative writing, and various forms of social media posts including text, memes, and videos. The quantity and range of artifacts collected were informed by experience completing similar analytical work during my practicum study (Galvin, 2019). I found that several artifacts in each category were enough to spark rich storytelling from the participants and reach data saturation but that

too many artifacts were a burden for participants to find and draining on participants' energy and interest during interviews (e.g., After describing the story behind a few social media posts, if participants were asked to continue with additional posts, they began resorting to shortened and impatient answers such as, "This one is like the others," or "I don't know what to say that I haven't already." This indicated a drop in interest and suggested data saturation.)

The three categories of composition artifacts to be gathered for this study (i.e., artifacts from social media, artifacts of authoring in other spaces, and artifacts exemplifying approaches to composition instruction) provided needed data for answering my three research questions (RQs). RQ1 asked, "How do pre-service teachers conceive of being an *author* on social media?" The artifacts from social media (and from other spaces as described in more detail below) were central to answering this question as they were essential to the interview questions that asked participants to discuss their ideas about what it means to be an author through examples of their own compositions. Using the artifacts provided concrete details to support, clarify (or contradict) the participants' ideas. RQ2, "How do pre-service teachers practice authorship on social media?", also benefited from the concrete examples gathered through the artifacts. Participants were asked to describe their composition process on social media and outline the specific steps they recall taking for a social media artifact they provided. Additionally, the social media artifacts were coded with both emergent and a priori codes (See Data Analysis below) to see what evidence of the creators' authorship practices existed in their products. The last research question (RQ3), "How are pre-service teachers' practices and conceptions of authorship on social media

evident in their approaches to composition instruction?”, was addressed through the artifacts of the participants’ approaches to teaching composition. Similar to RQ2, these artifacts were discussed directly during the interviews and coded during data analysis. Participants were asked to use the artifacts to support and supplement their descriptions of how they approach composition instruction. These artifacts were also coded for themes related to authorship (a priori and emergent) and for themes related to the pre-service teachers’ composition instruction (emergent). Then, connections and comparisons to the participants’ social media authorship were drawn to determine if there is a relationship between the two (See Discussion).

The artifacts from other composition spaces provided important context for answering all three of the research questions. During my practicum, I found that participants naturally discussed their authoring on social media in relation to the other types of authoring they practiced (Galvin, 2019). For example, one participant discussed how she enjoyed social media because she got to compose the content she cared about for a large audience. The self-selected content and audience factors were important to her because in her other authoring spaces she rarely experienced both. She described getting assigned content and an audience-of-one when writing for her teachers and getting more content freedom when writing for her school newspaper but still not having access to a large, engaged audience (Galvin, 2019). I did not collect non-social-media composition artifacts for my practicum, so I was unable to look more deeply into what those comparisons meant for the participant’s authorial identity on social media. For this study, I aimed to remedy that limitation. Although social media authorship was still the focus of this study, I could not fully capture authorial identity in

one space without acknowledging how it is situated within each author's unique web of identity and authoring practices (see Theoretical Framework above [e.g., Gee, 2008; Ivanič, 1998]). The participants' artifacts from spaces other than social media acted as points of comparison and expansion to further illuminate how their social media authorship was situated within their identities as authors. I gained clearer insight into the pre-service teachers' authorship on social media by understanding how their perceptions of and practices on social media fit within the broader scope of their identities as authors.

## **Interviews**

In addition to gathering the composition artifacts, I held four or five 1-1.5-hour semi-structured interviews with each of my six potential participants (see Table 1 for the exact number of interviews held for each case in this study). I planned for four to five sessions for each individual to ensure that I had time to make each interview thorough and unrushed. This timeframe was informed by my prior interviewing experience during my practicum study (Galvin, 2019), which allowed me to estimate how long I expected to need to complete my interview protocol (Appendix B). I knew that I had completed my data collection when I was able to reflect on the analytic memos I wrote after each interview and felt that I could completely answer my research questions (Brinkmann, 2013) and when I could see my evidence becoming repetitive and triangulating across stories and artifacts in my memos (Yin, 2017). Each session was spaced approximately one to two weeks apart during one semester to accommodate the participants' schedules and to allow time for me to review prior interview data, plan follow-up questions, and track my progress towards data saturation.

Interview protocols (Appendix B) were drafted in consultation with several interview methodological texts (Brinkmann, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Seidman, 1998). For instance, I decided to include ice-breaker questions in my interview protocol (Rubin & Rubin, 2012); because I was asking participants to be comfortable sharing examples of their personal authoring, it was important that I build rapport by starting the interview time with casual chatting, then transitioning to easy questions and continuing through the protocol. Additionally, I designed my questions to help me maintain a receptive and responsive interviewing style throughout the session (Brinkmann, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). More specifically, I drafted prompts that were open-ended and could be approached from multiple angles to encourage interviewees to share their own perspectives; I could then build on participants' responses through follow-up questions (e.g., "Tell me about your audience on social media" followed by "What did you mean by \_\_\_\_\_").

Although interview sessions varied depending on each participant's specific discussions, I spent each session as follows: (1) general discussion of the term *author* and the participants' ideas and stories of experiencing authoring; (2) discussion and storytelling of authorship using artifacts (i.e., examples of their compositions) they selected as prompts; (3) continued discussion and storytelling of authorship using artifacts (i.e., examples of their compositions) they selected as prompts; (4) discussion of participants' approach to teaching composition; (5) continued discussion and storytelling of their approach to teaching composition using artifacts (i.e., teaching artifacts) as prompts. Holding the interview sessions that focused on composition instruction last meant that those discussions took place in November and December,

the end of the participants' first semester in their teaching internships. This timing was purposeful so that pre-service teachers would be best prepared to reflect on teaching artifacts using insights from their first semester of instruction. Maintaining a sense of structure and purpose for each session helped me remain focused on my research questions and ensured I collect all necessary data (Seidman, 1998).

As I describe in more detail below, the use of composition artifacts during the interviews was an essential piece of the data collection. I used the interview protocol prompts (Appendix B) to help participants begin talking about their authoring while reviewing their artifacts and then used individualized follow-up questions specific to their artifacts to gain further insight. This type of text-based (i.e., artifact-based) interview technique allows me to capture detailed narratives from participants that explicitly connect with examples of their authoring (e.g., Prior, 1991, 1995). Seidman (1998) emphasizes the importance of asking for stories and concrete details during interviews in order to get a more thorough narrative that connects participants' attitudes or beliefs to their experiences. In this study, I used the composition artifacts during the interviews to facilitate the storytelling and the collection of concrete details. By reviewing the artifacts in advance of each interview, I was able to plan some potential follow-up questions in advance, but I also allowed the flow of the participants' stories in the moment to inform my line of questioning. See Appendix B for a complete version of the interview protocol which shows the alignment of the questions with the components of the authorial identity frameworks.

In order to generate data to address RQ1 (i.e., How do pre-service teachers conceive of being an *author* on social media?), the first portion of the interviews asked

participants to talk about what it means to author through their personal beliefs and experiences. This section of the interview related to Cheung et al.'s (2017) "self-identifying as an author" and Ivanič's (1998) "self as author" framework pieces. I began by asking participants to define what it means to be an author and describe times when they have authored in the past and/or might in the future. Although my questions about authoring started broadly without specific reference to social media so that the participants were free to start the conversation wherever makes the most sense to them, I also asked the participants about how they defined what it means to be an author on social media specifically—and if they believe they have or will ever be an author on social media—as the interview progressed.

After discussing what it means to be an author and the participants' self-perceptions of themselves as authors, I addressed RQ2 (i.e., How do pre-service teachers practice authorship on social media?) using both questions related to my authorship framework and open-ended prompts. I asked participants to reflect on aspects of authoring, as outlined in the authorial identity frameworks described above (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998), in various spaces and in reference to their shared artifacts. For example, questions included, "Tell me about your audience" and "How important are your posts to your audience?", which connect to the discoursal self (Ivanič, 1998); and "How valuable is the content you post on \_\_\_\_\_ social media to you and your audience?", which connects to the value an author associates with their composition (Cheung et al., 2017).

Additionally, I explored RQ2 through the stories participants shared about their artifacts. I focused on participants' social media artifacts and used their other



composition artifacts (e.g., classwork assignments, emails, lists, social media posts, poetry) as prompts for points of comparison. By asking participants for narratives and centering on their artifact stories rather than on particular elements of authorship theories, I created space for aspects of authorship that might not be captured in my selected framework to emerge. Story prompts included, “Tell me the story of a time when you were an author. Take me through what that was like, starting with when you first decided to compose” and “Using one of your social media posts that you shared with me, walk me through your process of creating that post starting with what it is like to come up with an idea.” These prompts captured how the participants experienced and practiced authorship through explicit examples, and elements of their stories were later coded to see how they aligned (or did not align) with my authorial identity frameworks. (See the section above describing artifact collection for further description of this data source.)

Lastly, to generate data to address RQ3 (i.e., How are pre-service teachers’ practices and conceptions of authorship on social media evident in their approaches to composition instruction?), I asked participants to talk about themselves as teachers and their ideas and strategies for composition instruction. Questions such as, “What types of skills, content, or activities does ‘composition instruction’ include?” prompted the teachers to reflect on themselves as educators and think concretely about what it means to teach students about composition. As part of this line of questioning, various types of teaching artifacts (e.g., philosophy of teaching statements, lesson plans, teaching portfolios) were reviewed and discussed as examples of the participants’

teaching philosophies and pedagogical approaches. (See the section above describing artifact collection for further description of this data source.)

Interviews were scheduled via email contact and held and recorded virtually through Zoom. Zoom is the video conferencing platform commonly used among teachers and students at the participants' university, so all participants were comfortable and able to easily access the platform. Each interview was recorded on two separate devices to prevent the possible loss of data. After data collection, all recordings and transcripts of interviews were de-identified and stored offline.

### **Data Analysis**

My coding plan for this study was one I developed and piloted when completing my practicum study (Galvin, 2019). During my practicum, I was similarly working with interview and composition artifact data and followed two strands of overlapping, iterative coding: one that focused on emergent themes and one that focused on themes related to my writer identity framework (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998), which I employed again in this study. A combination of coding strategies, including the use of analytic memos and code mapping, were also used (Anfara et al., 2002; Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Glesne, 2016; Saldaña, 2016). Analytic memos, in particular, were highly useful during my practicum as a way to document my thoughts as my data evolved from interview to interview and artifact to artifact. Initial reflections from my first post-interview memos informed questions for future interviews and helped me recall what ideas were most striking from each session when returning to review transcripts and artifacts

later. I made even more purposeful use of this memoing strategy in this study, composing and revisiting memos throughout my coding process. Below I provide a detailed description of my full data analysis process. See Table 3 for a summary.

I began my analysis with a complete chronological readthrough of all my data organized by my three selected cases. I then divided data within each case into large categories that labeled the type of authorial identity (and related composition artifacts) and instructional approaches (and related composition artifacts) participants shared so that I could easily identify the large chunks of content (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). For example, I grouped all stories about social media artifacts together, all stories about other composition artifacts and experiences together, and all stories about composition instruction and instruction artifacts together. I created and formatted transcripts for each interview using an open-ended two-column approach so that as I coded my transcript, I had space to explore and play with new insights (Jefferson, 2004). For instance, down the first column of each transcript I included the text of the interview, and the second column was reserved for coding notes that could be aligned with individual chunks or paragraphs (marked by inserting row divisions), as well as with specific lines (indicated by placing the code parallel to the line it referenced in the first column).

Once my transcripts were set up for analysis, I completed a round of initial coding using Gee's (2014) organizational and descriptive coding strategy that divides discourse into hierarchical sections: *part* (i.e. a larger section or chapter in the discourse story) and *stanza* (i.e. a mid-sized portion of discourse covering one main event or theme within a larger *part* of the narrative). After immersing myself in raw data and notes, Gee's (2004) strategy emerged as a useful way to begin identifying the main ideas,

stories, and events that shaped each interview. For example, *parts* within my transcripts covered sections like “What is an author?” or “Teaching artifacts.” Within those parts, stanzas covered portions like “What social media I use” or “Teaching artifact 1: Multimodal project.” This round of coding followed in the spirit of Saldaña’s (2016) suggested Initial Coding method, which provides an opportunity for the researcher “to reflect deeply on the contents and nuances of [their] data and to begin taking ownership of them” (p. 115). Looking at a transcript with these structural labels made sense for maintaining awareness of the larger context behind individual stories and helping me identify overarching themes across stories (see Table 3).

I reviewed artifacts while doing this first round of coding as they were mentioned in each transcript. I wrote initial summary descriptions and interpretations of each artifact following Saldaña’s (2016) technique of memoing artifact data. For each artifact, I viewed, reflected, and memoed notes about the content of the item and how it resonated with concepts of authorship related to the participant’s own authoring or teaching practices. If relevant, I noted connections to various discussions from the interview sessions in the memos as well. For each artifact I created a three-part memo: a caption to represent it, a summary describing its context (e.g., where it came from or why it was created), and a discussion of my interpretations of the artifact and a detailed description of its content (Saldaña, 2016). Saldaña (2016) described this as identifying the “elements, nuances, and complexities” of an artifact to better grasp the “broader interpretation of the compositional totality of the work” (p. 60).

**Table 3. Data analysis steps**

1. <b>Readthrough, Case Organization, and Transcript Creation.</b> Data within each case was divided into large categories that labeled the type of authorial identity (and related composition artifacts) and instructional approach (and related composition artifacts) discussions that were had (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Transcripts were set up for each interview using an open-ended two-column approach (Jefferson, 2004). The first column of each transcript included the text of the interview, and the second column was reserved for coding notes that could be aligned with individual chunks or paragraphs (marked by inserting row divisions), as well as with specific lines (indicated by placing the code parallel to the line it referenced in the first column).
2. <b>Coding Round 1: Gee's (2004) Descriptive and Organizational Coding Strategy &amp; Saldaña's (2016) Artifact Memoing.</b> Discourse within each transcript was divided into hierarchical sections: <i>part</i> (i.e. a larger section or chapter in the discourse story) and <i>stanza</i> (i.e. a mid-sized portion of discourse covering one main point within a larger part of the narrative) (Gee 2004). For each artifact, a three-part memo was created: a caption to represent it, a summary describing the context of it (e.g., where it came from or why it was created), and a discussion of my interpretations of the artifact and detailed description of its content (Saldaña, 2016).
3. <b>Round 1 Coding Memo.</b> Memos written for each participant to record reflections, observations, and the evolution of my ideas and interpretations.
4. <b>Coding Round 2: Emergent Coding (transcripts and artifacts).</b> Codes were created and identified as they emerged from the data. The codes grew organically out of what the participants shared (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). A blend of descriptive, subcoding, and simultaneous coding strategies were used (Saldaña, 2016).
5. <b>Round 2 Coding Memo.</b> Memos written for each participant to record reflections, observations, and the evolution of my ideas and interpretations.
6. <b>Coding Round 3: Provisional Coding (transcripts and artifacts).</b> A predetermined (a priori) list of codes (Saldaña, 2016) based on the established writer identity frameworks of this study (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998) was created and applied to all data.
7. <b>Round 3 Coding Memo.</b> Memos written for each participant to record reflections, observations, and the evolution of my ideas and interpretations.
8. <b>Code Mapping.</b> All codes from all coding rounds were listed, reviewed, reorganized, and revised to condense repetitive codes, remove extraneous codes, and categorize codes to illuminate the central ideas found in the data (Saldaña, 2016).
9. <b>Data Theming.</b> Main ideas about authorship, social media, and composition instruction present in the data from related codes were summarized into concise sentences or phrases (Saldaña, 2016).
10. <b>Final Coding Memo.</b> A final memo outlining initial thoughts for interpretations and drawing initial connections across cases was written.
11. <b>Member Checking.</b> All participants were contacted and given the opportunity to provide feedback and revise their case summaries.

After this first round of coding, I wrote memos about each participant reflecting on my thoughts and observations so far. A review of the memos I wrote during data

collection also informed this step. Memo documents for each participant were created and opened throughout this stage of coding so that I could jot notes mid-coding as desired. Longer reflections for each participant were memoed after finishing all the coding of that participants' data this round, but I still revisited and added to these memos as was necessary or inspired once I had moved on to other individuals' data. My memos were living documents that helped me track the evolution of my ideas.

The second round of coding I completed was emergent coding (i.e., codes were created and identified as they emerged from the data; they were not predetermined). These codes grew organically out of what the participants shared (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) and were most often *idea units* (i.e., a portion of data capturing a single idea or thought) that ranged from 1 to 3 sentences (Gee, 2004). Table 4 shows an excerpt representing my coding for one stanza of a transcript. Although all coding was completed in NVivo, Table 4 shows the format of the transcripts used with added columns to list the codes as marked within NVivo. Breaks and emphasis indicators were used to help identify idea units (e.g., they helped me recognize the separation of sentences or paragraphs intended by the speaker). The excerpt also highlights my coding thought process and includes the extra notes I took to help me track themes or questions to consider.

**Table 4. Excerpt of transcript with codes**

<p style="text-align: center;">Symbols Used</p> <p>,                      Brief beat during a phrase but not a full pause (short comma)</p> <p>/                      Break or pause (long comma)</p> <p>//                     Intonation indicating the end of a thought or sentence</p> <p><b>Emphasis</b>           Key words/phrases tied to codes</p> <p><i>Italics</i>                Codes (multiple codes separated by semicolon)</p> <p>(Parentheses)       Extra notes or thoughts during coding process</p>		
Part 1. What is an author? Stanza 1. Defining the term author (Idea Units 1-4)	Emergent Codes	A Priori Codes
<p>1. Ah, I think that / I think an author, or like whatever you consider to be an author is very much like a <b>personally driven title</b>. //</p> <p>2. So like, I don't think that it has to be like, oh you're <b>publishing</b> something or, even like trying to <b>share your writing</b> to, or whatever you've created, to like a <b>big group</b> of people I think / if you create this <b>beautiful text, just for yourself</b>, you can still consider yourself an author and if you create like a <b>small thing</b> that you want to share with, other people, you can consider yourself an author as well. //</p> <p>3. I think it's more like, just <b>creation</b>, of / like, <b>literature</b>, which is also like a very broad concept. //</p> <p>4. But yeah, I think <u>if you don't consider yourself an author, then like, that's okay</u>, but, like / I think there's <u>some people who don't consider themselves authors that other people consider an author</u>. //</p>	<p><i>Choosing to be an author</i> (personal choice; you can choose to take the title)</p> <p><i>Importance of audience size</i> (intended audience)</p> <p><i>Authoring as creating</i> (Diff. between authoring &amp; creating?) <i>Choosing to be an author</i></p>	<p><i>Self-identifying as an author</i></p> <p><i>Self-identifying as an author</i></p> <p><i>Value</i> (value of authorship not determined by size of audience)</p> <p><i>Autobiographical self; Discoursal self</i> (others may see you as an author regardless of how you see yourself)</p>

A blend of descriptive, subcoding, and simultaneous coding strategies was used to guide my emergent coding process (Saldaña, 2016). Descriptive coding was the core approach I used and involved coding to summarize and index topics (e.g., audience, composition process). I blended descriptive coding with subcoding techniques (i.e.,

creating child codes within broader parent codes). This allowed me to elaborate on what was depicted in the data (e.g., under the parent code “role of audience on social media,” subcodes such as “size” and “influence on content selection” were used). As part of the exploratory process of emergent coding, data that might have multiple meanings or interpretations were coded using more than one label (e.g., some data under the code “authenticity, be myself” also appeared under “expressing confidence” because some expressions of confidence were about taking pride in being oneself). This type of simultaneous coding was important to help me identify connections across codes. For example, I realized that I was coding some of the same data under “treating students as individuals” (a code originally related to participants’ teaching philosophies surrounding composition instruction) and “authenticity, be myself” (a code originally related to authorship practices on social media), so I began to recognize how participants’ authorship overlapped with their approaches to composition instruction.

The multimedia artifacts from each participant were also coded during this stage of emergent coding using the same strategies described above (i.e., descriptive coding, subcoding, and simultaneous coding) (Saldaña, 2016). To facilitate this, the memo summaries written for each piece of media were paired with supporting media details from the artifacts themselves (Saldaña, 2016). This meant coding both text pieces from the memos I wrote for each artifact, as well as tagging text or media directly from the artifacts themselves as codes. I created memos during this second stage of coding following the same process I used during round one and included a review of the previous coding memos as part of my reflection.



During my third round of coding, I implemented a provisional (a priori) coding strategy (Saldaña, 2016). All interview transcripts and multimedia artifacts (i.e., memo summaries as well as artifact content, as described above) were coded using a predetermined (a priori) list of codes based on the established writer identity frameworks of this study (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998). The codes used from Ivanič (1998) were aligned with the three aspects of authorship outlined in her framework: autobiographical self (i.e., life experiences you bring to compositions), discursal self (i.e., the identity you choose to portray in compositions), and self as author (i.e., considering yourself an author and claiming ownership over compositions). The codes used from Cheung et al. (2017) included three parent codes aligning with the three aspects of their framework—valuing one’s composition, confidence authoring, and self-identifying as an author—as well as a series of child codes (i.e., subcodes) for each that reflect how each concept was broken down and captured in the questions used in Cheung et al.’s (2017) survey. The parent and child codes drawn from Cheung et al. (2017) are listed below for reference:

- 1) Valuing composition
  - (i) Importance of clarity in composition
  - (ii) Importance of quality in composition
  - (iii) Importance of composition to me
  - (iv) Composition as an important skill to develop
- 2) Confidence authoring
  - (i) Communicating ideas
  - (ii) Documenting ideas
  - (iii) Expressing confidence
  - (iv) Formulating or generating ideas
  - (v) My own style or voice
- 3) Self-identifying as an author
  - (i) I am an author
  - (ii) Ownership over compositions

As much as possible, exact words and phrases from the survey were used as the codes themselves. See my full codebook (Appendix C) for complete definitions and examples of each. Once this third coding stage was finished, memos were once again written for all participants using the approach previously described.

After completing rounds of coding with separate a priori and emergent codes, I completed a round of code mapping and data theming using the combined set of codes from both my a priori and emergent coding processes. First, I used code mapping to organize and combine my emergent and a priori code lists. All codes from all coding rounds were listed, reviewed, reorganized, and revised to condense repetitive codes, remove extraneous codes, and categorize codes to illuminate the central ideas found in the data (Saldaña, 2016). Code origins were tracked for later reference, but most of this process involved removing all notations of hierarchy (i.e., parent vs child codes) and origin (i.e., emergent vs. a priori) and physically manipulating each code on slips of paper to find new connections. Some examples of analytical moves I made during code mapping include: removing repeat categories (e.g., multiple categories addressing confidence were combined); separating large categories into meaningful smaller codes (e.g., breaking “teaching philosophies” code into the specific teaching philosophy concepts that were shared such as “treating students as individuals” and “being a facilitator of learning and critical thinking”); and experimenting with regrouping codes into new, broad categories (e.g., I created and defined “internal-facing aspects of authorship” compared to “external-facing aspects of authorship” as I worked through how to understand authorship practices that involved internal identity work, requiring

reflecting or thinking about oneself, versus external authorial identity work, requiring reflecting or thinking about the role of others/audience in composition).

After this, I spent time data theming. That is, I identified the main ideas about authorship, social media, and composition instruction present in the data and summarized them into concise sentences or phrases (Saldaña, 2016). For instance, based on the data in the social media and autobiographical codes, I wrote the theme: “Social media as spaces for sharing authentic personal expression and lived experiences,” and based on the data in codes related to composition instruction and teaching philosophies, I wrote the theme: “Students should be empowered to compose in formats and towards goals that are relevant to them and their lives beyond school.” This process naturally led into a final round of memoing, which helped me outline the main themes I selected to discuss in the Findings and Discussion sections. During this final memoing period, I wrote one combined memo for all participants so that I could more easily begin thinking across cases.

Finally, the last stage of my data analysis approach involved member checking with each of my participants. After drafting individual case summaries, I shared each person’s summary with them for review and reflection via email and invited them for a follow-up interview opportunity (none accepted the offer). For more discussion of how I ensured trustworthiness and quality in this study, see the relevant section below.

### **Researcher Positionality**

As a prior high school English teacher, questions about students’ literacy and literacy instruction have pervaded my career. This research was inspired by observations of students’ confident and consistent authorship in online spaces that

never seemed to translate to their identities as authors in classroom compositions. I want to engage students in composing for school the same way they engage in their social media accounts. Not knowing how to approach this as an educator, I began this research to work towards demystifying for teachers how they can best support students' development of authorial identities. From this perspective, I recognized my potential bias as an interviewer hoping to find authorship in spaces where it might not have been present. To counter this I maintained a heightened awareness of my position and planned carefully worded interview questions that asked the participants to identify and describe their authoring experiences on social media (and elsewhere) without me presuming or prompting them to narrate specific examples. I also did not presume to know which composition experiences each participant might identify as authoring and spent my first session with each person interviewed exploring the boundaries of what they considered to be authoring. During our conversations about their artifacts, I also checked in with them to determine which ones they considered examples of authorship.

As a white, cisgender female educator, I also recognized that my connection and relationships with participants might be influenced by similar or differing identities (e.g., St. Louis & Barton, 2002). I was continually reflexive during my data collection and analysis, constantly reflecting on how I am positioning myself in the conversation and data. I was actively building rapport and connection with my participants through our time spent discussing their compositions and our shared experiences as teachers, so I had to juggle my own many identities and my role as a researcher throughout data collection (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). I gradually built trust with my participants such that they are comfortable being open about their composition processes and experiences as

authors, which I recognized as potentially highly personal. For example, Caspar explained how he was uncomfortable sharing details of his authoring with me in our first session because of how personal he considered the process to be. However, by our third session he was excited to show me a poem he had written about coming out to his parents as a teen. My relationship with all participants similarly evolved over the course of our interviews, and I believe the trust I established with each came from a balance between presenting myself as a neutral and interested party, as well as a fellow English teacher who could relate to and understand their experiences. I acknowledge that I was likely seen at least somewhat as an authority figure, particularly at the beginning of the study, as I was known as not only a researcher but as one of several instructors of a course they were taking (although I was not *their* instructor and did not accept any participants for whom I was responsible for grading or evaluating). Despite this, I used my warm, friendly demeanor and genuine enthusiasm for our conversations to build authentic connections with all of my participants, all of whom expressed that they had enjoyed and valued the interview time we spent together as moments of meaningful reflection and inspiration for their teaching.

### **Trustworthiness and Quality**

To ensure trustworthiness and quality, Guba and Lincoln's (1982) four measures of trustworthiness and Yin's (2017) four tests of case study quality were upheld throughout the study. To follow Guba and Lincoln (1982) criteria for trustworthiness in naturalistic research, I established credibility, or internal validity, through the maintenance of my raw data database. All original data has been stored offline and separately from de-identified data. In this way, my evidence and interpretations can

always be traced back to and confirmed within the raw data itself. I also addressed transferability, or external validity, through my purposive sampling technique (i.e., initial survey and case selection process) and my emphasis on thick description grounded in specific evidence (see Data Analysis above). Although not intended to inform broad generalizations, these details make my study more transparent and the findings more easily transferable to petite generalizations (i.e., towards other individuals who exhibit the same qualities and characteristics as those that I studied). To ensure defendability, or dependability, I detailed each step of my analytic approach (see above) and created a codebook (Appendix C) and other visuals to inform my readers of my process (Table 3). Finally, to establish confirmability, or data agreement, I have kept records and notes tracking my findings back to my raw data and interpretative steps including preserving separate records of initial codes and writing analytic memos after each interview and stage of my coding process.

Yin's (2017) four tests of quality include construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. While many aspects of Guba and Lincoln's (1982) trustworthiness indicators overlap with Yin's (2017) directives (e.g., internal validity, external validity), Yin offers additional specific recommendations when applying the tests to case study design. Although some are repeated from above, for clarity and transparency I summarize here the strategies I employed based on Yin's (2017) guidelines. To protect construct validity, I explored authorship using interview prompts aligned with my selected framework as well as prompts that were open-ended and collected participants' unique stories. This ensured I was not leaning on preconceived notions about authorship based on my theoretical framework and remained open to

potential findings that did not support current theory. To maintain reliability, I kept detailed records and notes so that my findings can be traced directly back to my raw data and maintained my raw data in a separate offline database. To address internal validity, I used multiple rounds of coding and analytic memos to ensure the inferences I drew were representative of the data. Finally, in consideration of external validity, I included detailed explanations of my methods (see Table 3) such that others can replicate my work and was careful not to draw broad generalizations inappropriate for a case study design.

In this chapter, I explained my process for designing and completing ethical and robust the data collection and analysis for this study. I now move to describe the results of my three cases: Caspar, Emma, and Jessie.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present findings in answer to my three research questions:

1. How do pre-service teachers conceive of being an *author* on social media?
2. How do pre-service teachers practice authorship on social media?
3. How are pre-service teachers' practices and conceptions of authorship on social media evident in their approaches to composition instruction?

Summaries for each case (i.e., Caspar, Emma, and Jessie) are presented first and broken into three sections with each section corresponding to each research question: (1) Conceptions of being an author on social media (RQ1); (2) Practicing authorship on social media (RQ2); and (3) Connections between social media authorship and composition instruction (RQ3). After presenting each teacher-case, I synthesize themes across cases in the presentation of a cross-case analysis. The cross-case analysis uses the same three-section structure as the case summaries. Findings detailed in this chapter create the basis for the insights explored in the discussion chapter that follows.

### Individual Case Findings: Caspar

As previously introduced, Caspar (he/him) was a young, White man whose most-used social media platforms were Twitter, Reddit, Facebook, and Snapchat. He identified as being part of the LGBTQA+ community, was a self-proclaimed media critic, and was a pre-service teacher preparing for a career in secondary English. As an educator, he valued incorporating a variety of media into his lessons and preparing students with the transferrable skills they would need to be critical creators and consumers of all types of media content. The sections below summarize findings from Caspar's case for each research question.



## Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media

Caspar defined an *author* as anyone that creates or records stories or history. He connected authorship to the idea of *creating* in general. For him, authoring is not something specific to one format or media. He also noted that storytelling (i.e., the presentation of a story, whether original or not) is authoring because of the personalized elements of presentation that impact tone and audience response. By extension, composing on social media counted as authorship for Caspar, as social media are spaces where various forms of creation take place and users often tell stories or use their posts to influence or inform others.

To better understand Caspar's conception of authorship on social media, the broader context of his authorship outside of social media is relevant. In general, Caspar spoke about himself as a passionate author. He excitedly retold interesting stories and described his feelings behind various compositions. Authoring was personally significant to him, and all of his shared artifacts were reflective of causes he cared about or aspects of his identity. He often shared in-depth background stories explaining how each artifact was important to him and entwined with his lived experiences. For example, Caspar detailed not only his thinking behind how he planned and structured a PowerPoint (PPT) presentation comparing two of his favorite video games (i.e., *Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat*) but expressed joy in getting to share this artifact. The PPT was created for a casual social event with friends, but Caspar's deep passion for *Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat* was evident in the thoroughness of his composition. He had over 25 slides covering various aspects of each game, including their histories and the pros and cons of playing each (Figure 2 below). He found pictures to support his

comparisons and considered his audience's prior knowledge, clarifying the difference between 2D and 3D games as well as between different types of lag time in the games. He was eager to walk me through the entire presentation and overflowed with enthusiasm as I followed along. Authoring for Caspar was personal and an outlet for self-expression. His artifact stories often began with an emotional response or pressing idea that he could not help but be driven to share.

**Figure 2.** Slides from Caspar's *Street Fighter vs Mortal Kombat PPT*



### Practicing Authorship on Social Media

Caspar's authorship practices on social media centered around connecting and communicating with others. When compelled by his passions or interests to compose online, Caspar employed particular strategies to share thoughtfully without falling victim to impulsiveness. He worked to balance his emotional drive to compose with his

concern for his own privacy and reluctance to spark conflict with his audience. Caspar utilized three main practices when authoring on social media: (1) finding platforms with audiences who shared his interests; (2) being thoughtful about how to approach educating others without creating conflict; (3) practicing self-censorship when necessary.

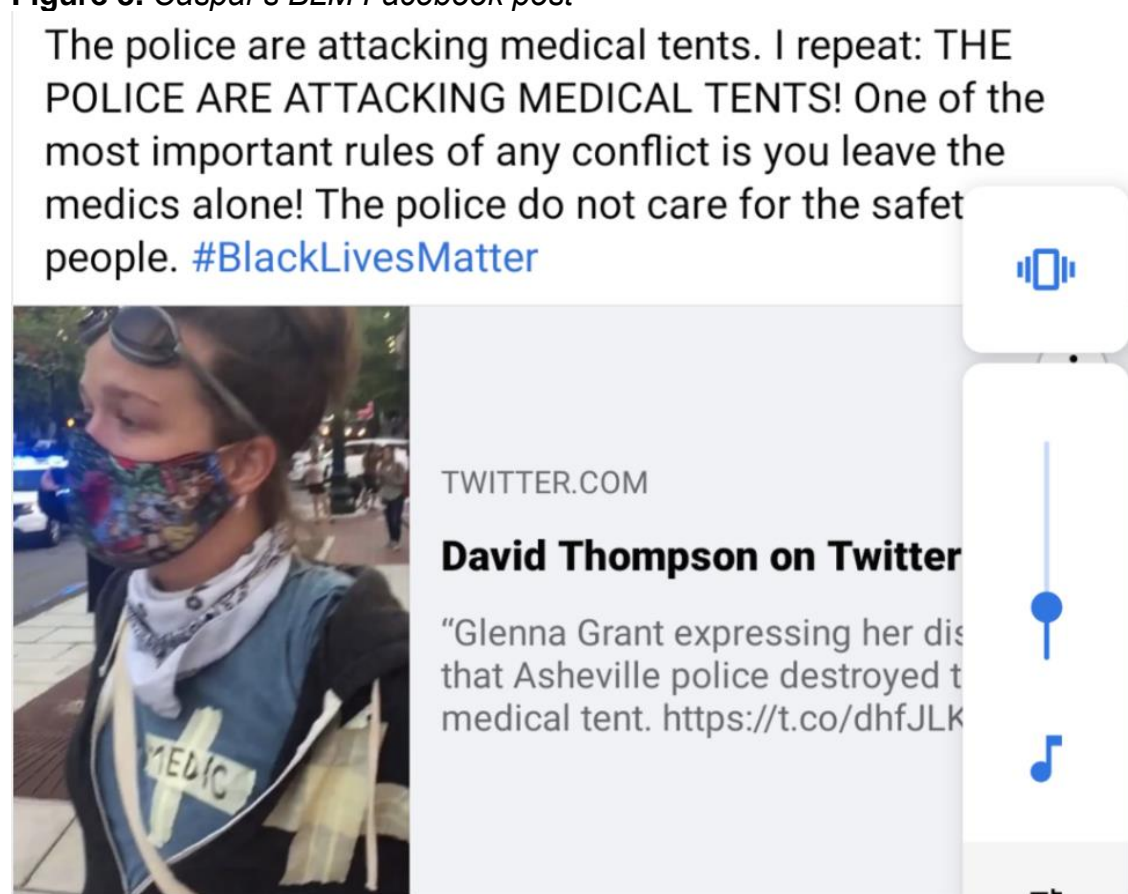
First, on social media Caspar enjoyed finding and engaging with like-minded communities he did not have through his offline networks. For example, on Reddit, Caspar was able to share insight and opinions on topics that interested him that were not as popular among his offline friends (e.g., America's Next Top Model television show). This platform acted like a conversational outlet for him, a space to find connections through shared interests. He also enjoyed reading and lurking on Reddit, where he found others' thoughts on topics he liked readily available. In general, Caspar was aware of his audience's interests across platforms so that he could choose where to share his compositions. On Twitter, for instance, he knew he had a high number of followers who were fellow teachers and interested in education-related topics. Here he posted content he knew his educator audience would appreciate.

Second, Caspar sought to inform and educate others on topics he cared about but was thoughtful about how best to engage with an audience who might not agree with his ideas. He valued social media as spaces for learning and educating but explained that he was cautious with his word choice and avoided inciting too much disagreement. For political content, Caspar took time to communicate clearly. For example, in his Facebook post expressing support for medics during a Black Lives Matter (BLM) event (Figure 3 below), Caspar described feeling compelled to post

because of the importance of supporting the BLM movement but strategically planned what BLM content would be most welcomed by his Facebook audience. He explained that his audience on Facebook would be less politically liberal (i.e., less likely to support BLM) than his audience on Twitter. Rather than share content into an echo chamber of others already in agreement with his stance on BLM (i.e., his Twitter audience), Caspar wanted to expose his less-liberal audience (i.e., on Facebook) to more BLM and anti-police brutality content than they might otherwise see. He explained that he knew he could not make his post “too controversial” or else it would be ignored or cause conflict rather than conversation; he thought this post would be effective because it is not in direct support of BLM but about the treatment of medics at the event. His goal was to educate and inform others, not collect likes; he was pleased when he was able to inform and share resources with one person who commented on his post.

Third, Caspar was aware of the potential dangers and consequences of posting on social media. Another strategy Caspar frequently applied when composing for social media was self-censorship. He hinted that he had suffered a bad experience on social media after a regrettable post and has since been careful about posting too impulsively. He explained that he would allow himself to type out an impassioned, personal post but would carefully consider whether or not to actually post it. More often than not, he would delete it before actually revealing it to an audience. He described himself as a private person, and although his social media posts were tied to his personal feelings or beliefs, Caspar was purposeful about what platforms would be best suited for projecting certain parts of himself (e.g., sharing a less-political BLM medics post on Facebook to avoid excessive conflict).

**Figure 3.** Caspar's BLM Facebook post



Both Caspar's passion and caution when composing on social media reflected how deeply he valued his posts. He always remained true to his ideals and embraced being himself on social media; however, he made informed and careful choices about managing his audiences and shared only when and where he felt safe.

### **Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction**

Similar to his broad definition of authorship as an act of creating, Caspar viewed his students as the authors of everything they created, whether writing a response to a prompt or making a multimedia project. The most important skills he wanted his students to master were the ability to communicate effectively with various audiences and the ability to express themselves in ways that were meaningful to them. His

teaching philosophy focused on helping students develop the skills and confidence they needed to be authors in their everyday lives. Connections between Caspar's authorship on social media and his approach to composition instruction centered around how to express yourself as an author while still being safe and aware of social contexts (e.g., biased media and audiences, impacts of online algorithms). The two core aspects of his social media authorship that paralleled his approach to composition instruction were: (1) emphasizing criticality, caution, and recognition of biases; and (2) valuing the pursuit of personal interests.

First, Caspar described the importance of students approaching composition creation and consumption from a critical perspective. He believed they needed to be able to recognize when they were being manipulated and when dishonest content was influencing them or their authorship practices. He spoke about empowering students to make choices about how they were seen by their audiences or how they engaged in "systems" that impacted their lives. Caspar defined systems as the social contexts or protocols in place that perpetuate biases or inequity (e.g., the inequities in the college application and acceptance process, the biases perpetuated by the spread of inaccurate or manipulated data online, the biases reinforced by online echo chambers, the inequities and biases supported by algorithms). He explained that often these systems were invisible to students because they were seen as commonplace when in actuality, students should recognize and question these problematic systems:

I want them to be aware of those systems and be aware of how to combat those systems . . . [T]here are systems in place, and I want the students to be able to recognize those systems and to make sure that when they engage with those systems, *they're* engaging [on the system], [it's] not the system just engaging *on them*. It's giving them the agency to choose if they want to be involved with it or not.

Caspar explained that he brought this perspective into every lesson he planned, always integrating clear connections to current, historical, social, or political issues and supporting students' development of informed opinions and worldviews.

For example, he would never teach a novel in isolation but sought to help students understand it within history, politics, or the universal human experience. In a planning document he created to brainstorm approaches to teaching *The Crucible*, Caspar wrote:

*The Crucible* deals with many themes of religion, deceit, sexism, racism, [and] allegory of history. There are so many ways to compare this text to relevant history, texts, conversations, so much that if a teacher cannot come up with a few [critical perspectives for students to study] it's not because they aren't trying, it's because they are trying to hide certain critical lenses.

For Caspar, each lesson was an opportunity to facilitate students' exploration and demystification of society's injustices and real-world problems; any lesson that did not contribute to students' developing the critical thinking and agency necessary to successfully navigate the systems surrounding them was flawed. Caspar's social media authorship was reflective of this defensive stance against inequitable systems. His commitment to safety and privacy when posting on social media was a result of his sense of agency and heightened awareness of the risks associated with online authoring (e.g., facing negative attacks from trolls, recognizing the consequences of losing anonymity by going viral or being shamed online). He wanted his students to be prepared to be informed and think critically as authors despite having to compose in a society rife with inequities and injustices.

Second, Caspar used social media to pursue his own passions and interests; he carried these same practices into his lesson planning strategies. When describing his

composition instruction, Caspar explained that he prioritized creating relevant lessons that connected to students' interests. He took great pride in his social media and pop culture knowledge and defined his lesson style as one that forefronted the implementation of many multimedia sources that would be relatable to students. He actively tried to learn about his students, their identities, and what they enjoyed, and then used that information when creating lessons. For instance, Caspar planned composition units that included content from popular movies like *Get Out*, computer games like *Among Us*, and television shows like *Criminal Minds* all based on his students' interests. Although Caspar did not interact with students on social media due to privacy concerns and the limitations of being a student teacher within his mentor's classroom, he had occasionally brought in content from social media for students to analyze or discuss (e.g., TikTok videos with topics or themes related to the curriculum). Caspar believed that authoring should be aligned with personal interests and preferences, even when composing in formal classroom settings. He explained that he discovered through experience that students could learn how to write strong argumentative papers critiquing a favorite television just as effectively (if not more so) as when asked to compose about texts or media they found less engaging or relevant. He wanted his students to enjoy composition and connect authoring to their personal interests in the same way that he enjoyed authoring on social media because he composed content on the topics, ideas, and values that were interesting or personally important to him.

Caspar's authoring on social media and his approach to composition instruction were both characterized by caution and a critical perspective as well as a commitment



to embracing personal interests. Caspar was both a *careful* and *passionate* author on social media, and he planned and ran his classroom to support students in developing similar authorship practices.

### **Individual Case Findings: Emma**

The second case in the study focused on Emma (she/her), a young, white woman whose most-used social media were Instagram and Snapchat. She identified as a feminist who valued authenticity and speaking out for social or political causes in which she believed. As a future secondary English teacher, Emma grounded her teaching philosophy in uplifting student voices. The sections below summarize findings from Emma's case for each research question.

#### **Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media**

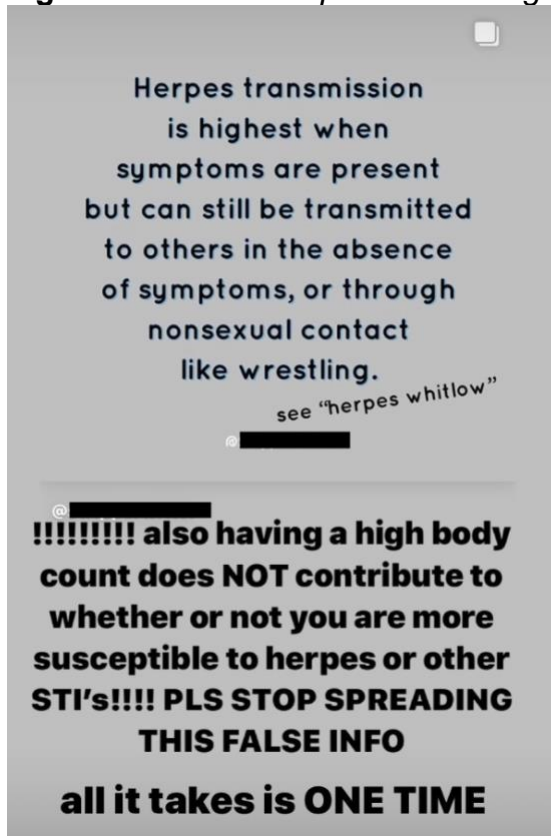
Emma believed that anything that can be created using original ideas or that is an original *presentation* of someone else's idea counts as authoring. To Emma, authored content can come wholly from the author's own thoughts or opinions, or it can emerge as a unique perspective, presentation, or "spin" inspired by someone else's content. She also broadly defined authoring as a process of creation, inclusive of anything that one can *create*, such as social media posts, works of art, or marketing designs. During one interview, to exemplify her definition of authorship, she held up a bag of coffee beans and explained that someone had authored the bag design. Emma readily claimed the identity of being the author of everything she created, including her social media content.

To situate her conception of social media authorship within her broader identity as an author, it is important to note that Emma was an unapologetic and confident

author in all contexts. She was the proudest of compositions that she felt best reflected her authentic self. For instance, in an Instagram story she shared with me (Figure 4 below), Emma spoke out about common misconceptions surrounding the transmission of herpes, a topic about which she wanted to spread awareness. The top portion of the post is a re-post from someone else, and she added her own response below it. Emma used bold text, capitalized various words for emphasis, and started her post with a series of exclamation points to ensure no one questioned her firm stance. Emma's comfort voicing her opinions carried through all her authoring. When a friend reached out to her for help navigating a challenging relationship, Emma created a pro and con list outlining reasons she believed her friend should not stay with her boyfriend. Emma explained she was supportive of her friend, but she was also comfortable being open and direct about her advice.

Emma loved being herself and using her voice in every composition. To her, everything she authored was an extension of her identity, and she was proud to present herself through her creations.

**Figure 4.** *Emma's herpes PSA Instagram story*



### **Practicing Authorship on Social Media**

Emma's most prominent authorship practices on social media stemmed from her need to cope with the tension between her passion for "authentic" self-expression and the social expectations that she please her audience. Emma was adamant about being herself online and resented the idea that she should censor or edit her content to impress others or avoid arguments. She expressed frustration that as an educator she was told to severely censor what she posts online. While she agreed "inappropriate" content should not be shared (i.e., bad language), she rejected the idea that her opinions and her right to share information on social media should be restricted (e.g., she should not have to take down a picture of herself in a bathing suit). A clear distinction between what content was inappropriate versus what content was unfairly

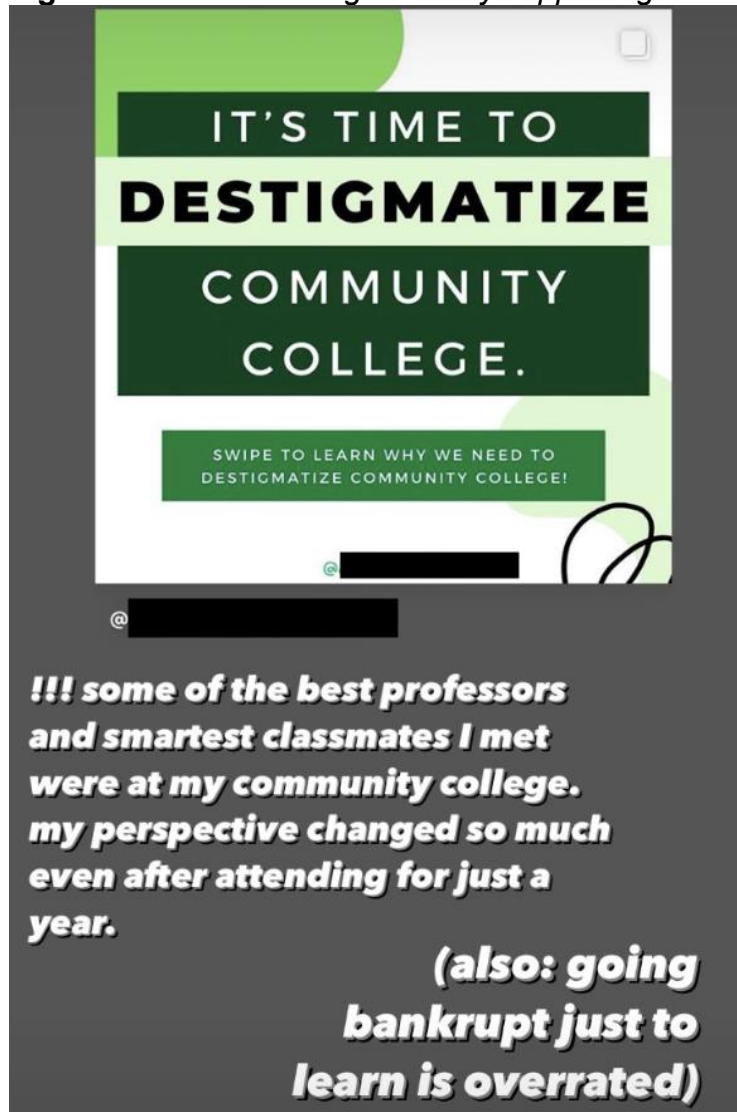
censored eluded Emma, and her authorship on social media was complicated by this tension. She frequently employed two main authoring practices to balance wanting to “be herself” on social media with satisfying audience expectations of “appropriate content”: (1) she focused on creating content about lived experiences and social causes she was passionate about; and (2) she looked for overlap between content that felt authentic to her and was also likely to be interesting to her audience.

One practice Emma embraced to celebrate her authenticity on social media was sharing content that she found meaningful and reflective of her identity. Although she hoped that her audience enjoyed or benefitted from her posts (e.g., learning from her posts about equity and education) she did not assume that this would happen nor required it to feel proud of her authorship. For instance, in her Instagram story post supporting community college (Figure 5 below), Emma shared her positive personal experience attending community college and advocated for others to consider the choice. Her post shows a re-post of someone else’s content at the top with the main text stating “It’s time to destigmatize community college.” Underneath, Emma added her own content, describing what she enjoyed about learning in community college (i.e., excellent professors, intelligent classmates, saving money). She used bold text and exclamations points, like her text style in her herpes post, to communicate her passion for the cause. She hoped that her openness and public statement would inspire others but ultimately cared more about being able to share her own experiences from community college and participate in spreading awareness of a social issue that was important to her (i.e., affording college, destigmatizing community college). She used social media to tell her story and confront social or political issues.

A second authorship practice Emma employed was looking for overlap between what she considered authentic content and what she believed her audience would like. She organized her audiences on different platforms or accounts (e.g., finsta vs Instagram vs Snapchat) so that she could share different content in different spaces and maintain a professional image when necessary. She specifically chose content that she thought would intrigue her curated audiences on different platforms based on their interests (e.g., posting about social justice in the classroom on Twitter where her teacher-friends might see it). She also described calling on her friends to help her generate witty captions that her audience might appreciate. Emma enjoyed being herself on social media and getting to share that authentic self with others. Although she did not want her audience to dictate her content, Emma still wanted her audience to be able to connect with her posts. For example, in her bittersweet post about graduating college during the pandemic, she shared both genuine reflections of her feelings *and* pictures with humorous captions that she knew others would enjoy or find relatable (Figure 16).

Emma sought a balance between being herself online and acknowledging her audiences' preferences. Emma evaluated the quality and success of her posts in terms of how confident she felt about her content (e.g., how accurately it reflected her viewpoints, experiences, or aspects of her identity) compared to how well it aligned with her audiences' interests.

Figure 5. Emma's Instagram story supporting community college



### Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction

Emma considered everything her students created as authoring: "Students are authors every day, whether they know it or not." She centered her discussion of composition instruction around students' identity development, focusing on the importance of honoring students as individuals and helping them learn to view and respect others in the same way. Emma hoped her students would learn to be their authentic selves through their composition and develop transferable authoring skills that

would empower them to confidently create and communicate in ways they found valuable. This teaching philosophy reflects her emphasis on authenticity when composing on social media. Just as she valued being herself when posting, she wanted her students to not only find and embrace their own identities but have the skills and confidence to share who they are and express themselves freely.

In addition to Emma's philosophical perspective on teaching composition, her instructional approaches paralleled her social media authorship. Two core perspectives she used to shape her composition instruction were reflected in her own compositions on social media: (1) valuing choice and self-expression; and (2) embracing a critical perspective as an empowered storyteller.

First, Emma firmly held an overarching commitment to treating students as individual people (i.e., not just learners) and focused her instruction around providing choice and autonomy to students to forefront self-expression in her classroom. She wanted all students to feel their unique identities, skills, and interests were welcome in her classroom, so she often created assignments that let students select the form and content of their compositions. For example, Emma designed a multimodal choice project (Figure 6 below) as part of her coursework that she intends to use in her future classroom. She explained that she loved the unit she created around this assignment because it was about exposing students to a variety of compositional forms and letting them choose what they wanted to study and practice further. By giving students the autonomy to choose a type of composition that *they* liked or that was meaningful to *them* as authors, rather than having students prioritize pleasing an audience (i.e., composing to satisfy their teacher or get a certain grade), Emma hoped to instill a sense

of pride and confidence in her students. Emma practiced these same beliefs through her social media authoring. Emma was highly confident posting on social media because she was confident in being herself and did not post with the primary goal of pleasing her audience. Emma celebrated her unique identity through her social media composition and aimed to inspire her students to have similar experiences authoring in her classroom.

Emma also approached her composition instruction with the goal of preparing students as critical thinkers and empowering them to use their voices. For Emma, this meant creating space in her classroom for students to create knowledge and develop informed opinions. She considered herself a “facilitator” of learning, rather than an authoritative figure, and wanted students to recognize that they can develop their own worldviews. Emma feared that students who were not taught to think critically and engage with social or political causes that impacted them would be easily “manipulated.” For example, she wanted her students to recognize that school policies and curricula typically privilege only one form of the English language—what many call “standardized English”—even though this form of the language is not inherently better or more valuable than Black English or different dialects. She hoped that by helping students gain awareness of the racist and oppressive educational policies that impacted their literacy development, they will be better prepared to fight or overcome them.

Emma wanted to empower her students to speak out on topics they cared about and share their *own* stories their *own* way. She explained, “It’s critical that students’ stories are heard in the fashion that they want them to be heard in.” Rather than feeling obligated to compose within the confines of privileged literacies or restrict their self-





expression, Emma used her composition instruction to grant students the freedom to explore, think for themselves, and practice developing and sharing their ideas and identities. Her multimodal unit plan artifact, for example (Figure 6) not only exposed students to a variety of genres but prompted students to tell their stories in whatever form they were drawn to. The prompt for the project read, “When was a time I found the courage to do the right thing? When was a time I fought hard to overcome?” Emma described wanting the project to create space for students to celebrate themselves through developing their voice style. She gestured emphatically, raising her hands to indicate she wanted to “hold up” her students above her own voice and “support” them in sharing their narratives with the world. Similarly, on social media, Emma’s voice is at the core of all of her content. She felt empowered to be herself and share content that revealed her stance on various political and social issues. In her classroom, Emma wanted to create space for students to do the same.

Emma’s overall approach to composition instruction emphasized supporting students’ identities in the classroom, whether by encouraging personal expression or the critical thinking and sense of empowerment necessary for creating and voicing a unique worldview. Emma’s social media authorship followed this same commitment to genuine personal expression and honoring her authentic voice and ideas regardless of audience perception or opinion.

**Figure 6.** Emma's multimodal choice project assignment directions

*Finding Courage in our Lives*

*When was a time I found the courage to do the right thing? When was a time I fought hard to overcome?*




As we have seen throughout this unit, the stories we create and share with each other have more than just an immediate feeling. The narratives that we create and share can have an everlasting effect on us as readers and members of society for generations to come. For this assignment, you will create a multimodal piece that tells a story about finding courage in your life.

Because this assignment is multimodal, it must include at least 2 modes of storytelling in the same submission. These modes should “converse” with each other, meaning they will support one another in their message.

This can include, but is not limited to (Pick 1 from each side):

1. Short story	1. Images (photographs you've taken or cited images), or drawings/paintings
2. Poetry	2. Collages
3. Spoken Word Audio	a. magazine cutouts, word collage
	3. Poster (with images)
	4. Spoken Word Audio (do not choose this twice)



### Individual Case Findings: Jessie

The final case in this study is Jessie's (she/her). She was a young, white woman whose most-used social media were Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest. She identified as part of the LGBTQA+ community and was an aspiring novelist and amateur digital artist. Jessie was a pre-service teacher of secondary English and Special Education (SPED). Her teaching emphasized creativity and creating space for all students to feel valuable

and inspired as authors. The sections below summarize findings from Jessie's case for each research question.

### **Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media**

Jessie conceived of any activity that required creative effort as authoring, including posting on social media, making to-do lists, and cooking dinner. She believed authoring included retweeting or sharing others' posts on social media because choosing how or what content to associate with your profile constituted creating a unique "theme" that is presented to others. To place Jessie's conception of authorship on social media in context, Jessie saw herself as an author in many genres and formats. She described not only her creation of social media posts but the authoring that went into her digital artwork, schoolwork, and creative writing. Creating something original was at the core of Jessie's understanding of authorship. For example, even though her artwork on Instagram was inspired by tracing basic shapes from images, Jessie brought her own creative eye to re-envisioning the picture, picking and choosing colors and details, and developing a style distinct from the original. The album cover art piece in Figure 7, her take on the *Immunity* album cover by Clario, was something she enjoyed making before posting it to Instagram. Jessie explained this piece was for a friend; it was valuable to her because it was something she had worked hard on and was proud to share.

Jessie's authorship was characterized by creativity and personal enjoyment. Jessie thought finding joy and taking pride in authored work were most important, and she expressed satisfaction with her artistic abilities that were not tied to audience feedback or critical acclaim. She thought of her compositions as a form of "self-care"

and explained that others' opinions did not have to change her personal valuing of her authored work if she had fun and felt good about her creative experience. Regardless of whether her authoring was intended to advance her career (e.g., writing a novel, composing lesson plans) or not (e.g., digital artwork), Jessie firmly believed that authoring should bring joy and satisfaction, and be tied to personal value.

**Figure 7.** *Jessie's album cover artwork*



### **Practicing Authorship on Social Media**

In alignment with her broad beliefs about authorship, Jessie authored on social media for enjoyment and personal satisfaction. Almost all of Jessie's posts were related to her lived experiences or personal interests. She described her transition from frequently posting selfies during her high school years to posting about aspects of her identity beyond her physical appearance. Few of her recent posts included images of herself. When discussing how she developed her approach to social media authorship,

she explained, “I just kind of figured out who I was and what I cared about and my priorities in life.” Jessie viewed her authoring on social media as a reflection of her life and passions, and while she made choices about what she shared based on what she considered to be appropriate for various audiences on different accounts or platforms (e.g., remaining professional when posts could be accessed by her bosses), she was not ultimately concerned with her audience’s opinions. Jessie cared about sharing content that was important and valuable *to her* above all else. Jessie used three main strategies to inform her authorship on social media: (1) she restricted her content to topics and ideas that brought her joy; (2) she used social media to curate and chronicle memories she cherished; (3) she managed different audiences across different platforms or accounts.

First, Jessie used social media as spaces to explore and share her own happiness. Jessie’s overall approach to composing on social media initially came across as casual; she repeatedly explained that she did not think her audience would care about her content, and she was ambivalent about her audience’s opinions regardless. For Jessie, posting was not primarily about communicating to her audience but about enjoyment. She created her art Instagram account because she liked creating digital artwork; when first exploring Pinterest, she described having fun gathering images related to characters in her novel and was not even sure how to access or create an audience on the platform. She was not political nor prone to composing posts inspired by heightened emotions (other than enjoyment). Jessie saw her social media content as representative of her identity and chose to post about her joy, personal likes, and interests.

Second, Jessie utilized social media platforms for capturing and organizing fond memories. She described using social media to track life events and accomplishments much like a scrapbook. She saw her shared memories as a way to keep others informed about her life if they were interested, but mostly, Jessie liked being able to save memories to reflect on later. For example, when she first moved to a new city, she posted collections of images showing her adventures exploring her new home (see Figure 8 below). Jessie explained she enjoyed looking back at these pictures as reminders of how far she has come in adapting to a different and challenging environment. Similarly, Jessie kept a specific reel (i.e., a collection of posts) on Instagram just for tracking her favorite books she had read. Despite the public setting of her social media platforms, Jessie focused on posting content of personal value, considering herself to be the most important audience for her compositions.

Jessie consistently prioritized her own likes and interests when composing on social media but had a nuanced approach to acknowledging the presence of her audience, even if audience satisfaction was not her main concern. Thus, the third strategy Jessie most often employed when posting on social media was her careful maintenance of different audiences and presentation of different personas on different platforms or accounts. For example, she had an Instagram account specific for sharing her digital artwork. Anyone who did not want to look at her digital art could choose not to follow that account and instead get updates from her by following her personal Instagram account. On Snapchat, she had a general account and a more personal one where she could send her “rants” to a small audience of close friends. This separation

technique also helped Jessie maintain a professional image in spaces where employers might view her content.

In general, Jessie enjoyed having an audience on social media because she liked to share content and experiences that were important to her. She posted confidently knowing her compositions were meaningful to her and not otherwise having expectations about audience reactions—putting her content out into the world was satisfaction enough.

**Figure 8.** *Jessie's Instagram post capturing memories in a new city*



### **Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction**

Jessie considered everything her students made in the classroom to be examples of authorship. Her general teaching philosophy centered around wanting students to value themselves, their voices, and their work. She focused her pedagogy on getting all students to have a growth mindset about their composition abilities. Jessie

emphasized creative writing in her instruction and prioritized giving students the freedom to write about whatever they wanted. She talked about all writing having value and wanting students to understand that they did not have to worry about trying to be “perfect” (e.g., having perfect spelling). Instead, Jessie envisioned creative writing as an outlet for students to express themselves and recognize the value of their own *ideas*. Jessie was completing her Special Education (SPED) endorsement; her commitment to inclusive instruction and creating a positive classroom environment for all learners was at the foundation of her teaching strategies. Jessie lived this teaching philosophy in her social media authorship too, composing for creative expression and personal enjoyment or pride above all else.

Two major connections emerged between Jessie’s social media authorship practices and her approach to composition instruction: (1) focusing on self-expression and personal choice, and (2) finding pride and enjoyment in the creative process, not just the finished product.

First, Jessie emphasized wanting to be an inclusive composition teacher, one that encouraged all forms of self-expression and granted students the freedom to choose how they composed. Jessie supported composition in a variety of forms in her classroom, purposefully limiting essay writing and increasing creative opportunities. She described wanting to implement daily creative writing time in her own future classroom so that students could practice expressing themselves. In sample lesson plans she wrote and hoped to teach in the future, she had students writing comics, creating social activism pieces in various formats, writing book reviews, and finding pictures online, all as part of her classroom composition activities. In a lesson she created and intended to



teach about social activism, Jessie incorporated a project where students chose the topic, and format to create their own examples of compositions promoting social justice (see Figure 9 below). This lesson allowed students to decide what content and form of composition were most meaningful to them; the most important goal of the lesson was for students to feel “inspired” and “empowered” as individuals to understand and make their own choices about how to fight against societal inequities. All of Jessie’s composition instruction prioritized identity development and creative self-expression, aiming to support students in being themselves through compositions. Similarly, Jessie’s social media composition practices reflected this close tie between her understanding of authoring and identity. Jessie was comfortable expressing herself and creating social media content that brought her happiness; she wanted students to experience that same feeling of contentment and self-awareness through their authoring.

Second, Jessie prioritized teaching composition as a *process* that students should feel confident enjoying at all stages without the burden of having to accomplish a “perfect” final product. She believed her focus on creative writing was an important part of building students’ confidence during the composition process. Jessie explained, “I think composition's a good way to put thoughts to paper and then taking pride in your thoughts and wanting to share them and having them more organized in front of you.” Her goal of having students write creatively on a daily basis exemplified this. Jessie wanted to create a safe and encouraging environment for students to become comfortable taking creative risks with their compositions. She reflected that one of the biggest barriers students face to being authors in the classroom is their own insecurity

and struggles with wanting to meet required standards instead of finding enjoyment in the creative process. The most important sentiment she hoped to instill in her students was that "All ideas and all things you write are valuable and welcomed." She did not want any student to feel "left behind" and wanted students to embrace the idea that there were "no limits on writing." All students should feel comfortable composing without the pressure of conforming to specific standards or rules that can be addressed later (if necessary). Jessie adamantly believed that getting students to create and value their own creations was the most important step of the composition process.

**Figure 9.** *Jessie's Black lives and language matter lesson summary*



**Title: Black Lives and Language Matter**

**Grade Level**

High School

**Background Information:**

By this lesson the students should have knowledge of the grammar rules in Black Language and the relationship between language and power, specifically how this is shown in the education system. Following this lesson students will hopefully become more aware about different ways to become active in regards to the unfair bias towards languages.

**Objective:**

The purpose of this lesson is to be inspire students. First, to show students that people are fighting back against the inequality they are facing in today's world. Second, that the students can fight back too. Activism does not have to be a huge thing either, students can share a poem written in BL or a chant and that is part of them engaging in their community with activism.

**Experiences:**

Students will first start in a small, short discussion sharing their knowledge about the Black Lives Matter Movement. Then they will read #Stay Woke (Abstract, pgs. 4-8 & 15-19). I then will show a form of activism that incorporates the Black Lives Matter and Black Language. After students will make their own form of activism incorporating BL into it. This can be a chant, poem, poster with a slogan, etc.

Towards this end, Jessie minimized the importance of standardized grammar and language practices in favor of promoting language inclusivity and appreciation of language diversity. She shared a lesson that exposed students to how schooling privileges “White Mainstream English” unfairly and advocated for every student having the opportunity to feel confident “speaking up and speaking out” both in class and in society (see Figure 10 below). In the Language and Power lesson she designed and plans to teach once she has her own classroom, Jessie wanted students to reflect on their own experiences and on research to consider how inequity and privilege may cause people to take less pride in their own language, voice, or compositional ability. She hoped increasing students’ awareness of problematic schooling and test practices would help them shift their attitudes towards their authorship and that of others who may have different language backgrounds or practices. Jessie’s belief that all forms of composition are valuable and that what matters most is having enough confidence to enjoy and take pride in your compositions resonated across both her instruction and her social media authoring. On social media, Jessie shared unedited pictures, imperfect examples of her artwork, and memories that held meaning to her. She was unafraid and unapologetic about valuing her voice, ideas, and opinions. The same pride and self-assurance Jessie felt authoring online, she strove to help her students find through their compositions in her class.

To summarize, Jessie's expressions on social media of her passions and commitment to sharing what she likes reflected her teaching beliefs about wanting students to feel comfortable expressing themselves through their compositions. She found value in her social media posts if only through her own enjoyment and getting to

express her identity; she sought to create this experience for students in her classroom; they should value and take pride in themselves and what they create.

**Figure 10.** *Jessie's language and power lesson summary*



**Title: Language and Power**

**Grade Level**

High School

**Background Information:**

Students at this point will have taken many standardized test. These tests measure students exposure and expertise White Mainstream English (some people refer to this as 'standard' English).

**Objective:**

The purpose of this lesson is to show the unfair relationship between language and power. How WME is the 'dominate' language and therefore has power over standardized tests that all language speakers take.

**Experiences:**

The lesson will begin with a discussion about the way standardized tests are written. Then students will read the Students Right to Their Own Language statement. After reading students will perform a Think-Pair-Share about what they think about the statement and compare it to their experiences in education. Then the teacher presents research on ACT scores and race.

### **Cross-case Analysis**

The sections below present themes across the three cases (i.e., Caspar, Emma, and Jessie). I highlight significant similarities and differences and analyze how considering the pre-service teachers' experiences in juxtaposition provides further insights into each of the research questions.

### **Conceptualizing Being an Author on Social Media**

All three participants had a clear vision of composition on social media as a form of authorship. Their general conceptions of authorship were broad and inclusive of various types of creating and presentation, even if text was not the main format. Emma

and Jessie described examples of authoring that were strictly visual, non-text designs (e.g., visual art). Caspar similarly explained that while he doubted individuals who created non-text compositions would claim the title of “author” (e.g., someone who completes a welding project would likely choose the title “welder” over “author”), he would never restrict someone’s use of the term: “If someone wants to call themselves the author of something they created, sure why not.” Relatedly, all participants recognized a distinction between originality of *content* and originality in *presentation*—both of which could constitute authorship. For example, Emma argued students who remix content learned from a textbook into a PowerPoint are still authoring, and Caspar described history telling as authorship because even though certain facts remain “unoriginal” the spin, style, and tone all contribute to a unique presentation. Jessie used the term “creative effort” to define originality; as long as the creator had input some of their own creativity into the project, it counts as authoring.

In addition to a general agreement about the scope of authorship, all participants conceptualized their authoring on social media as aligned with their identities and self-expression. Caspar’s authorship was often characterized as passionate, stemming from his heightened emotions or feelings about certain topics or beliefs (e.g., posting about teacher salaries, see Figure 15 below). Relatedly, Emma felt strongly about her social media reflecting her “authentic self” and was careful to only post content that she felt was a genuine representation of who she was. Figure 11 shows a screenshot of Emma’s Instagram video of her first interaction with a pig. Emma was eager to share this artifact with me and emphasized repeatedly, “I just *love* pigs!” She explained that she had always wanted to meet a pig and that her love of pigs was well-known amongst

her friends and family. In the video, Emma broke down in tears of joy just looking at the pig and had to be encouraged by her boyfriend, who was videoing the moment, to move closer and finally pet the animal. She was excited to share the recording on Instagram because it was an important event to her and something that she knew her audience would appreciate. Jessie similarly described her social media use in terms of opportunities to share or document important content about herself. She not only captured memories (e.g., Figure 8) but also her artwork (e.g., Figure 7). Social media were spaces for all the participants to express themselves; they embedded their identities into all of their social media compositions.

**Figure 11.** *Emma's Instagram post meeting a pig*



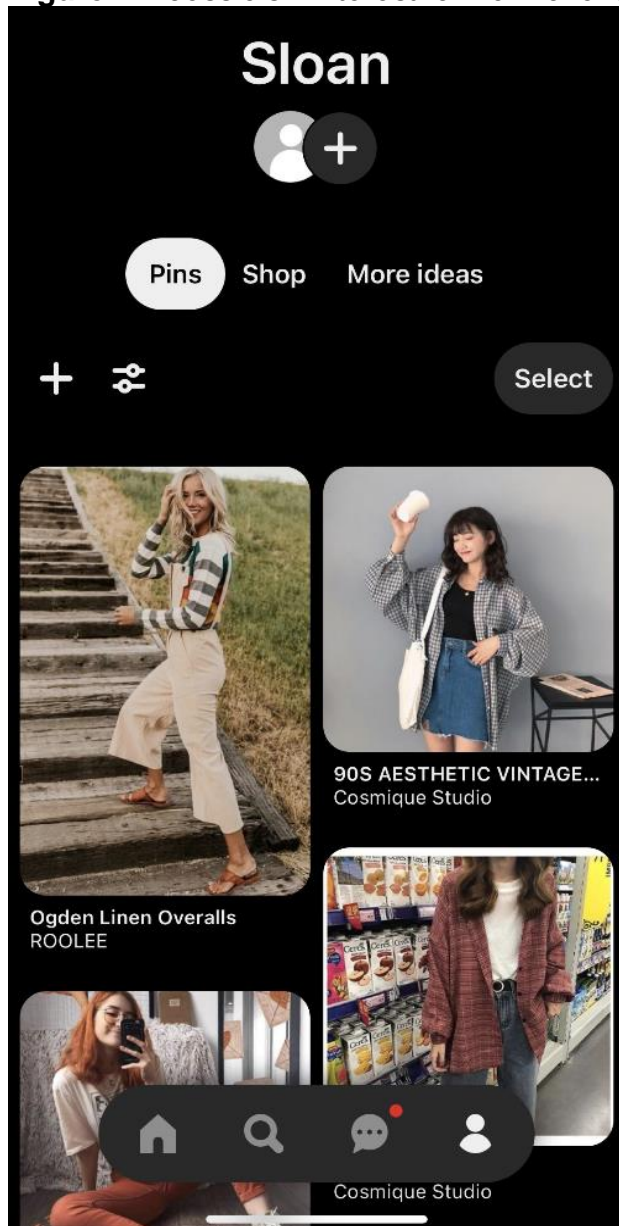
## **Practicing Authorship on Social Media**

When comparing the social media authorship practices between Caspar, Emma, and Jessie's cases, I found two main themes: (1) composition content was dedicated to topics that the pre-service teachers found personally enjoyable or addressed political or social causes they valued; and (2) audience management was essential.

First, across the social media authorship practices of the three participants, one prominent commonality was their approach to content selection. The pre-service teachers all prioritized creating and sharing content that they were passionate about rather than pleasing an audience. Social media were platforms where their personal preferences or interests directed their compositions. Jessie prioritized her own satisfaction and enjoyment on social media, even to the exclusion of an audience. On Pinterest, for instance, Jessie did not make her posts public and instead used the platform to view others' pins and curate content for herself. She explained that she used Pinterest to brainstorm and collect ideas for characters in the novel she was writing (Figure 12). She liked using Pinterest because it helped her visualize her characters and keep track of ideas for their outfits and looks. On Instagram, Jessie maintained a reel of all the books she had read and enjoyed. Although her audience was able to review the posts, she admitted the collection was mostly for her and that she enjoyed having a list of her favorite texts to reference (Figure 13). Jessie's focus on her own joy and satisfaction in her posts was similar to Emma's practice of enjoying her authorship on social media by being authentic. In her Instagram post when she met a pig for the first time, Emma loved being able to share her genuine happiness (Figure 11).

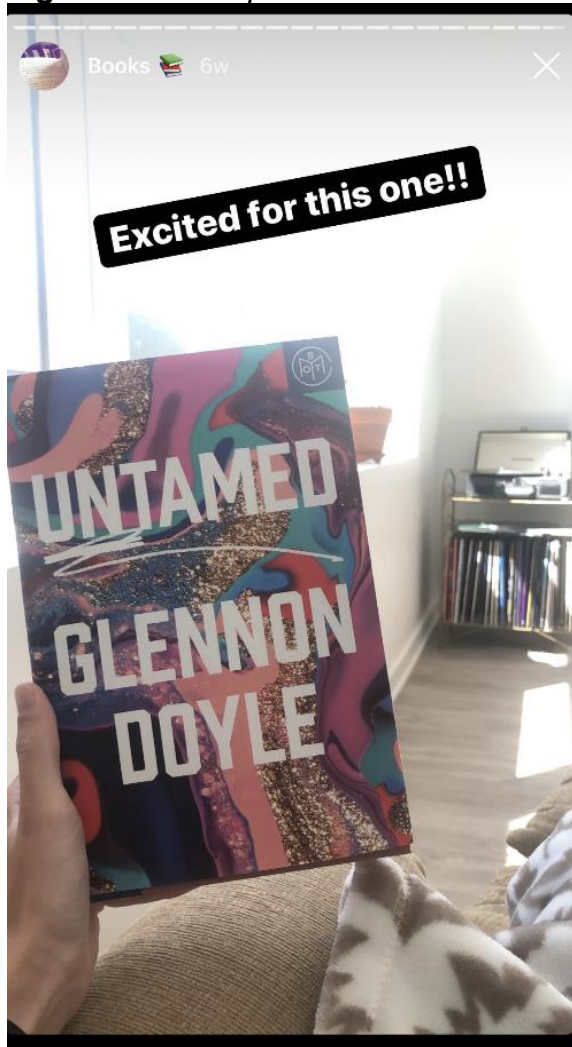


**Figure 12.** *Jessie's Pinterest for her novel character Sloan*





**Figure 13.** *Book post from Jessie's Instagram reel*



Caspar also used social media as an outlet for his interests and joy. On Reddit, he connected with communities of others who liked the same content and topics (e.g., television shows). This led him to create memes specific to his niche interests. He shared several memes that he created for Snapchat and explained the jokes related to each, qualifying each story with an admittance that they likely would not be understood by anyone who had not seen the anime that inspired them (see Figure 14 for examples). He told me he often made memes for a specific audience of only a few friends that he reached through Snapchat and treated them like inside jokes. Although

his audience was small, Caspar took great joy out of making memes that he thought were clever; his own enjoyment was more important than connecting with a large group of others.

**Figure 14.** *Caspar's Snapchat memes*



Another important commonality in participants' content in their social media compositions was attention to political and social issues. Both Caspar and Emma used social media as platforms to engage in social critique and advocate for justice and equity-related causes. Caspar frequently composed on social media with the goal of educating others on political topics he cared about (e.g., BLM [Figure 3], voting rights, teacher compensation [Figure 15]). In Figure 15 below, Caspar composed a retweet on Twitter that added a political spin to another poster's joke about drama between teachers. Caspar explained that he wanted to enhance the humor while also layering in an important social message about teachers' pay. He described this type of post as "on brand" for him: a composition that is cautious about inflaming his audience (in this case using humor to lighten the tone), while still making a statement about a cause Caspar is passionate about. For Emma, engaging in political content was an important reflection of her authenticity. Being herself online meant using her compositions to draw attention

to the political and social issues that were important to her. While she did not focus on the goal of educating others as much as Caspar did, she did believe that putting out content that defined her political stances was an integral part of being herself online (e.g., destigmatizing community college [Figure 5], stopping the spread of misinformation about herpes [Figure 4]). Social media offered all three participants the freedom to focus on content that mattered most to them, whether related to their interests, passions, or other causes that inspired them to compose.

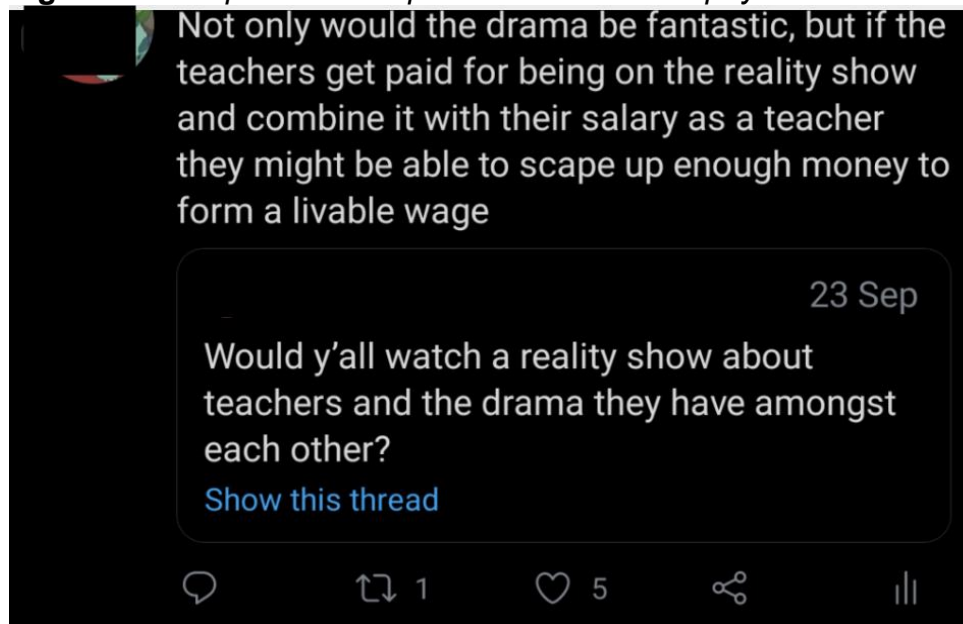
The second major theme across the social media authorship practices of all the pre-service teachers was their diligent audience management. The participants each discussed how they maintained separate audience groups on different platforms and determined where to post certain content based on which platform had the most suitable audience. Caspar was perhaps the most adept at this, using different platforms for specific purposes (e.g., posting about favorite television shows on Reddit threads, choosing to post about BLM on Facebook where his audience was less politically liberal and more likely to be influenced by his content [Figure 3]). Caspar composed largely *toward* or *for* his audience, prioritizing educating others and making content decisions for different platforms based on audience. For example, when describing his composition process when tweeting about teachers' pay (Figure 15), Caspar explained that he decided to tweet because he saw the post as a good opportunity to make an important point about how teachers are compensated to an audience that might not be fully informed or aware of the issue. He knew his Twitter audience included some educators, but many were individuals he knew might learn something new about teachers' experiences by reading his content. He described his post as "cheeky;" he

was proud of his ability to wrap an important message into a humorous statement that would still be palatable to his Twitter audience, which thrived on pithy jokes that were easily digestible within Twitter's 280-character limit. He reflected on this post and his audience by elaborating:

I am an educator and I talk with a lot of educators, but a lot of my friends are not [educators]. So, even though [teacher pay] is something that they probably think about, it's not something that they *have* to think about all the time. And I think by [bringing up the topic], it keeps it on their minds because as much as you think about things, you think about issues, if something doesn't directly affect you, there are times where you completely forget about it.

Caspar always considered the purpose of his social media compositions within the context of how they may impact or inform his audience. He focused his content on his interests and passions but let his audience influence how they were crafted and where they were posted.

**Figure 15.** *Caspar's Twitter post about teachers' pay*



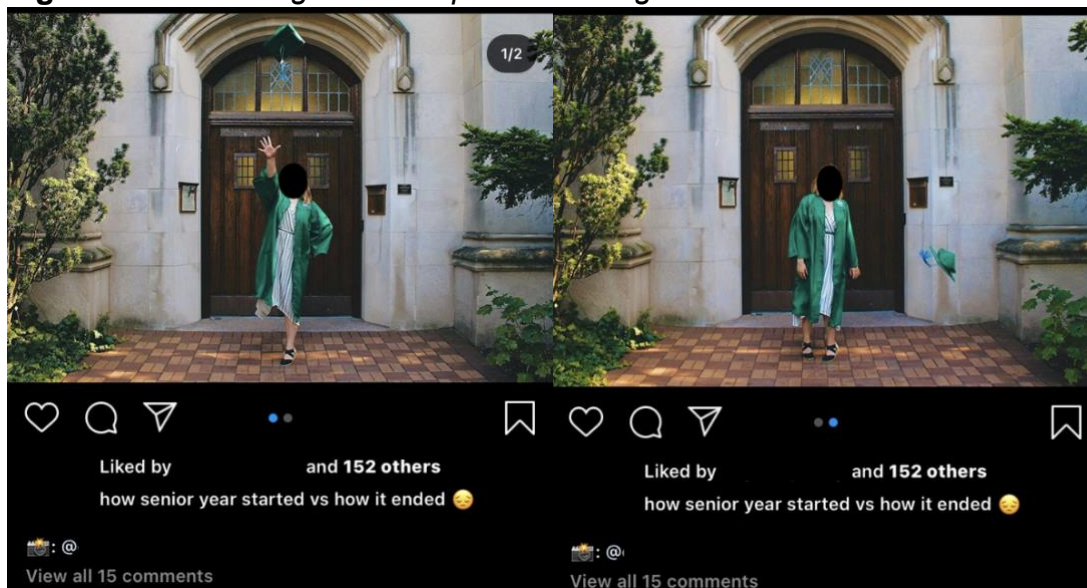
Of the three pre-service teachers, Caspar paid the most attention to his audience, but both Emma and Jessie also incorporated audience management techniques into their authorship practices on social media. Jessie gave the least

attention to her audience but still acknowledged that she considered whether her content was “professional” or “appropriate” before posting so as not to offend anyone who may see it. She also made expert use of multiple accounts and separated audience groups on different platforms. For example, she created a separate Instagram account for her digital art so that individuals could choose to follow that content if they wanted. She did not want to force her artwork on her audience from her personal Instagram if they were uninterested. She also maintained two Snapchat accounts so that she could differentiate between what she wanted to share with close friends versus acquaintances. Her priority was always her own enjoyment and satisfaction when posting online; she authored almost entirely *for herself* rather than others, but she was still thoughtful about situating her authoring within the audience groups she created and managed.

Emma, conversely, sought to find more balance between authoring for herself and for her audience than did either Caspar or Jessie. She valued authenticity and wanted to post content that was a genuine reflection of herself; however, she determined where to post certain content based on which platform had the most suitable audience. She did not completely prioritize her own opinion and enjoyment over her audience’s (as Jessie did), and she did not compose primarily with the purpose of impacting, pleasing, or influencing her audience (as Caspar did). Her Instagram post about her graduation (Figure 16 below) captured the tension between her desire to be authentic while also shaping her posts for her audience. In the post, Emma shares two pictures of herself in her graduation gown, the first showing her excitedly tossing her cap into the air and the second, showing her standing and watching the cap fall to the

ground. She paired the photos with a caption reminiscent of a meme that stated, “how senior year started vs how it ended [disappointed emoji].” Emma explained that she had to process a lot of complex emotions when she graduated; her graduation ceremony was canceled due to the initial spread of COVID-19. She wanted to share a post that expressed her emotional experience but that would also appeal to her audience. To accomplish this, she used the humor of the two photos and caption to strike a lighthearted and relatable display of her bittersweet feelings. Emma also pointed out that she used unedited pictures of herself in the photos and that she selected pictures that she liked and thought were “cute,” even though some of her other friends pointed out that she could have used more flattering images.

**Figure 16.** *Emma’s graduation post on Instagram*



### **Connections Between Social Media Authorship and Composition Instruction**

Caspar, Emma, and Jessie all shared connections between their social media authorship and their composition instruction. Although each teacher had developed their own philosophy about teaching composition, two common themes emerged across

cases: (1) participants' emphasis on self-expression and personal choice when authoring on social media was reflected in the authorship opportunities they provided for their students, and (2) participants' engagement with political and social justice topics on social media was reflected in their commitment to prioritizing critical thinking and the use of critical, anti-racist, and equity-oriented perspectives in their classrooms.

First, all three pre-service teachers' social media practices emphasized self-expression and sharing personal interests or passions. These practices resonated with their instructional strategies which encouraged students to have expressive freedom when composing. Caspar's use of social media to find communities that shared his niche interests (e.g., threads about his favorite television shows on Reddit) was reflected in his discussion of bringing students' interests into his classroom. A core belief in Caspar's teaching philosophy was that students should be allowed to engage with texts and composition prompts that were relevant to them. He wanted his curriculum to be engaging and focused on transferable composition skills rather than completing a checklist of classic texts. After hearing students chat about a new anime they enjoyed, he incorporated various episodes into his curriculum. He prided himself on taking students' content requests seriously; he described examples of bringing TikTok videos and all types of media from movies to computer games into his classroom as texts that students could choose to explore and analyze for various projects. Caspar explained that by giving students access to content and topics they enjoyed and found relevant, as part of composition assignments, they were more engaged and invested in their skill development.

Similarly, Emma embraced being unapologetically herself on social media (e.g., sharing her emotional first meeting with a pig [Figure 11]) and approached her composition instruction with the goal of providing students with the same freedom and opportunity to be themselves through their authorship. Emma's teaching philosophy emphasized letting students decide what meaningful authorship meant to them in both content and form. Emma wanted her students to come away from her instruction with the skills and confidence to be authors in whatever contexts were relevant to their personal goals. Getting students to embrace authorship as a transferable skill meant using her classroom to help students find content ideas that interested them, as well as exploring a variety of formats, genres, and media. Her multimodal choice project (Figure 6) facilitated students not only telling a story about themselves but also choosing the format and genre of their response to the prompt. In an image she created as part of her coursework meant to help her reflect on her identity and priorities as a teacher (Figure 17 below), Emma wrote about her responses (i.e., comments in the blue thought bubble) to common problematic pieces of advice given to new teachers (i.e., comments in the white speech bubbles). She pointed to one sentence in particular that was significant to her teaching composition and elaborated:

That last sentence of the second paragraph, "We need cultures to grow and thrive in our society" I think definitely impacts how we teach composition because . . . there's more than one way to write, just like there's more than one way to analyze a text. But there's a lot of ways that you can compose something, like compose a story, a poem, anything. And the way that cultures can grow and thrive is through composition, and through sharing those experiences. Just encouraging students to be candid and open with their experiences and supporting them in whatever kind of composition that they wish to do, that's my job.



Emma relished the authentic voice she crafted for herself on social media and brought a similar perspective to how she hoped her students would find and embrace using their voices and telling their own stories in her classroom.

**Figure 17.** *Emma's teacher identity self-reflection visual*



Note: Image recolored to increase text contrast for readability.

Jessie's creativity and focus on personal enjoyment when composing on social media (e.g., collecting memories through posts to save and review later [Figure 8], sharing digital artwork [Figure 7]) came through in her composition instruction as well. Not only did she center her approach to composition instruction around frequent creative writing but founded her classroom philosophy around wanting all students to feel confident as authors. She believed that getting all students to feel comfortable composing and engaging in the creative process was important in composition

instruction. Jessie wanted her students to know that “all writing is welcome” – that the goal of authoring is not to have perfect grammar or a polished final product but to develop a unique voice and enjoy the process. She explained that she wanted “every student [to feel] valued in the classroom,” for “every student [to be] listened to and heard,” and that “positivity” was essential to her classroom environment.

In addition to the parallels between participants’ self-expression on social media and the freedom of expression they allowed in their classrooms, pre-service teachers’ engagement with issues on social media that promoted equity and social justice translated to similar equity-focused content and skill development in their composition instruction. Caspar and Emma most directly exemplified this theme through their political openness on social media, reflecting how they approached equity in their classrooms. Caspar not only used social media to educate others about social justice causes (e.g., his Facebook post about BLM [Figure 3]) but also practiced caution and awareness when composing on social media; he considered how content may be perceived or influence others either positively or negatively. He was careful to be informative in his political posts but not inflammatory and spoke fervently about the importance of understanding social media algorithms and how content can be used to unfairly manipulate users. Similarly, in his classroom, Caspar emphasized preparing students with the skills they needed to be critical thinkers, consider issues from all angles, and be aware of how various social structures perpetuated inequities. The lessons and learning activities he shared with me were framed using various critical lenses (e.g., feminism, Marxism) and involved students in argument development and the critical examination of multiple perspectives (e.g.,

compare and contrast essays, Socratic seminars [i.e., an intellectual debate activity]). Caspar composed thoughtfully and with a critical eye toward identifying and fighting inequities; in his classroom, he hoped to prepare students to approach authorship from a similar perspective.

In Emma's case, her comfortability composing about equity and social justice issues on social media (e.g., her Instagram post about destigmatizing community college [Figure 5], her Instagram post about stopping the spread of misinformation about herpes [Figure 4]) paralleled her comfortability addressing equity in her classroom. As part of classwork in her teacher preparation program, Emma created an infographic of her teaching philosophy (Figure 18 below). One main goal she set for herself as an educator was to "foster critically aware and active youth." This sentiment is also evident in her self-reflection visual (Figure 17 above), where she advocated for challenging outdated curricula that privileged white men and asserted, "We need to constantly challenge the ideas around us and learn from other perspectives." Emma believed in using her classroom to prepare her students to be advocates for equity and justice just as she used social media to be a voice for social causes she valued.

In contrast to Caspar and Emma, Jessie did not author on social media using critical perspectives or share content meant to promote equity or social justice. Her main purpose for composing posts was for personal enjoyment, and unlike Emma, she was not interested in sharing political statements as part of her self-expression or creative output. However, Jessie's approach to composition instruction aligned with Caspar and Emma's with regards to its emphasis on equity and the integration of a critical lens in her classroom. She was confident designing lessons that addressed

social issues (e.g., Figures 8 and 9) and centered her teaching philosophy around inclusivity and equity.

**Figure 18.** *Excerpt from Emma's philosophy of teaching infographic*



Interestingly, although the pre-service teachers engaged in their own social media authoring for various purposes, they did not use social media within their classroom composition instruction or facilitate students' authoring on social media. Caspar and Emma spoke out about causes they cared about on social media because of their audiences; they saw social media authorship as an opportunity to educate or influence others. All three participants wanted to use their composition instruction to prepare students to compose from a critical perspective and be confident as authors when they engaged in social and political contexts, but none of the pre-service teachers prioritized utilizing social media composition with their students to accomplish this. Caspar, Emma, and Jessie all shared that they could envision social media being useful

within their classrooms when I asked them directly; however, their teaching artifacts from their teacher preparation program (which could presumably be used in their future classrooms) did not provide evidence of this. Their conception of authoring on social media for themselves seemed disconnected from how they conceived of their future students' authoring (not) on social media.

To summarize, each participant had complex beliefs and practices surrounding authorship on social media and their composition instruction. Looking across the cases reveals surprising intersections and divergences. Whereas all three shared a broad definition of authorship that included social media composition, and all saw themselves as authors, they had contrasting perspectives on audience management. Interestingly, themes of self-expression and personal choice permeated all cases. All participants approached composition instruction wanting students to express themselves and have agency over their creative processes, much like the authoring practices that the pre-service teachers employed during their own social media authorship. The role of equity, social justice, and critical perspectives within social media authoring compared to the classroom was prominent but also inconsistent across cases. In the discussion chapter that follows, overarching themes from the findings are examined within the context of authorship theory (i.e., Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998) and current literature.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

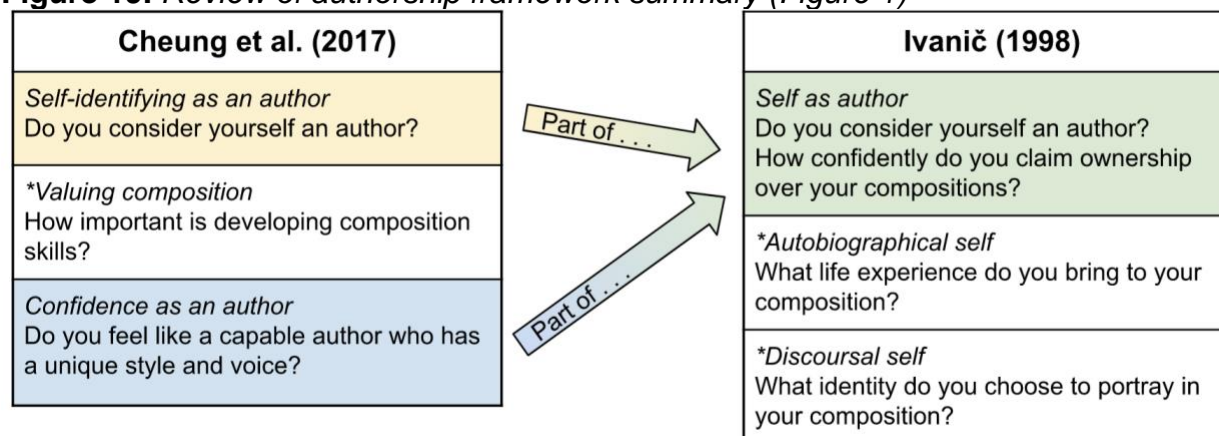
Next, I elaborate on connections between major findings from the study and relevant literature. In the previous chapter, findings from each of the pre-service teachers, Caspar, Emma, and Jessie, were summarized in individual case summaries and a cross-case analysis structured around my three research questions:

1. How do pre-service teachers conceive of being an *author* on social media?
2. How do pre-service teachers practice authorship on social media?
3. How are pre-service teachers' practices and conceptions of authorship on social media evident in their approaches to composition instruction?

In this chapter, I lean into the theories and theoretical wonderings I brought to the framing of my research questions. As described in my theoretical framework, the two prevailing authorship theories (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998) were developed in academic writing contexts and without consideration of social media or other informal composition settings. However, as New Literacy Studies (NLS) posits, legitimate literacies and authoring practices exist beyond formal school environments (e.g., Gee, 2008), and there is a need for theoretical exploration and development to help explain how *authorship* or *authorial identity* happen across contexts. Toward this line of thinking, sections in this chapter are organized by the main concepts associated with the two authorship theories (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998). I explore how well elements of these theories align with my findings as well as how my findings shed new light on these frameworks.

To help guide the reader, below is the visual summary of Cheung et al.'s (2017) and Ivanič's (1998) authorship theories originally introduced in my theoretical framework (Figure 19), as well as a review of each theory and its major elements.

**Figure 19.** Review of authorship framework summary (Figure 1)



Note: \*indicates authorship aspect that is not shared across theories.

Initially, I defined *authorship*, also termed *authorial identity*, as the author's understanding of themselves as an author. This was then unpacked through two related theoretical framings, one from Cheung et al. (2017) and one from Ivanič (1998). Cheung et al. (2017) broke authorship into three main elements: *self-identifying as an author* (i.e., acknowledging one's self as an author and taking ownership of one's work), *valuing authoring* (i.e., understanding composition as an important skill worth developing), and *claiming self-confidence as an author* (i.e., feeling capable as an author and recognizing one's ability to communicate a unique voice and unique ideas). Ivanič (1998) similarly defined three aspects of authorship, but she organized them into different selves at play within an individual during the composition process that are all placed within the author's socio-cultural context, called the *possibilities for selfhood*. The first of Ivanič's (1998) selves is the *self as author*, which represents individuals' self-positioning as an author and the extent to which they present themselves as authors.

This self also encompasses an author's feelings of confidence and ownership over their work. Ivanič's (1998) *self as author* not only directly aligns with Cheung et al.'s (2017) *self-identification as an author*, but also Cheung et al.'s (2017) depiction of *self-confidence as an author* and can be understood as a combination of both (see Figure 1). The second self in Ivanič's (1998) theory is the *autobiographical self*, which represents the identity an individual brings to their composition based on their own life experiences. Finally, Ivanič's (1998) third self is the *discoursal self*, which represents the identity the author chooses to portray in their composition. This self embodies the impressions of themselves the author consciously reveals in their text.

Below I explore the core elements of Cheung et al.'s (2017) and Ivanič's (1998) frameworks as they intersect with major thematic findings from this study and relevant literature. Several aspects of the authorship theory were best illuminated in juxtaposition to each other, but all elements of both theories are covered across the following sections: (1) Self-identifying as an author (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998); (2) autobiographical and discoursal selves (Ivanič, 1998); and (3) confidence and value (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998).

### **Self-identifying as an Author**

As described above, *self-identifying as an author* from Cheung et al.'s (2017) theory overlaps with the self-as-author element of Ivanič's (1998) theory, and in this section, I use those terms interchangeably to represent the following shared idea from both frameworks: authorship includes claiming an identity as an author and recognizing one's compositions in various contexts and formats as authored content.



One of the most prominent themes that emerged from this study was Caspar, Emma, and Jessie's broad definition of what it meant to be an author and what types of creation could be considered authorship. The pre-service teachers were open-minded about what they considered examples of authorship (i.e., authoring is not just writing but includes all creative processes), and they all claimed identities as authors that applied across their varied creative endeavors, including their composition practices on social media. Their conceptions of being an author on social media (and in general) support the New Literacy Studies (NLS) paradigm and the movement toward pluralizing literacies (Gee, 2015), which assert that literacies are the varied and evolving competencies individuals need in different social contexts (Street, 2003; 2009). That is, the literacies (i.e., competencies) needed to advocate for a cause on Twitter may evolve based on the purpose and audience for one's tweet and be distinct from the competencies needed in other social contexts, liking sharing gaming interests on PowerPoint.

Their NLS orientation to authorship was also reflected in the range and variety of composition opportunities the participants brought into their classrooms. They appreciated the creative freedom they were afforded as authors on social media, and this manifested in their instructional practices. Emma, for example, incorporated a variety of forms and genres in her composition instruction, giving students the opportunity to choose which literacies they found most interesting or useful (Figure 6). Perhaps because of their own diverse authoring both on social media and across other contexts, the pre-service teachers understood that—given the wide range of literacies that could be part of authoring—identifying literacies that are *relevant* to their students

was paramount. Similar to their authorship experiences on social media, the pre-service teachers focused their composition instruction on giving students choices and encouraging students' self-expression (e.g., creative writing prompts and multimodal projects). These pedagogical decisions are supported in the literature as avenues for increasing student authorship (Jones & Beck, 2020; Vetter, 2011). For instance, Jones and Beck (2020) found that high school students who are granted more agency in their writing (i.e., given space to take control over their work) developed writer identities with high confidence and a strong sense of ownership over their compositions. Similarly, in Vetter's (2011) study of high school students, the learners began positioning themselves as authors during class discussions once they were given creative composition assignments that allowed for self-expression. Students in both Bickerstaff's (2012) and Pytash's (2016) studies were reluctant authors in school because the work was not meaningful or interesting to them, but they thrived as authors outside of school (on social media and through other creative outlets) because they could pursue their passions and create without the restrictions of a formal assignment.

The teaching strategies Caspar, Emma, and Jessie described aligned with their goal of encouraging student authorship. Research has established that teachers who enjoy authoring themselves were able to create and implement a more effective composition curriculum than were teachers who did not because of the personal experiences and insights they can bring to their instruction (e.g., McCarthy et al., 2014; Street, 2003). That is, as Street (2003, p.46) found in his case study of pre-service English teachers, educators who have anxiety about composition, lack confidence as authors, or otherwise had negative perceptions about being authors were "unable or

unwilling” to provide excitement or passion for composing to their students. Conversely, pre-service teachers who “saw themselves belonging to two intellectual communities—writing and teaching—. . . simply had more to offer their students” (Street, 2003, p. 46). Findings from this study further support this sentiment. Each of the pre-service teachers found their own form of joy and satisfaction authoring on social media and demonstrated instructional moves (e.g., bringing student interests and creative projects into their classrooms) and philosophies (e.g., wanting students to recognize their compositions as valuable and as a way to voice their ideas) that created similarly generative authorship experiences for their students in the classroom.

Interestingly, although the pre-service teachers all indicated that they wanted their students to view themselves as authors and employed other strategies to support student authorship (see above), one significant strategy essential to the *self-as-author* aspect of authorship was noticeably absent—having students claim and use the title *author* for themselves. That is, the term or title of *author* was not frequently referenced in their instructional materials or plans (e.g., students were not taught they were *authors* nor were students taught to refer to themselves as *authors*). Caspar, Emma, and Jessie were educators who prioritized authorship by providing opportunities for student choice and creativity; however, in specific vocabulary usage or affirming identity statements that are essential to the *self-identifying as an author* aspect of authorship, their instruction was disconnected (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998). This may be explained simply by their lack of knowledge of authorship theory, as all three participants indicated they had not been taught nor had considered teaching students to call themselves *authors* until we talked about it during our final conversations at the end of the study.

After data collection, the pre-service teachers expressed interest in wanting to learn more about authorship theory and how to incorporate it into their instruction. Self-identifying as an author was one of the strongest aspects of authorial identity present in Caspar, Emma, and Jessie's own authorship on social media, yet it was also an apparent weakness in their composition instruction intended to support students' development as authors.

### **Autobiographical and Discoursal Selves**

Two important components of Ivanič's (1998) authorship framework introduced at the beginning of this study and reviewed at the start of this chapter are the *autobiographical* and *discoursal selves*. Recall that the *autobiographical self* represents the author's identity as established through lived experiences (i.e., the life experience that an author brings to their composition). The *discoursal self*, by contrast, is the self that the author chooses to portray through their compositions (i.e., the identity that the author wants their audience to perceive through their work). Here I discuss the autobiographical and discoursal selves together because it was through considering their relationship to each other that I illuminated insights not only to the pre-service teachers' conceptions of authorship on social media but also their composition practices addressing audience, and their approaches to composition instruction.

The autobiographical and discoursal selves overlapped within Caspar, Emma, and Jessie's consideration of identity and audience on social media and in their planned composition instruction. As authors on social media, all of the participants forefronted their autobiographical selves in their compositions, leading to a strong alignment between the autobiographical and discoursal self-concepts in Ivanič's theory (1998).

Emma valued “being authentic” in all her posts; Jessie posted only to serve her own interests and passions. Even though Caspar was the most cautious poster of the three, he still limited his content to ideas and causes that were personally significant to him. They all closely tied their life experiences and identities in the offline world (i.e., autobiographical selves) to the identities they projected on social media (i.e., discursal selves). Research exploring identity presentation on social media supports this finding, suggesting that rather than creating fake or disingenuous identities online, as some scholars have suggested (e.g., Shahane & Gore, 2018), individuals use social media to reflect lived experiences and develop authentic identities (e.g., Davies, 2012; Gleason, 2018b). In Gleason’s (2018b) study, for instance, three young adults explored and solidified their identities through their Twitter use. Similarly, Davies (2012, p. 28) found Facebook to be “an additional space for being” for her participants. The 25 young adults in her study used Facebook to practice various social literacy activities as extensions of their everyday lives; they interacted with friends and shared thoughts and ideas with others as they would offline, except without the limitations of restricting interactions within a synchronous time and space.

The convergence of the autobiographical and discursal selves that seems prominent on social media may be due to affordances on the platforms that facilitate identity work, exploration, and expression more extensively than can be achieved in other composition spaces. For example, Instagram users’ activities (i.e., posts, stories, commenting, liking) are archived on their profile pages. All content on Instagram is directly linked back to a person and contributes to that person’s identity presentation on the platform. All social media platforms include some amount of publicly shared past

activity on the site as part of an individual's profile, ranging from displays of content curated by the user (e.g., collections of pins on Pinterest, lists of followed accounts on TikTok) to public records of profile updates and archives of posts (e.g., LinkedIn creating and storing posts about profile updates, Twitter tracking all likes and followers). These features (i.e., unique profile creation and the public display of social networks) that prompt the overlap between the autobiographical and discursal selves are defining pieces of what makes online spaces *social media* (Ellison & boyd, 2013). As Ellison and boyd (2013) outline in their definition of social media, all such platforms must include a profile; public displays of networks or connections to others on the site; and features to create, share and interact with content. In static, offline writing, links between the author's identity and their writing are not instantaneous hypertext links but rather links readers make by flipping to the writer's biography or otherwise searching for the writer's biographical information. Distance between the autobiographical self and the discursal self is more easily preserved offline, but online, the features of social media minimize the distance and prompt users to create and consume content that is bound to individuals and their profiles.

The emphasis on the autobiographical self that the pre-service teachers found and embraced their authoring on social media was also found in their approach to composition instruction. They all expressed wanting their students to be themselves through their compositions and designed lessons around facilitating students' expressions of varied identities and interests that connected with their out-of-school lives (e.g., Jessie's emphasis on creative writing prompts; Caspar learning about students' interests and pop culture to bring relevant media and content into his lessons).

This personalized, identity-centric approach to composition instruction has been shown to support students' authorial identities in the classroom (e.g., Jones & Beck, 2020; Vetter, 2011; see section above); however, it also contrasts with typical expectations and requirements for students' composition skills in school. School composition assignments often emphasize knowledge or skill demonstrations rather than self-expression or creativity (i.e., students write factual essays or compose to demonstrate rhetorical moves or mechanics rather than share interests or creative inspiration) (Deane, 2018).

Since academic composing remains the most-privileged form of literacy education (e.g., Graham et al., 2014), the participants' teaching philosophies that counter this perspective can be seen as acts disrupting the status quo in composition instruction. The extent to which their disruptive pedagogy may be effective for students long-term remains to be seen and could not be captured in the scope of this study. Whitney (2011) discussed the tension created when personal, identity-centric literacies that are most often found outside of school (e.g., social media, journal writing, reading favorite books) are brought into the classroom as potentially "invasive" or "violating" to students (p. 55). She explained that the inherent "schoolishness" of school (e.g., being graded or evaluated by a teacher; structured experiences with specific outcomes) shapes literacy experiences and prevents in-school or for-school composition from being able to replicate out-of-school composition (Whitney, 2011). The pre-service teachers in this study did not reveal struggling with schoolishness-related tensions when bringing personalized, identity-centric composition into their classrooms and framed their instructional approaches as *preparing students for* out-of-school literacies as if to

elevate out-of-school composition above formal, in-school composition learning agendas. They considered their classrooms to be spaces for practicing and developing the authorship students would take into the real world. School composition instruction was meant to connect with out-of-school composition but not replicate or replace students' real-world authoring.

Although their multi-literacies approach that emphasized preparation for life beyond the classroom was reflective of trending approaches in current teacher education programs (Cervetti et al., 2006; Kim & Johnson, 2021; Smagorinsky, 2018) and national teacher certification standards (NCATE, 2008), the nuance of how they conceptualized *balancing* and productively bringing together in-school and out-of-school literacies made their teaching philosophies progressive. In the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education's standards (NCATE, 2008), teacher preparation programs must prepare teacher candidates to use a variety of pedagogical strategies and bring varied content and technologies into their classrooms effectively and be capable of creating a safe and engaging learning environment for students with diverse backgrounds and needs. The participants accomplish these goals with their highly creative lessons, integration of a range of media types, and commitment to facilitating relevant learning experiences connected to student interests, but they also go one step further in their understanding of how their classrooms can meaningfully blend formal in-school composition instruction with out-of-school literacies.

In the pre-service teachers' instructional plans, in-school and out-of-school literacies were not dichotomized but neither were they forced to overlap in intrusive or unrealistic ways as Whitney (2011) warns against; instead, the participants aimed to



create a hybrid environment that brought in-school and out-of-school literacies together without distorting them. For example, Caspar took the in-school literacy practice of constructing compare-and-contrast arguments and facilitated students applying them to out-of-school literacy contexts in which they critiqued media in various formats that were relevant to their interests. Emma and Jessie used similar approaches in several of their teaching artifacts. Emma addressed in-school literacy concepts like genre and narrative storytelling but integrated opportunities for students to make connections to their out-of-school literacies through choosing creative formats and content that was relevant to them outside of the classroom. Jessie's social activism lesson also employed this strategy. The participants wanted to use in-school literacies and out-of-school literacies *in support* of each other, creating what some scholars have called a third space (Gutiérrez et al., 1999; Moje et al., 2004)—a learning environment in which students productively utilize literacies from two spaces that might otherwise be considered separate or contradictory (e.g., home or communities literacies as one space and standardized school literacies as a second space).

Additionally, an examination of the autobiographical and discursal selves in this study revealed connections between audience and authorial identity. Rather than leaning into Ivanič's discursal self by choosing to portray an identity different from their autobiographical selves on social media, the pre-service teachers used audience management strategies to control who saw their content and still posted autobiographical compositions (e.g., maintaining different audiences on different platforms or accounts). The engagement in audience management practiced by the participants on social media resonates with Humphreys' (2016) classification of social

media as somewhere in-between interpersonal and mass communication platforms (p. 8). Jessie, for example, situated her social media authorship as mostly interpersonal, focusing on posting for herself and not worrying about reaching an audience beyond her immediate friends and family. Caspar thought of his social media authorship as closer to a type of mass communication—he composed with the intention of informing others and participating in broader social and political conversations. All three participants authored on social media with a thoughtful awareness of the audiences they were reaching with (or restricting from) their content.

However, the pre-service teachers did not bring the same attention to audience management in their composition instruction. One teacher discussed wanting his students to be informed about the risks of being exposed to and manipulated by the algorithms of social media but learning about or practicing audience management strategies was not evident in his teaching artifacts or instruction. Similarly, all three pre-service teachers addressed issues of institutionalized bias and discrimination in their composition instruction, but they focused this content more on building student confidence and critical thinking (see next section) than on the students' consideration of audience in their compositions generally, or in students' compositions on social media.

In fact, social media use was not prominent in the participants' composition instruction. Even though each pre-service teacher had positive authorship experiences on social media and translated many of those authorship elements (e.g., focusing on enjoyment and self-expression) into their plans for their future classrooms, social media platforms as spaces for students' authorship were not part of the pre-service teachers' instructional plans. This disconnect aligns with current research showing the difficulty of

effectively implementing social media in the classroom (e.g., Galvin & Greenhow, 2019; Greenhow et al., 2020). Issues of privacy versus publicity can make it difficult for teachers to safely facilitate authentic, public audiences for their students while still protecting their identities (Galvin & Greenhow, 2019; Greenhow et al., 2020). Youth more readily engage in composition that reaches and is relevant to an authentic audience, often seeking social media specifically to find an interactive audience for their work (e.g., Buck, 2012; Lammers & Marsh, 2015). However, they are also careful to control the size and make-up of their audience online, and in academic settings, where students are forced to accept a larger audience than they intended within their online networks (i.e., connect with classmates or teachers through platforms), they are likely to feel uncomfortable with the intrusion into their personally managed space (Waycott et al., 2017). This tension echoes Whitney's (2011) assertions about the risks of bringing too much schoolishness into personal literacy practices. When prompted to discuss the role of social media in their classrooms directly, the participants expressed neutral and cautious attitudes, all indicating they were open to it but were not eager to implement social media because of privacy and logistical concerns (e.g., social media are often blocked on school grounds; getting permission from parents is difficult and requires extra planning). The pre-service teachers did not seem to recognize the disconnect between how they eagerly brought aspects of their social media authorship into their classroom yet were not eager to bring social media itself into their instruction. Regardless, the disconnect seems understandable given the potential challenges to effective social media implementation—teachers already established and settled into

their own classrooms and school districts would be better situated to navigate effective teaching with social media.

### **Confidence and Value**

In this final section, I bring together the authorship concepts of *confidence* (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998) and *value* (Cheung et al., 2017), which intersected for the pre-service teachers both in their social media authorship and in the composition instruction. As mentioned at the start of the chapter, *confidence*, although present in both Ivanič's (1998) and Cheung et al.'s (2017) theories, was represented differently in each. Cheung et al. (2017) included a distinct element of their theory specifically for *confidence*, while Ivanič (1998) incorporated *confidence* into her *self-as-author* element. Here I examine the concept of *confidence* that appears in both frameworks as: the feeling of pride and ownership over composition and the recognition of skill and competency needed for composition. In addition to *confidence*, Cheung et al. (2017) included *value* as the final element of their authorship theory. In their framework, *value* was defined as the perceived importance of compositional skill development (e.g., the belief that knowing how to post on social media is a valuable skill). That is, a composition is more valuable if the author believes the skills necessary to create the composition are valuable. *Confidence* and *value* emerged as closely related for the pre-service teachers over the course of the study, and below I describe the insights I gathered by examining their connection.

The pre-service teachers found value in their social media compositions through posting content that was personally significant to them. Their prioritization of *personal value* encouraged confidence. The participants were confident in themselves as authors

because they felt strongly about the value of their compositions. Emma believed it was important to be authentic in her social media posts and was therefore confident authoring because she was proud of being true to herself. Similarly, Jessie's primary goal on social media was to post content that she enjoyed creating or that brought her personal satisfaction to share; as long as she met this goal, she was confident authoring. Caspar leaned heavily on his passions and interests to direct his authorship on social media and was confident posting because he was careful to share only the content he felt most strongly about.

The participants' understanding of *value* highlighted their feelings and attitudes towards their composed content more than the skills used for creation (i.e., the content was valued rather than the skills needed to create the content). In other words, the pre-service teachers evaluated how much they valued their posts based on how important they thought the content was and did not take the level of skill required to create the post into consideration. This perspective contrasts the definition of authorship laid out by Cheung et al. (2017), however, in which *value* is related to the skills needed for authoring, not the content itself. Interestingly, research on social media composition supports the participants' perspective on how value factors into authorship rather than authorship theory. The freedom to create content that is personally meaningful is an affordance that draws in many users (e.g., Lesley, 2012; Moje et al., 2009; Wargo, 2017). For instance, in Wargo's (2017) case study, he followed LGBTQ+ youth who found creating content on social media personally gratifying and valuable because they were able to craft and control their own identity narratives

The pre-service teachers' conceptions of *confidence*, however, were well aligned with authorship theory. Ivanič's and Cheung et al.'s definitions of confidence blend skills-based and attitude-based meanings. In their theories, confidence is related to competence (skills-based concept) and feelings of pride and individualism (attitude-based concepts). Authorship theory described confidence authoring as feeling like a capable author with a unique style and voice. The participants discussed confidence similarly, relating their confidence on social media to being proud of being themselves, to their ability to create quality content, and to their successful audience management.

The findings showed that the personal value and high levels of confidence that the pre-service teachers found authoring on social media appeared reflective of how they promoted authorship for their students. The participants not only wanted their students to feel confident when composing but to feel confident being themselves through their compositions. They emphasized choice and allowed students to pursue composition topics and genres that were interesting or relevant to them. Even though the pre-service teachers were not actively bringing social media platforms into their instruction for students to use, they recreated similar feelings of personal pride and personal value in the authoring opportunities they facilitated for students.

Additionally, all teachers discussed the confidence they wanted their students to have as authors and the value they wanted their students to place on their own authoring in terms of social impact and communication. They wanted their students to be able to compose toward social change—use their voices as authors to speak out about causes they care about. Their commitments aligned with the research on *critical literacies*, which emphasizes the use of literacies to uncover, critique, and transform

dominant ideologies or systems that protect inequities and power imbalances in society (e.g. Borsheim-Black et al., 2014; Luke, 2012; Mirra et al., 2018). The pre-service teachers wanted students to feel prepared and empowered to speak out for social and political causes and recognize that their voices mattered. The participants characterized the confidence they wanted for their students as active, a feeling that spurred them to engage in political or social change through authorship rather than remain neutral or passive. Critical digital literacies also prompt action and engagement; as Borsheim-Black et al. (2014, p. 123) explained, “language and texts are not neutral” and therefore pedagogy that embeds critical digital literacies into learning experiences must incite students to take political or social stances and compose from those perspectives. For example, Saunders et al. (2017) told the story of how a high school teacher facilitated and supported her students when they wanted to write a critical review of a recent school-wide assembly that they believed promoted problematic messaging. The students identified and developed their own critiques of the event and used their collaborative composition for the school newspaper to spark important conversations about cultural representation and authenticity in branding that spread to public social media exchanges and community news outlets. This type of bold action was also what the pre-service teachers hoped to empower their students to participate in. Confident authorship, as the participants described it, entailed not just feeling proud or believing in the value of your content, but also recognizing and using the power that comes with authoring for a cause.

This chapter outlined several important themes that informed my research questions and provided insights into the effectiveness of Cheung et al.’s (2017) and

Ivanič's (1998) authorship frameworks when applied to social media contexts. First, when considering the *self-as-author*, I found that while the range of literacies the participants considered authoring was aligned with extant literature and suggestive of strong authorship instruction, they were not employing one significant strategy necessary to support the development of the *self as author* in the classroom: teaching students to claim identities as authors and using the title *author* during instruction. Second, I found that tracing overlap between the pre-service teachers' *autobiographical and discursal selves* illuminated their nuanced approach to blending in-school and out-of-school literacies in their instruction and uncovered a unique skillset associated with audience management. Lastly, I discussed how *value* and *confidence* intersected for the participants both on social media and in the classrooms, while also noting distinctions between how the pre-service teachers conceived of *value* compared to its representation in authorship theory. In the chapter that follows, I use the themes and insights developed here to draw implications for theory, research, and teaching.



## **CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION**

In the previous Discussion Chapter, I explored major themes related to the pre-service teachers' authorship on social media and their approaches to composition instruction and made connections to current literature. Themes were also evaluated in relation to authorship theories (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998). In this final chapter, I zoom in on the discussion threads most relevant to my research questions and detail implications for theory, research, and practice. Limitations for this study are also described, and I conclude with a summary of what was gained from this research, the significance of my contributions, and a call to action for continued investigations and efforts in support of literacy education.

### **Implications**

#### **Theory**

In my practicum study (Galvin, 2019), I began exploring the possibility of revisions to current authorship theories (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998), all of which were derived within academic writing environments, in order to make them applicable to more literacy contexts. This study represents continued work toward this goal; it suggests new theoretical directions. Below I describe how current authorship theories did not fully capture and represent the authorship participants in my study demonstrated. Then, I outline a starting point for how authorship theory could be expanded based on my findings. These suggestions are meant to highlight the progress my research provides toward understanding authorial identity in social media spaces and represent a way forward for future research, especially for studies of authorship in online contexts outside of school.

I found that the social media authorship of my participants highlighted the importance of audience, but that current theory did not adequately capture the nuances of their audience management practices. Current authorial identity theory has focused on demystifying the author's understanding of self and how it related to their compositions (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998). However, this theoretical emphasis offers only a limited conceptualization of authoring as both identity work and a social practice, as the New Literacy Studies (NLS) paradigm espouses (Gee, 2008; Street, 2003, 2009). Ivanič (1998) created some space for an NLS perspective on authorial identity through placing the autobiographical self, discoursal self, and self as author within the *possibilities of selfhood*, the term she coined to describe the sociocultural aspects of composition. Although the possibilities of selfhood does contextualize Ivanič's (1998) authorial identity selves, her theory, and the framework established by Cheung et al. (2017), do not provide a clear structure for understanding how the role of audience impacts authorship. Ivanič's (1998) three selves (i.e., self as author, autobiographical self, and discoursal self) do not have specific outlines or core definitions that address how audience may influence them. Similarly, in Cheung et al.'s (2017) framework, audience is not necessarily excluded but is left to be inferred from the other elements (i.e., self-identification as author, confidence, and value). Confidence as a writer comes the closest to addressing audience through Cheung et al.'s (2017) description of having confidence in communicating ideas. This implies that the writer is communicating *to someone*—an audience. The lack of specificity, however, does not reflect the depth of attention to audience management seen by participants in this study (or in my previous practicum study).

On social media, audience was social and interactive for my participants; the pre-service teachers took time to consider the extent to which they cared about their audience reactions to their posts, and sometimes the goal of their posts was to incite a particular reaction or change audience thinking. Participants made choices about their content and how they presented themselves based on authoring goals related to their audience. Audience was something the participants actively controlled on social media and that directly influenced their authoring practices; however, current authorship frameworks (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998) did not clearly explain how to interpret audience management within their theories.

To address how the role of audience fits in authorship theory, I suggest elaborations within both Cheung et al.'s (2017) and Ivanič's (1998) framework to more directly include audience. These suggested revisions (Table 5) do not change the core pieces of either authorship theory but instead create space within each for clear attention to audience. For each of the three elements associated with Cheung et al.'s (2017) and Ivanič's (1998) theories, I crafted a question about audience to add to the prompt(s) already used to summarize each. The added questions (highlighted in green) summarize how audience could be relevant to each part of the theories. For example, under Cheung et al.'s (2017) concept about *confidence*, I added the question, "How does audience impact your confidence as an author?"

**Table 5.** *Adding audience to authorship theories*

Cheung et al. (2017)	Ivanič (1998)
<p><i>Self-identifying as an author</i> Do you consider yourself an author? _____</p> <p>Is audience important to consider yourself an author?</p>	<p><i>Self as author</i> Do you consider yourself an author? How confidently do you claim ownership over your compositions? _____</p> <p>Is audience important to consider yourself an author?</p>
<p><i>Valuing composition</i> How important is developing composition skills? _____</p> <p>How important is audience in determining the value of a composition?</p>	<p><i>Autobiographical self</i> What life experience do you bring to your composition? _____</p> <p>What role does audience play in determining how you portray yourself in your compositions?</p>
<p><i>Confidence as an author</i> Do you feel like a capable author who has a unique style and voice? _____</p> <p>How does audience impact your confidence as an author?</p>	<p><i>Discoursal self</i> What identity do you choose to portray in your composition? _____</p> <p>What role does audience play in determining how you portray yourself in your compositions?</p>

These questions may also serve as steppingstones toward larger revisions to authorship theory in the future as they facilitate the collection of data that may inform other needed changes to the frameworks to make them applicable beyond academic writing to writing in online contexts outside of schooling. For example, Cheung et al.'s (2017) *value* component was misaligned with my participants' interpretation of value within authorship. While the pre-service teachers focused on the personal value of the content, Cheung et al. (2017) intended the focus to be on the value of composition skills involved. By adding the audience-based question I incorporated into Cheung et al.'s (2017) value component, (i.e., How important is audience in determining the value of a composition?) I can explain how my participant's ideas about value are derived from how they considered their audience on social media. The pre-service teachers prioritized audience when thinking about the value of their authoring on social media—

they were posting specific content for a specific audience. They authored for themselves as the audience, creating content that made them happy; or, they authored for others with the intention of sharing or spreading content to an audience rather than expressing or demonstrating skill. If further research continues to highlight similar disconnects between value and skill development on social media, potential revisions to this aspect of Cheung et al.'s (2017) theory could be explored.

## **Research**

While there are many potential avenues for future research that can build on this study across the fields of social media, authorship, and composition instruction, I have chosen here to focus on two that relate most closely to authorship. As described above, I intended this study to contribute to conversations about authorship theory and update our understanding of authorial identity to include digital literacy and composition instruction contexts. Two important directions for future research that stem from this work are research on 1) the teachers' role in composition instruction and 2) the intersections between authorship and critical literacies. I describe each research strand next. One important direction for future research suggested by this study is the role of teacher authorship in composition instruction. My findings indicate that the pre-service teachers' authoring on social media informed their approaches to teaching composition; there is a small body of literature that shows that when teachers are writers themselves (e.g., published authors) their composition instruction benefits (McCarthy et al., 2014; Street, 2003); however, there is more still to unpack. Street (2003) explained how pre-service English teachers who had positive past experiences writing were able to enrich their teaching by sharing their excitement and experience with students. McCarthy et

al. (2014) similarly found in their case study of how elementary teachers negotiated influences on their writing instruction that teachers (knowingly or not) brought their attitudes and past experiences with writing into their instruction. They concluded that understanding how teachers' personal authorship influences their teaching is complicated by teachers' variable awareness of how their own authoring experiences inform their classroom decisions.

In particular, if teachers' authorship practices and attitudes from casual creative experiences online can impact how composition is taught, there are potentially vast influences shaping literacy education that have previously gone under-recognized or unrecognized entirely. Placing a New Literacy Studies (NLS) (e.g., Mills, 2010) lens over all types of composition in which teachers participate, highlights how many teachers could be considered prolific authors. When noting the extensive use of informal digital literacies, whether through social media or other technologies (e.g., Anderson & Jiang, 2018; Clement, 2020), the time pre-service teachers spent on informal authoring experiences that influence composition instruction may easily overshadow the time spent in training courses or professional development. We know that teachers' in-school literacy experiences growing up and as adults impact their attitudes and approach to composition instruction (Cremin & Oliver, 2017; Morgan, 2010; Norman & Spencer, 2005). For instance, pre-service teachers in Morgan's (2010) study who had anxiety and low confidence about their ability to teach writing all shared memories of their stressful classroom experiences learning to write and receiving discouraging feedback from instructors; these negative memories were barriers to developing effective pedagogical approaches to composition instruction that the pre-

service teachers worked to address and overcome during their professional training. What is less clear is how the more extensive authoring pre-service teachers engage in outside of formal school or training shapes their instruction. Teachers must be understood as authors in all spaces to fully understand how their authorship impacts their teaching.

A second promising direction for future research is to study how critical literacies—defined as the literacies needed to critique and confront societal inequities and power imbalances perpetuated through media (Luke, 2012)—and authorship intersect. Critical literacy perspectives from the pre-service teachers were evident both in their social media authoring and in their composition instruction. The scope of this study could not fully capture *how* and *why* discussions around social media and authoring are connected to critical literacies, but this emergent theme warrants closer examination. Social media are known to be places of social action and platforms for speaking out against biases and power inequities (Amgott, 2018; Lee, 2018), but the pre-service teachers' critical perspectives were not limited to their online posts; they were brought into their classrooms. As seen in my participants' experiences, critical literacies are increasingly prominent in instructional strategies as part of core instructional values that promote equity and progressive social change (e.g., Baker-Bell, 2013; Borsheim-Black et al., 2014; Comber, 2015; Mirra et al., 2018). For instance, Borsheim-Black et al. (2014) described the rise of critical literacies in the English classroom as tied to the movement toward re-contextualizing canonized texts (e.g., *To Kill a Mockingbird*). Instead of centering studies around automatic acceptance of normative ideologies (i.e., perspectives that often privilege Whiteness, heterosexuality,

Christianity, and other identity markers that are already most privileged in society), students are taught to analyze both *with* and *against* texts, to identify their projected ideologies and examine or critique them for inequities or biases (Boresheim-Black et al., 2014).

Perhaps the importance of critical literacies as they are related to both social media and the pre-service teachers' teaching philosophies was what led to their prominence in this study, but what is less understood is how critical literacies and authorship overlap. As youth take on more social activism, especially on social media (e.g., Amgott, 2018; Lee, 2018), and as critical literacies continue to rise in significance in the classroom and teacher preparation (Mirra et al., 2018), understanding how authorial identity can support or detract from an author's ability to apply a critical lens to a composition is important. Preparing students to be civically engaged and independent critical thinkers means facilitating their development as *critical authors*.

## **Teaching**

Implications for teaching that can be drawn from this study inform both secondary English education and teacher preparation programs. First, in the secondary English classroom, students are likely to benefit from learning about authorship vocabulary and being encouraged to take identities as authors. If we want to begin addressing the disconnect between students' literacy skills and the literacy skills most desired in the workplace (Murray & Perez, 2014; Oberländer et al., 2020; Raish & Rimland, 2016), we must first help students fully connect with the value and importance of literacy skills in a range of social contexts. Learning about and practicing authorship is a critical step



toward this goal for students as it helps them relate their literacy skills to their identities and encourages them to associate value and confidence with the composition process.

Most of the instructional strategies and philosophies the participants shared with me all centered around wanting students to embrace composition, feel confident creating in the classroom, and be proud to author and share their own ideas. In terms of attitudes toward composition, the pre-service teachers were already teaching concepts essential to authorship theory without using authorship theory vocabulary that would support metacognition. For example, when Jessie described wanting her students to complete creative writing daily to help support their confidence as authors, she did not incorporate instruction that taught students to identify what confidence *means* and what it *feels like* as an author. This type of instruction can help students reflect on their feelings and have the appropriate vocabulary prepared to discuss and describe their experiences. Similarly, teaching students what it means to *value* their compositions and their composition skills can help them identify compositions that they find meaningful. For instance, students could be asked to brainstorm what they value when creating or what makes something that they created valuable. This could not only help students more easily recognize when they value something they composed but can also provide insight to the instructor about what skills or content they could bring into the classroom to increase the value students find in their authoring.

Using the term *author* when referring to students and their work is also important. Taking time to define *author* and discuss the variety of authoring that students likely participate in daily would further encourage students to recognize and self-identify as authors themselves. Incorporating terms like *autobiographical self* and *discoursal self*

may be less useful to secondary English students as they likely do not connect with their prior knowledge, nor will they be useful in other contexts. However, emphasizing vocabulary like *identity* and *audience* instead can facilitate similar authorship conversations without the burden of esoteric language. Students can be asked to describe what identity they want to share with their audience in their compositions and can make comparisons between times when they choose to lean on their lived experiences and times when they created alternate identities to present in their work. This type of instructional connective tissue was the main gap and barrier between my participants' intentions to support their students' authorship and the effectiveness of their planned lesson activities.

Second, implications for teacher preparation programs include not only training instructors in strategies for teaching authorship (as described above) but also fostering teachers' development and awareness of their own authorship. Standards from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 2012) for preparing secondary English teachers do not yet cover authorship directly, but several requirements reflect elements of authorship. For example, the standards support the integration of a variety of media types from authors with diverse backgrounds (e.g., standards 1.1, 3.1, 4.1), which relates to the *self-as-author* and the *discoursal and autobiographical selves* by creating opportunities to discuss what counts as authorship and who can be an author (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998; NCTE, 2012). Other standards prioritize teachers making connections to students' interests, communities, and home languages (e.g., 4.4, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2), which can also contribute to students' belief in the *value* of their work and their *confidence* in being themselves in class (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998; NCTE,

2012). These connections highlight how authorship theory aligns with the overall philosophies of secondary English education programs, and I posit that furthering the integration of authorship into teacher preparation is critical for supporting large-scale literacy reform in K-12 classrooms, where teachers remain more comfortable teaching reading than composition (Cremin & Oliver, 2017; Gardner, 2018). Students' experiences with literacy education impact their confidence as authors (Cremin & Oliver, 2017)—students who have teachers who lack confidence in teaching composition will develop similar insecurities in their own authorship.

Direct exposure to and experience with authorship theory and its applications in the classroom would support pre-service secondary English teachers in synthesizing how various strategies and content in their training come together to facilitate their own and their students' development as authors. To start, this should address pre-service teachers' personal authorship growth. Novice secondary English teachers should be taught to: (1) recognize that *they are authors*, and that authorship exists outside of academic settings, (2) be *confident* in expressing themselves in various formats, and (3) *value* their varied forms of composition as authorship. Training and experience to develop these mindsets can be incorporated into teacher education programs by aligning content with NLS in its support of diverse literacies and that personal authoring practice and self-reflection activities prompt pre-service teachers to identify with their own authorship practices. Similar metacognitive activities like those described for secondary English students above could be effective for pre-service teachers as an opportunity to have teaching strategies modeled for them and to experience the process of learning about and reflecting on authorship themselves before trying to facilitate it for

their students. After attending to their own authorial identities, pre-service teachers can explore strategies to integrate the three learning objectives listed above for their students (see suggestions at the start of this section).

Relatedly, demystifying the connection between personal authorship and classroom composition instruction for pre-service teachers can help them identify what may be positively or negatively impacting their teaching. Participants in my study were not aware of how their authorship was reflected in their composition instruction and had not considered how they might be connected. If we want teachers to support their students in developing authorial identities, then we must support them in recognizing and valuing their own authorship not just as a facet of their identities but also as important to how they approach instruction in their classrooms.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations of this study. First, it is important to note that as a multiple-case study, this research was not intended to inform broad generalization. However, descriptive and exploratory work across several cases can put forth petite generalizations that contribute to the knowledge base of the field and can capture vicarious experiences from which readers can draw their own meaningful implications (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake & Trumbull, 1982). Additionally, interviews incorporating the review of participant-selected social media and other composition artifacts provide *snapshots* of authorship, but an ethnographic approach with a more constant immersion in data collection would offer further valuable perspectives, including examples of authorial identity transitions over time and potential insights into the culture of studied groups. Similarly, interviews facilitate insight gathered directly from the participants;

however, observational data would add another layer of insight into how the pre-service teachers act as authors and teach authorship. In particular, I would recommend that future studies consider data from classroom observations of pre-service teachers' field placement experiences paired with a discussion of their composition instruction artifacts to better understand how aspects of their social media authorship may inform their instructional choices. While this study provided significant foundational work in uncovering pre-service teachers' authorial identities on social media and addressing initial connections between their social media authorship and approaches to teaching composition, further examination of those connections will be necessary.

Another challenge to completing this research was the consideration of ethical concerns when investigating participants' social media practices. To protect participants' privacy and the others with whom participants interacted online, full access to social media accounts was not requested. Posts selected for deeper analysis were at the participants' discretion based on what they offered as artifacts and what they were comfortable discussing during interviews. For example, Caspar indicated he had a past negative experience authoring on social media during which his privacy was compromised when a post went viral, but he was not comfortable discussing or sharing the details. Honoring my participants' boundaries was critical to building meaningful trust and rapport but also meant my data was limited to what they were willing to share. I understood that delving into participants' identity work was inherently personal and was potentially made further uncomfortable when focused on the volatile online environments of social media. Although a general understanding of the lack of privacy and immortality of posts online may be common knowledge, the complexities of what

specific users consider public or identifiable information about themselves makes research ethics on social media a convoluted process. For this study, I followed Stake's (2005, p. 244) ethical approach for case study research that defined the researcher's role as a "guest" in "private spaces": the researcher does not inherently have the "right to know" more about participants than they want to disclose. I respected the privacy of the individuals in this study by using only data they explicitly shared with me for the purposes of this study (Beninger, 2016).

With regards to case selection and population, this study was focused specifically on pre-service teachers in secondary English and employed purposeful case selection procedures (see Methods) on the likelihood of robust data collection. There remain many rich opportunities to expand similar research to varying populations of pre-service and in-service educators. More research will be necessary to bolster the conclusions drawn below; this study is only the beginning of exploring pre-service teacher authorship on social media and its implications for classroom instruction.

## **Conclusions**

This study has illuminated the complicated intersections of social media, authorship, and composition instruction. Social media, as some of the most-used online spaces for content creation (e.g., Clement, 2020), are rife with unique opportunities for authorship. In contrast to the robust and sought-after authoring environments found online (e.g., Curwood et al., 2013; Lammers, 2016), authoring in schools continues to feel disconnected and irrelevant to students' interests (e.g., Bickerstaff, 2012; Pytash, 2016) and the needs of the workforce (e.g., Oberländer et al., 2020). Composition instruction, although once considered secondary to reading within school systems, is

gaining attention in educational research, and acknowledgment of the need to improve compositional literacy instruction is gaining momentum (Brandt, 2015; Gardner, 2018). However, English teachers have historically struggled with writing and composition instruction, indicating anxiety, dislike, or feelings of incompetence toward teaching that content (e.g., Cremin & Oliver, 2017; Gardner, 2014, 2018). In this study, I began important foundational work toward a better understanding of how to prepare educators to support the development of digitally literate and real-world-ready authors in their classrooms. Toward this goal, we must first understand composition instructors as authors themselves. We know that teacher authorship and attitudes towards composition directly impact their composition instruction (e.g., Street, 2003; McCarthy et al., 2014); therefore, to create classrooms where students develop into confident and effective authors, we must train our educators to bring confident authorial identities to their composition instruction. Training English teachers in authorship is a new direction for teacher education and for teacher preparation programs in particular. Pre-service teachers can practice authorship and develop positive authorial identities through their training and be prepared to support their students through similar authorial identity development experiences in their classrooms.

In this study, I uncovered several critical insights to direct this work. First, pre-service teachers have complex authorial identities, and especially on social media, these need more attention and consideration when thinking about how to support them in approaching composition instruction. Significant identity work and sophisticated audience management were part of my participants' authorship on social media, and not all elements of their authorship practices were well-captured by current authorship

theories, which were derived from academic writing settings (Cheung et al., 2017; Ivanič, 1998). This means continued theory building is likely required; in my theoretical implications section, I provide some starting points for this work. In general, pre-service teachers' authorship on social media is an under-explored area, as evidenced by the needed theoretical development and limited extant literature (Cremin & Oliver, 2017).

Social media are likely spaces where many pre-service teachers are active and engaged authors, potentially enacting authorial identities like those desirable in classroom settings. Continued exploration of pre-service English teachers' authorship on social media can uncover avenues to support the teachers themselves in their authorship development, as well as inform how best to incorporate authorship into teacher preparation programs and classroom instruction. Pointing to his list of social media artifacts, one teacher explained: "that's part of me," when talking about himself as an author. Today's teachers and students have embedded identities and value in their social media authoring; we as educators and educational researchers must reframe authorship and composition instruction to accommodate the new literacy frontiers evolving in the 21st-century.



## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A. Initial Survey

After being prompted to confirm voluntary participation (and age requirements) in the study, participants enter their name and email before the start of the survey.

Name:

Email:

1. Gender identification. Select all that apply.

Man

Woman

Non-binary

List other(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Racial identification. Select all that apply.

Asian or Pacific Islander

Black or African-American

Hispanic or Latinx

Native American or Alaskan Native

White or Caucasian

List other(s): \_\_\_\_\_

3. How often have you typically used social media over the past 3 months? Select one.

Multiple times per day

Once per day

A few times per week

Once per week

Less than once per week

4. Which social media have you used in the past 3 months? Select all that apply.

Facebook

YouTube

Pinterest

Instagram

Snapchat

LinkedIn

TikTok

Twitter

WhatsApp

Reddit

Tumblr

Fanfiction site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bloggng site Name: \_\_\_\_\_

List others: \_\_\_\_\_

5. For each social media you selected above, please indicate how often you typically access it, whether you typically post content, and whether you typically view others' posts.

**Table 6.** *Sample question 5 prompt from initial survey*

<b>Social Media</b>	<b>Frequency of Use</b>	<b>Posting Content</b>	<b>Viewing Content</b>
	I use this platform:	I post content:	I view others' posts:
Social Media 1	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week
Social Media 2	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week
Social Media 3	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week	Multiple times per week Weekly Less than once per week

Note: Social media items determined by participant selections from question 4.

6. I think of myself as the author of my social media posts. Select one.  
 Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly disagree

Why? Please explain or offer an example to support your selection: \_\_\_\_\_

7. I have my own style and voice when posting on social media. Select one.  
 Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly disagree

Why? Please explain or offer an example to support your selection: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Being able to create effective social media posts is a valuable skill. Select one.  
 Strongly agree  
 Agree  
 Disagree  
 Strongly disagree

Why? Please explain or offer an example to support your selection: \_\_\_\_\_

9. I make choices about what I post about myself on social media based on how I want others to perceive me.

Strongly agree  
Agree  
Disagree  
Strongly disagree

Why? Please explain or offer an example to support your selection: \_\_\_\_\_

10. As an English teacher, briefly describe one important aspect of your approach or philosophy towards composition instruction (e.g., What do you think is most important to focus on? Or, what is one strategy that is central to your instruction?).

Free response: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you interested in learning more about the interview process for this study?

Interviews are scheduled at your convenience and will be completed via video chat. By selecting “yes” you will receive further information regarding the interview portion of the study but are not obligated to participate. Interviewees may opt-out of interviews at any time and will be paid \$25 per hour for their contributions.

Yes  
No

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### **Distribution of questions to aspects of authorial identity theories:**

Question 6 is an adaptation of the self-identification as an author concept from Cheung et al. (2017) and Ivanič (1998).

Question 7 is an adaptation of the authorial confidence aspect from Cheung et al. (2017)’s framework.

Question 8 is an adaptation of the valuing composition aspect of Cheung et al.’s (2017) framework.

Question 9 addresses the discursal and autobiographical selves from Ivanič’s (1998) framework.

## Appendix B. Interview Guide

### Research Questions

1. How do pre-service teachers conceive of being an *author* on social media?
2. How do pre-service teachers practice authorship on social media?
3. How are pre-service teachers' practices and conceptions of authorship on social media evident in their approaches to composition instruction?

**Table 7.** *Interview guide*

Interview Sections by Content	Interview Questions	Relevant Research Questions
Warm-ups for each session (these are samples, can vary)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How have your classes/teaching been going?</li> <li>2. What's something interesting that's been happening in your class/with your students?</li> <li>3. What have you been working on this week?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What have you been doing to find/take time for yourself?</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><i>Note: Follow-up each question as appropriate with responses to carry a short conversation. Relate to the participant, share stories, and ease into the interview.</i></p>	N/A: used to build rapport (e.g., Rubin & Rubin, 2012)
<p>General discussion of the term author and authoring experiences</p> <p>*This section is not limited to social media, so participants should lead with the discussion and stories that they want to share. However, prompt follow-up questions to have participants address social media if they do not otherwise bring it up in their answers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In your opinion, what does it mean to be an author?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What does a person have to do to be considered an author?  <i>[Follow-up: What about on social media/in the context of the other artifacts shared?]</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Do you consider yourself an author, or have you ever been an author?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If yes, when?  <i>[Follow-up: What about on social media/in the context of the other artifacts shared?]</i></li> <li>b. If no, why not?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Do you think you might be an author in the future? Why or why not? <i>[In which spaces? On social media?]</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Would you like to be an author? Why or why not? <i>[In which spaces? On social media?]</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Tell me the story of a time when you were an author. <i>[Use artifacts as references for storytelling.]</i> Take me through what that was like, starting with when you first decided to compose. <i>[Multiple stories should be shared as time allows. Ask about social media if relevant and not mentioned. If they want to talk about a social media artifact, include the questions from item 4 in the next section.]</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Do you think you will be an author again in the future? Or, do you think you will continue to be an author? Why or why not?  <i>[In which spaces? On social media?]</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RQ1</li> <li>2. RQ1, RQ2</li> <li>3. RQ1, RQ2</li> <li>4. RQ1, RQ2, RQ3</li> </ol>

**Table 7 (cont'd)**

Interview Sections by Content	Interview Questions	Relevant Research Questions
	<p>Alternate for question 4. <i>[If participant does not believe they have ever been an author, rephrase question 4 as follows]</i></p> <p>5. Tell me the story of a time when you composed something. <i>[Use artifacts as references for storytelling.]</i> Take me through what that was like, starting with when you first decided to compose. <i>[Multiple stories should be shared as time allows. Ask about social media if relevant and not mentioned. If they want to talk about a social media artifact, include the questions from item 4 in the next section.]</i></p> <p>a. Do you think you will compose again in the future? Why or why not? <i>[In which spaces? On social media?]</i></p> <p><i>Note: Looking for insight into <u>how they felt</u> during the process, their level of <u>enjoyment</u>, their level of <u>confidence</u>, how much <u>value</u> they placed on the product, how <u>personally connected</u> they felt to the product/process, and how <u>successful</u> they felt they were.</i></p>	<p>5. RQ1, RQ2, RQ3</p>
<p>Discussion of social media authorship and artifacts</p> <p>*Questions with fill-in-the-blanks in this section should be repeated for each social media the participants actively use.</p>	<p>1. What do you typically do on _____ (social media)?</p> <p>a. How often do you use this platform? <i>[Follow-up: How often do you post vs consume content, like vs. retweet, etc.?]</i></p> <p>2. What types of content do you prefer to post about on _____ (social media)? Why? <i>[Follow-up: Why do you post?]</i></p> <p>3. Tell me about your audience on _____ (social media).</p> <p>a. Who sees your posts? How many people?</p> <p>b. How important are your posts to your audience? Why?</p> <p>4. How confident are you when you post?</p> <p>a. How important is posting to you? How valuable is your content to you and your audience?</p> <p>5. Using one of the social media post examples that you shared with me, walk me through your process of creating that post starting with what it is like to come up with an idea. <i>[Repeat this prompt for at least two of the social media artifacts they shared, as time allows.]</i></p> <p>a. How did you feel after you published your post? Was it successful? <i>[Follow-up: How confident were you when posting? How valuable is this post to you/your audience?]</i></p> <p>b. Why did you choose this post as an artifact?</p> <p>c. How do you feel about it now that we've revisited it together?</p> <p>d. <i>Revisit this question is relevant:</i> Do you consider yourself the author of this post? Why or why not?</p> <p><i>Note: Looking for insight on <u>why they posted</u> it, <u>how they felt</u> during the process, what <u>steps</u> they took to complete it, how <u>personally connected</u> they felt to the product/process, and any awareness they had of or consideration they gave to <u>audience</u>.</i></p>	<p>1. RQ2</p> <p>2. RQ2</p> <p>3. RQ2</p> <p>4. RQ1, RQ2</p> <p>5. RQ1, RQ2, RQ3</p>

**Table 7 (cont'd)**

Interview Sections by Content	Interview Questions	Relevant Research Questions
General discussion of composition instruction and composition instruction artifacts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe yourself as an ELA/English teacher. <i>[Artifacts may be used for reference.]</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What are your priorities as an educator?</li> <li>b. What strengths do you bring to the classroom? <i>[Follow-up: Specific content, skills, or strategies?]</i></li> <li>c. What challenges you most? <i>[Follow-up: Specific content, skills, strategies?]</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Describe your approach to composition instruction. <i>[Artifacts may be used for reference.]</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What types of skills, content, or activities does “composition instruction” include?</li> <li>b. What is most important for students to gain from your composition instruction? Why? <i>[Follow-up: Long-term, how do you want to impact students through your composition instruction? Or, what is the long-term value of composition instruction?]</i></li> <li>c. Do you consider your students to be the authors of what they compose in your class? Explain.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. How confident are you as a writing instructor? Explain. <i>[If relevant, ask about a story/example that supports their response here.]</i></li> <li>4. Looking at one of the artifacts that you shared with me, tell me about what this shows about you as an instructor/composition instructor? <i>[Aim to have participants tell stories about several of their composition instruction artifacts. Prompts will vary depending on the type of artifacts. These should be planned prior to the interview]</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>[Example for a lesson plan/activity artifact]</i> Which aspects of this are related to composition? Talk me through what those aspects of the activity look like in your classroom and what students are experiencing or learning at each step.</li> <li>b. <i>[Example for a personal statement/philosophy of teaching artifact]</i> Which aspects of this are related to composition instruction? Tell me about why you chose to include it.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. What would that idea look like in practice? Can you describe a classroom situation where that would happen?</li> </ol> </li> <li>c. <i>[It is possible artifacts may be from lessons/activities they have already tried in a classroom setting or from an assignment they completed as part of their coursework that was discussed or that they received feedback on previously. If this is the case, prompts that ask participants to reflect on what happened would also be relevant.]</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RQ3</li> <li>2. RQ3</li> <li>3. RQ3</li> <li>4. RQ3</li> </ol>

**Table 7** (cont'd)

	<p><i>Note: Looking for insights into how they consider <u>students' confidence as authors</u>, how they think about <u>composition that is valuable for/to students</u>, how <u>students are personally connected to their compositions</u>, how they define <u>what counts as composition</u>.</i></p> <p>5. How, if at all, has social media influenced your instruction?  <i>[Follow-up: In your lesson content? Your selected strategies? Your perceptions of your students?]</i></p> <p>6. How, if at all, do you see your students as authors in your classroom?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. If yes, can you describe what types of activities they author?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b. If no, why not?</p>	<p>5. RQ3</p> <p>6. RQ3</p>
Wrap-up for each session (Rubin & Rubin, 2012)	<p>1. As we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to add or tell me related to _____ or anything else we discussed today?</p> <p>2. Is there anything you think I should have asked you?</p>	<p>1. Variable</p> <p>2. Variable</p>



## Appendix C. Codebook

Codes are listed alphabetically within a single broad category for ease of reading; however, many codes overlap, and many would fit in additional categories. These categories were selected for the purpose of increasing codebook readability and are not intended to be reflective of major themes identified from the data.

*\*Denotes a priori codes for Cheung et al.'s (2017) and Ivanič's (1998) frameworks.*

**Table 8. Codebook**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
Related to identity	Authenticity, "be myself"	Discussion or example of being authentic or being oneself during composition	Caspar: "I enjoy [posting on Twitter] and I spend time on it. And I'll post and to me, it's kind of a good medium of self-expression. By it's weird because I do think of it kind of more as a diary that I give people permission to look at."
	Authoring for emotional "needs"; expression of passion or heightened emotion	Discussion or example of authoring that is meant to meet an emotional need (e.g., process feelings or think through a situation); being compelled to compose because of heightened feelings or passion	Caspar: "I was like I was angry about why I was angry. I was able to just ... Instead of just seeing the celebrities [post political nonsense] and just be angry, I was able to be like, 'Okay, I'm angry for these reasons.' Which I feel once you're able to better recognize why you're feeling a certain type of way, it helps just either put into action [a post], so you stop doing that."
	Autobiographical self*	Discussion or example of the self/identity brought to composition based on lived experiences	Caspar: "I think it's because writing, there is this level of it being personal to you and just for someone to be like, 'Oh, this is bad. Or I don't agree with this.' It's just like, but I wrote that, that's part of me and it just that... Whereas a lot of things it's very easy to distance yourself."
	Connections to lived experiences or real-life; capturing memories	Discussion or example of authoring that references lived experiences or offline life events; authoring intended to capture or saves memories	Jessie: "[Instagram does] story recaps from your month, so it's always fun to look at those, to be like, 'Oh, I actually did do a lot this month.' So just kind of like having another way of collecting memories and reminiscing if you feel like you didn't do a lot."

**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
	Discoursal self*	Discussion or example of a self/identity that the author chooses to portray to their audience	Emma: "Even now when I'm talking, I'm like, 'Oh my gosh [Emma], this is not professional at all.' But it's interesting to think about what is professional versus what's not professional, and if your social media is supposed to be a reflection of the lifestyle that you lead, does that necessarily fit the ... does it have to be professional, per se?"
	Posting something I like or "just for fun"	Discussion or example of social media compositions reflective of personal likes or intended for casual amusement	Caspar: "But a lot of the times I post, I'm kind of just like, I had a thought, it made me smile. Or as I had a thought and it's just how I feel. I was like, 'This is what I'm posting.'"
	Reflection of or connection to personality or identity	Discussion or example of how a composition does (or does not) reflect the author's personality or identity	Jessie: "Right now I'll still retweet political stuff and everything but I'm like that's okay because it's still part of my voice. You don't want to lose your sense of self when thinking about the possible audience, but you don't want to overstep."
	"Tell your own stories"	Discussion or example of compositions that authors used to tell their own stories (i.e., create their own narrative of events; share their perspective; control the narrative or story told about themselves)	Emma: "Just that it's important for students' stories to be heard, but more importantly, I think it's critical that students' stories are heard in the fashion that they want them to be heard in"
Related to teaching composition	All students' ideas, languages, and expressions are valuable	Discussion or example of the belief that all students bring valuable contributions to the composition classroom	Jessie: "Definitely making every student feel valued in the classroom, every student being listened to and heard. And then positivity is very important to me in the classroom. And yeah, just making sure everyone's learning too."
	Defining composition instruction	Discussion or example of how the participants' defined composition instruction (e.g., types of content, activities)	Jessie: "Definitely I think creative writing is very important. We have a digital writers' notebook for our students, and they love it."

**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
	Importance of technology or multimedia in the classroom	Discussion or example of the role of technology or multimedia in classroom instruction	Emma: "Why not let middle schoolers create [videos, social media posts, multimedia]? At least try to make creating something enjoyable now so that way the joy doesn't get sucked out of their little ten-year-old souls or whatever."
	"Multiple ways to be good at composition"	Discussion or example of the sentiment that quality composition can be a wide range of things	Caspar: "There's lots of things that make [compositions] good for different reasons. You don't have to use all of them, but I want [students] to know ways they can improve their writing and find the ones that work for them and know about the others. I want them to be able to have the option to say I choose this or not."
	Students as authors in the classroom	Discussion or example of how the participants perceived their students as authors in the classroom (e.g., what activities counted as authoring; when does the title "author" apply)	Caspar: "If they wrote it, they created it, they did it . . . Even if they were given a prompt, the prompt for them to do their writing very specifically, like journalists are given the same things, write about this, and they write about it in 250 words, they're still the authors of that."
	Teach content relevant to the real world and student interests	Discussion or example of prioritizing students' interests and real-world connections in content selection	Caspar: "Some of my greatest strengths right now is I'm very up to date on pop culture, which doesn't sound like it would be super important for teaching, but it really is. Because I like to make sure that what we are teaching are relevant to what the students want to know."
	Teach students how to transfer composition skills	Discussion or example of preparing students to apply composition skills in new situations	Emma: "So, my job is just to help them reach those milestones and skills so they can reach their own trajectory or whatever. . . My main goal, is for them to acquire the skills that they need to become better people or whatever their goals are."
	Teach students to "think for themselves"	Discussion or example of preparing students to be critical thinkers and have the skills to make informed decisions	Caspar: "I'd say my priorities are to prepare students to think for themselves. So, I'm going to give them the tools to think. I'm not telling them how to think. I'm giving them the tools to do with what they want to."

**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
	Teach students to use critical lenses, critical analysis	Discussion or example of teaching students to apply critical perspectives when analyzing content (both academic and real-world content)	Emma: “[Learning how to critically analyze the moves authors make] lends itself to everyday situations that we see. So, if I’m driving on the road and I pass a billboard and it’s a pro-life billboard, what kind of things are they doing in that billboard that’s going to try to manipulate me as the viewer to not abort my baby?”
	Teaching with social media	Discussion or example of the role of social media in classroom instruction	Caspar: “I don’t want them to feel uncomfortable creating something from my class that then the whole world has the opportunity to see if they really don’t want it to be seen by anyone but me, them, and maybe some of their classmates. So as much as I like it, if I did that, I would have to create alternate ways of [not requiring public posting].”
	“Treat students as individuals”	Discussion or example of including content and pedagogy that is meaningful/effective to students with diverse identities and backgrounds; individualized instruction	Jessie: “I know not every student’s going to. . . finish with all the same content learned, or just making sure every kid feels valued, knows that we want them to learn, knows that we want them to do their best, whatever their best is. Just more like that, not having a student be like, ‘Oh, I can’t learn it, so I’m not going to do it.’ Or, ‘Oh, my teacher doesn’t care about me, so I’m not going to turn it in.’”
	Understand and fight inequities students face	Discussion or example of combating inequities students face and/or preparing students to fight inequities	Emma: “So I talked about how teachers have, especially White teachers having the responsibility to use their privilege for something good if they are going to be in front of the classroom, that is one of the most powerful roles that you can have in trying to encourage or help shape mindsets, and you need to use it for good basically. So teachers have the responsibility to create and foster politically aware and active youth, to inform especially and support student cultural and personal growth.”

**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
Related to confidence	Communicating ideas*	Discussion or example of using composition to communicate ideas	Caspar: "[On Reddit] I'm just kind of like, 'Hey, I have this thought or opinion or this thing I made, so I'm going to share it. We all enjoy this. So, here.'"
	Documenting ideas*	Discussion or example of using composition to document idea (i.e., the specific intention to keep track of or save ideas)	Jessie: "I think [my notes are important] because I get anxiety about forgetting something. I'm not really a forgetful person. Or I hate stuff hanging over my head, so visually seeing things is very helpful for me."
	Expressing confidence*	Discussion or example of being confident (e.g., stating pride in one's authoring or skill; believing in one's self as an author or in one's ability to composition)	Jessie: "I think for sure if they're proud of it [is most important]. If you feel successful in [your composition], and then depending how the audience perceives it, but if you get criticized on a piece of artwork but you still love it then it's still a success."
	Formulating or generating ideas*	Discussion or example of using composition to brainstorm or help inspire new ideas	Jessie: "So yeah, I picked outfits that I liked for my character [on Pinterest]. There's definitely a lot more now and I need to slim it down. I'm still trying to figure out the character's vibe. But it was very helpful in getting a sense of how to describe the character and how to picture her physically."
	Informing others about a topic or issue	Discussion or example of using composition to inform others (i.e., the specific intention of teaching or shaping their knowledge)	Caspar: "So, part of this [BLM post] was specifically for ... It was to gain awareness, but specifically for people who may have been on the fence or being critical about the Black Lives Matter protest in response to George Floyd stuff."
	My own style or voice*	Discussion or example of composing that reflects one's personal style or voice (e.g., unique perspective, tone)	Caspar: "I stand by the sentiment [of my post]. I thought it was very on brand of me, still being critical, but still using humor, which are probably my defining character traits are ... I think my defining character traits would be humor and critical. So, yeah."

**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
	Supporting student pride or confidence in composition	Discussion or example of supporting (or wanting to support) students in expressions of confidence as authors; wanting students to feel proud of their compositions and feel like competent authors	Jessie: "I think [creative writing is] a really good way to get students to put their thoughts to paper and then get really proud of it and want to share it. So I think the opportunity to have no prompts and to have no specific short answer question or anything is really important for composition for kids."
Related to authoring in general	Composition process	Discussion or example of the composition process (e.g., steps, stages, iterations from the initial idea generation to completion)	Caspar: "I feel like if I'm going to make a statement that is some sort of, I don't want to say aggressive, but counter, if I want to counter an opinion that's been posted on Twitter, there are definitely times where I'll go to my friends, I'll type it up and be like, 'Hey, is this a valid thing? Am I overreacting? Is this harsh? Is this mean?' And they're just like, 'Maybe a little harsh.' Or they'll be like, 'No, this is perfectly fine.' It's like, 'No, I'm thinking the same thing.'"
	Defining author	Discussion or example of what it means to be an author	Jessie: "I would say just creating anything, really. You can be an author if you write a lesson plan, or you can be an author if you write a story. Basically, anything that's unique to you or newly created by you."
	I am an author; Self as author*	Discussion or example of claiming the identity/title of "author"	Emma: "Yeah, yes. I am an author. I think even when I was in high school, I was in newspaper, but aside from the normal stuff that we think of that others are associated with, so articles and books et cetera, social media definitely. I'm the author of my own posts."
	Ownership over compositions*	Discussion or example of claiming, or taking ownership over compositions (e.g., borrowing ideas from others but creating something new)	Emma: "I'm the author of my own posts, even if I share a post on my story, but I add something else to it, I think it's similar to when an author writes something and another author chimes in and either critiques or, or they add onto it type thing."

**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
Related to social media composition	Audience influencing identity presentation or content selection on social media	Discussion or example of how audience impacted composition choices on social media (e.g., type of content/identity selected; where certain content was posted)	Jessie: "Before, I'd be like, 'This [photo] won't get a lot of likes. I'm not going to post it.' But now I'm like, 'I don't care. I want to post it.' And I feel like that's happened a lot once you get older. I've noticed that with more friends, it's less like, 'Oh, glamified' photos and more like, 'Look at this cool bookstore I'm at.'"
	Importance of audience size or amount of attention on social media	Discussion or example of participants caring (or not caring) about the size of their audience or receiving feedback from their audience on social media (e.g., likes, comments)	Emma: "Yeah, I strongly [think this post was successful]. Let me look at it, hold on. It's so weird. I feel like narcissist almost. Let me. Here, 140 likes and one, two, three, four, five comments. And they're all ... One girl said, 'God, I love you.'"
	Privacy on social media	Discussion or example of the participants considering privacy when posting on social media	Jessie: "So definitely as you get older creating a voice and making sure this is a profile that you're comfortable with your boss seeing, you're comfortable with your mom seeing, you're comfortable with anyone seeing."
	Social media for activism, learning about and supporting causes	Discussion or example of how social media can be used to learn about and/or express support social or political causes	Caspar: "I think social media influences a lot because if you follow people, you learn from them and just across various forms of social media, I follow a lot of people in education. I follow a lot of people on activism and it's teaching me a lot about the ways we can look at."
Related to value	Composition as an important skill to develop*; valuing the skill of composition	Discussion or example of how important of a skill the participants' believed composition was (e.g., how critical was it for their students to learn; how important was it to them personally to gain composition skills)	Jessie: "It's different because my art's very average but I don't really care as much, but I feel like with writing I care more about it and I've had more of a passion for it so I'm more sensitive to criticism. I mean I still want it to be criticized to make it better, but I'm very new to the whole thing so I'm very like, 'Oh, there's more experienced people out there. People who majored in creative writing' and stuff like that, so it's definitely more intimidating."



**Table 8 (cont'd)**

Reference Category	Code	Description	Example
	Importance of clarity in composition*	Discussion or example of how important the participants believed clarity to be in their compositions (e.g., worrying about miscommunication)	Emma: "Man, I really hope that after reading [my post], and then reading it kind of through the lens of not-myself, trying to view it from another person's point of view. . . I hope they understand. If they even take the time to read this, which I don't know if they will or not. But if they do, hopefully, it changes their opinion if they had a different sort of perspective."
	Importance of composition to me*; valuing composition	Discussion or example of how the participants determined whether or not a composition was valuable to them and how they defined value	Caspar: "I think it is valuable. Because even looking back, I think it was very good for me to be self-reflective and be more vulnerable in my writing and just putting it out there is just better for me not just as a writer, but just as a person."
	Importance of quality in composition*	Discussion or example of how important participants thought quality was for their compositions and how they defined quality	Emma: "Captioning is kind of important [on Instagram], you've got to have a nice little witty caption. And those are just the societal built-up constructed protocol. So usually witty captions work well, usually back in the day song lyrics maybe. So there's different trends of what's cool to write versus what's not so cool to write."
Other organizational codes  <i>These codes were used in combination with the codes above to track sub-groups within the other codes</i>	Non-social media	Broad code used to group all data related to participants' non-social media authoring	
	Social media	Broad code used to group all data related to participants' social media authoring	
	Social media use	Broad code used to group all data related to participants' general social media use (e.g., what platforms were used how often)	
	Students	Broad code used to group all data related to students	
	Teaching	Broad code used to group all data related to teaching	



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