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Final MA Portfolio

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FINAL MASTER'S PORTFOLIO

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A Final Portfolio

Submitted to the English Department of Bowling Green
State University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the field of English
with a specialization in
English Teaching

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Dr. Erin Labbie, First Reader
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Analytical Narrative

“Sure, I’m willing to teach Rhetoric I ...” When I spoke those words back in 2005, I had agreed to teach persuasive writing to high school sophomores at a classical academy. The school hired me because of my humanities background, but I did not have a degree in English. Since I had spent my first year in college as a journalism major, I felt confident I had enough background to teach students how to write. That first year was a pretty steep learning curve without much in the way of resources. Fortunately, the second year, the school adopted a writing program and I became acquainted with concepts that had not been a part of my journalism courses. Even with the new program, I ultimately felt ill-equipped to continue teaching the course and decided to teach courses that I felt better fit my academic background. I was with the school for five years, and subsequently moved to Illinois, where I became employed at the College of Lake County as a Writing Specialist. I was hired because of my secondary teaching background, but once I began to work with college students, I came to realize there still was so much that I did not know about academic writing. As I continued to work in the writing center a desire to build a better foundation from which to meet my desire to return to teaching led me to the conclusion that I needed to pursue my master’s in English.

As I reflect on all that I have gained through this program, I realize that several theories have become the core of my teaching philosophy. Though I was already familiar with James Gee’s discussion on discourse communities through his article, “Literacy, Discourse and Linguistics: Introduction,” revisiting the concept in my first class, ENG 6040 Graduate Writing, provided a way for which I now frame all literacy; it comes through primary or secondary sources. His notion that we all have a primary discourse that we have mastered, and we continually enter into secondary discourses that need to be mastered revolutionized my thinking.

Instead of expecting college students to be proficient academic writers in first year composition classes, I now view them as apprentices who are acquiring a secondary discourse and need to be placed in practicing communities. In an attempt to invite students into that community, I found The New London Group's suggested pedagogy particularly helpful. They claim the way the mind works leads to pedagogy that is an integration of four factors: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice (31). This concept allows students to practice by being immersed in a community of learners with instruction from a 'master' that is scaffolded so that students learn to critically frame and transform their way of writing. The group points out that students need overt instruction so that they can "gain conscious awareness and control of what they have acquired" (32). I would agree that the goal is to create writers that have the ability to critically frame their writing that is transferred into "other contexts or cultural sites" (35).

Other theories I became acquainted with in the Graduate Writing class build on the concepts of discourse communities and situated learning. Prior to becoming acquainted with the principles involved in Activity Theory, I viewed writing as a process. Thus, the way I engaged students in the writing center reinforced the idea of process. I always opened a tutoring session by asking students where they were in the process; activities were hinted at, but not identified the way Donna Kain and Elizabeth Wardle identify them in "Activity Theory: An Introduction for The Writing Classroom" (277). Kain and Wardle present the system as a triangle which depicts six different aspects of the system. Learning how these aspects are interrelated shifted my thinking and I now embrace a more holistic view of writing as a process that is based on a system of activity. An area of overlap between activity system and The New London Group's proposal of overt instruction is rules. Rules include conventions and customs people adhere to

while engaging in the activity (277). Instructing students regarding expected writing conventions within specific genres will be a primary focus of any composition course I teach.

A closer examination of the aspect of community embedded in the Activity Theory triangle reveals that individuals and goals within the community need to be considered. Developing the habit of reflection is one aspect of community goals. I will give students the opportunity to become more reflective by requiring it as a component of projects that I assign. As an example, one of the most dynamic aspects of ENG 6040 Graduate Writing was the reflective writing pieces we were required to do. I found having to examine various aspects regarding my writing habits led me to valuable insight regarding the optimal workspace for me to be productive. Not only was the reflective writing edifying, I became aware of the significance of reflection and the important role it can play in student awareness and growth. With awareness comes the ability to expand into genres previously unknown and refine writing practices.

The essays and revisions contained in this portfolio are reflective of my growth as a writer. Not only are the pieces representative of my best work, they also demonstrate a range of writing ability since each is a different genre. Viewed pedagogically, the concept of requiring students to produce four differing writing projects reinforces my belief that doing so will broaden their range of ability.

Project One: A Literary Analysis of “The Laugh of the Medusa” by Hélène Cixous

The first piece I have chosen, ““The Country of the Repressed: A Place for Feminine Writing,” is representative of my foray into a genre that was previously unknown to me: Literary Theory and Criticism. Though I was somewhat familiar with the topic of semiotics, I was challenged by my professor Dr. Erin Labbie to explore the topic of *écriture féminine* using semiotics as foundational theory. The original version was inspired by Hélène Cixous who is a

founder of *écriture féminine*. In “The Laugh of the Medusa,” Cixous focuses on the possibility of a woman writing authentically and differently than a man. A combination of psychoanalysis and linguistics was used to examine structures through which gender identity is formed and the role signification plays in that formation. The analysis concludes with the possibility that a woman can “write her self” by accessing the unconscious which can in general be more difficult for a man (Cixous 1942).

I revised my introduction by adopting Dr. Labbie’s suggestions which provided clarity regarding feminist criticism and sexual difference within psychoanalytical theories. She also encouraged me to reconsider my thesis and base the notion of gender identity in a way that transcends biology/anatomy. Her reminder that men can write like women convinced me to do some research which led to a revision of the thesis. Given that my thesis changed to include how it is possible for both men and women to write through the use of the unconscious, I expanded the discussion to include men. Initially, the discussion was focused solely on women. Finally, I added more analysis to one of Cixous’s poems by highlighting her use of *écriture féminine*.

The revision of this analysis gave me the opportunity to expand my position on the definition of gender identity so that it moved beyond a biological view. I now feel that the way in which I present Cixous is a much more accurate depiction of her philosophically.

Project Two: Literacy Narrative Unit

Constance Weaver has convinced me that the most effective way to teach standard English conventions is while students are editing their own writing (5). She suggests that the topic of grammar should be approached from the standpoint of possibility, rather than correctness. She explains, “We see it as *positive*, the offering of options, rather than the avoidance of errors; as *productive*, especially in the sense that it produces effective sentences and

paragraphs; and as eminently *practical*” (6). With her sentiment in mind, the second piece I’ve included is a lesson plan that focuses on overt grammar instruction which is included in a literacy narrative assignment. This unit was developed for ENG 6220 Teaching Grammar in the Context of Writing. The writing conventions I chose to highlight are ones that I believe will enhance student writing, particularly the five brushstrokes Harry Noden highlights in *Image Grammar*.

My revisions of the plan are based on comments from the course instructor, Dr. Cheryl Hoy. She pointed out that I had not included any assessment strategies or tools. The revised version includes a requirement for one of the in-class activities to be turned in for a grade, along with a reflection. I’ve also included a checklist that will allow students to perform a self-assessment based on the conventions covered in the unit. The checklist will need to accompany the students’ first draft and points awarded will be included in the final essay grade. The final essay will be assessed using an analytic rubric that focuses on mastery of the concepts covered in the unit plan.

Project Three: Academic Book Review of *Hold Your Tongue*

The third piece I have included contains the most extensive revision in comparison to the other three pieces. It was originally written as a book response for ENG 6150 Introduction to Linguistics and was fairly informal. However, when considering the best examples of my writing, I felt that I had the beginning of something worth expanding upon since the focus of the book, *Hold Your Tongue*, is bilingual education. As an educator who works in a very diverse college community with many ESL students, I found the book extremely thought-provoking; particularly, when considering The New London Group’s first factor, situated practice. As I move into classroom teaching, I want to be mindful of all the aspects of building a community that feels inclusive to native and non-native English writers.

I initially reached out to the instructor for feedback since he had not originally included any. Unfortunately, he was not available; so, I was able to get feedback from my ENG 6800 Teaching Multilingual Writers instructor, Professor Lucinda Hunter. She presented several excellent options and I decided an academic book review would be the best way to go. Since the original piece contained quite a bit of response, that was eliminated, and I added a significant amount of content that is appropriate for an academic review. I learned a lot about making the conversion from response to review since I have never done one before. The process expanded my view of how one can effectively take a piece and create a different genre by critically reframing the content.

Project Four: Rhetorical Analysis of Remix Movie Trailers

The fourth project allowed me to expand my horizons and analyze a genre I was not previously familiar with – remix movie trailers. What was fascinating about this project was to consider how the use of movie scenes, sound, dialogue/narration, and text can be manipulated to create a parody of a well-known film. The analysis was written for ENG 6800 Teaching Multimodal Writing and required me to examine how different modes are used to create meaning. Through the process of analyzing the three trailers, I came to appreciate the benefit of observing composition that extends beyond alphabetic text. I revised the analysis based on feedback from my instructor, Dr. Ethan Jordan. He pointed out that I had not provided enough context from the original movies throughout the analysis, nor addressed audience expectations. Therefore, I added content that would help the reader make comparisons between the actual film and the remix. This gives the reader a better understanding of why the remix is a parody of the original film.

Since I did not major in English as an undergrad, I entered the program knowing that there were gaps in my understanding when it came to teaching composition. The knowledge that I have gained is immeasurable and I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to have studied under some of the best instructors I have ever had. I look forward to taking all that I have gained and passing it on as a much better prepared and confident teacher having met all the goals I set for myself prior to entering BGSU.

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“The Country of the Repressed: A Place for Feminine Writing”

Hélène Cixous is most well-known for her development of and participation in *écriture féminine* (feminine writing). Her essay “The Laugh of the Medusa” was first published in 1975 as a manifesto for the women’s movement and has been central to debates regarding feminist criticism and sexual difference within psychoanalytical theories. A part of this debate has to do with her view on the structure of all thought and its consequences. Cixous insists that defining feminism within the structure already in place will reproduce the structure, not change it (“Hélène Cixous” 1938, 1940). In response, she exhorts women to write in a way that is different, and in so doing will break free of male constructed language. **Though it may seem impossible to write coherently outside of the conventions of current language, psychoanalytical thinking provides a foundation for understanding how women connect to the unconscious. This connection is at the heart of the Freudian model of identity formation and has implications for how humans express themselves linguistically.**

The relationship between the unconscious and semiotics sheds light on how thought is represented by language through the use of signs. The science of semiotics was developed by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure as a way of studying language through the concept of signification. Signification occurs when a concept, the signified, is identified by a sound-image, the signifier. The signifier and the signified combine to create a whole which is known as a sign (Saussure 853). Saussure points out, “Language is a system of signs that express ideas, and is therefore comparable to a system of writing ...” (851). Though signification may seem like a

simple process, it is actually quite complex when viewed from a psychological standpoint.

Pairing semiotics with psychoanalysis facilitates a better understanding of the process.

Sigmund Freud's study of the "subject" breaks free of classical views of semiotics. The classical view of an individual proposes that "ideas correspond in an unmediated way to real objects and values." Traditionally the concept of consciousness was linked to our ability to reason. The well-renowned philosopher René Descartes believed that private consciousness is forever independent and authentic (Silverman 126, 128). However, for Freud the concept of "subject" is quite different semantically and ideologically than what had been traditionally held.

Freud created a topography that consists of the mind, the preconscious, and the unconscious and is "semiotically suggestive" (Silverman 55). In *The Subject of Semiotics* Kaja Silverman describes how they work together:

The centrality of the subject to discourse is also compelling demonstrated by the early writings of Freud. Not only do those writings equate the subject with the signifying systems which define the unconscious on the one hand, and the preconscious on the other, but they establish that all discourse proceeds from the interactions between these two systems. Discourse must thus be understood as the product of a "psychic" assembly-line. (Silverman 54)

In other words, discourse is not possible without the signifying systems that support the unconscious and the preconscious. Mnemic traces, memory, also play a role and feed the unconscious with material from all five senses. This, of course, is an on-going process. The unconscious is a repository of repressed memories based on cultural taboos and is formed when the subject first encounters a cultural prohibition. In addition, the unconscious has unlimited access to mnemic traces, but communication with the preconscious is limited (Silverman 55-56).

The preconscious is the storehouse for all cultural norms/prohibitions and it communicates fluidly with the conscious. Unlike the preconscious, the conscious is limited by the amount of information it can handle at one time. Initially, the preconscious and unconscious are not too dissimilar when responding to a desire, however, over time the preconscious blocks unacceptable wishes and represses them. Wish and fulfillment need to be disguised if they are to make their way through the preconscious and into the conscious. According to Freud “dream-thoughts” (thoughts from the preceding day) make their way into “dreams” and are constructed into an argument that is acceptable to the preconscious. Dream-thoughts work through two different operations of the mind: condensation and displacement (Silverman 56, 60-62).

According to Silverman these operations are very significant:

Condensation involves the compression into a single feature of qualities belonging to two or more. Although that compression can take many forms, it always requires that there be points of affinity between the elements it conjoins. Displacement is subject to the same restriction. However, instead of combining two or more things, displacement involves the transfer of psychic intensity from one to another; it invests an innocent and often unimportant object with the affect which properly belongs to one which is taboo.

Condensation and displacement are agencies of distortion and disguise. (Silverman 62)

The displaced object becomes signified since the original object has been repressed. Freud views his topography in this way: the unconscious is known as the primary process, and the preconscious is known as the secondary process (Silverman 66). This distinction comes into play when discussing the interaction of signifiers and signifieds.

The primary process takes the fastest route when seeking gratification of a desire. It avoids painful memories and is incapable of making connections between memories. Thus,

rational logic is foreign to the primary process. On the other hand, the secondary process still seeks pleasure, but can defer until finding an appropriate route to it. This process is made possible through language “by binding word-presentations or linguistic signifiers to the original memories or thing-presentations” (Silverman 102). Linguistic signification occurs after the binding process is complete. Saussure stresses that the signification system is based on several relationships. Words are chained together in a linear way and are called syntagms. It is within the syntagm that words obtain value because they are different from every word that comes before or after it. The other relationship has a mental associative quality and is known as paradigm. A paradigm contains terms that all have something in common with each other (864-865). Syntagm and paradigm are mental processes that occur during the secondary process and are a part of the organization of desire (Silverman 102).

Metaphor and metonymy are another pair of terms that come into play when understanding how desire is addressed within the secondary process. Closely aligned with each of these terms are the concepts of similarity and contiguity. Silverman explains, “Displacement can only occur when two elements are either similar or contiguous. Thus desire is nothing more than a series of metaphors and metonymies” (115). In other words, the repressed object of desire must be replaced with something that is similar or next to it within a sequence which would contain either a metaphorical element or a metonymic one. Moving from how the mind mediates desires through the primary and secondary processes, the focus will shift to ways in which the concept of an individual or “subject” are defined through a patriarchal system.

Jacques Lacan has done much to connect Freud’s work to the symbolic order. Both of their models show “the family, like language, to be a vital relay between the various territories that make up subjectivity and the larger cultural field.” Freud and Lacan believe that an

individual's identity can be traced to the "Oedipal rubric" (Silverman 130). Lacan goes further by connecting semiotics to the Oedipal concept by showing how both the unconscious and preconscious are centered on it. The phallus or paternal signifier are used to bring coherence to the Western symbolic order (Silverman 131). When viewing the Western symbolic order Silverman warns, "Semiotics must include a careful examination of the ways in which sexual difference has determined signifying practice, both at the level of the larger symbolic order and at that of subjectivity, if it wants to progress beyond epistemological limits of that philosophical tradition" (131). A look at Freud's later work regarding the Oedipal complex is needed to further the discussion regarding the basis for female identity.

As has been established, Freud initially divided the subject into two distinctive parts: the unconscious and the preconscious/conscious. However, Freud's later topography divided the subject into the terms "id," "ego," "superego" and relied more heavily on Oedipal values. The concept of the id aligns most closely with the unconscious, but only portions of it are repressed. It also differs from the unconscious in that it does not have the ability to signify. Freud claims it is most associated with the passions and a lack of self-control. The ego, however, restrains impulses and is associated with reason and common sense. To mediate the unrealistic desires of the id, the ego forms "through a series of identifications with objects external to it" (Silverman 134). These identifications are offered up to the id as substitutes. Identifying with the father is the first and most important identification and is how the superego begins to form. This is a complex process which ultimately leads to a son's acceptance that he can never be like his father. This realization leads to a distancing from the father and becomes a construction of an ideal version of the ego. "This ego ideal or superego functions throughout the history of the subject as the mirror in which the ego sees what it should be, but never can be" (Silverman 135). Initially,

Freud said very little regarding the formation of female identity; however, his later work claims that both the terms “male” and “female” acquire meaning through their opposition to each other (Silverman 132-137, 139).

Male/female opposition can be understood as a binary set that is “analogous to antonyms in language, and must be understood as a closed system of signification” (Silverman 139). Signification occurs through opposition: male can only be considered aggressive and potent if female is considered passive and impotent. Central to this view is that the “penis signifies ‘plentitude’ and the vagina signifies ‘lack.’” Lacan replaces the term “penis” with “phallus” arguing that this word symbolizes privileges from which the son is temporarily excluded. However, a male gains authenticity when compared to a female’s inferiority. The phallus is a cultural representation of exclusion or lack (Silverman 139-140). Silverman draws this conclusion:

It would seem reasonable to assume that female identity is constructed through the initial assimilation of a very different image and voice than those internalized by the male subject – that the female subject takes into herself the values of inferiority and powerlessness embodied by the mother rather than those of superiority and power embodied by the father. It is by looking into this mirror that she discovers her “castration.” (Silverman 145)

Cixous sums it up by claiming that women are kept in the dark about themselves through “the great arm of parental-conjugal phallocentrism” (“The Laugh of the Medusa” 1943). Her call to break free from culturally constructed identities presents challenges; however, Lacan’s view of the unconscious as a signifying network may allow women to tap into an area of the mind less accessible to men.

Since language is made up of signifiers, a distance is created between an object and the language which represents it. Furthermore, Lacan claims that "... language isolates the subject from the real, confining it forever to the realm of signification" (Silverman 166). Signification occurs when the male undergoes a series of identifications or what could also be considered displacements, so according to Freud his consciousness is mediated through metaphors and metonymies. In contrast, the female has not gone through the same identification process and remains much closer to the real than the male. It would stand to reason that she would be able to access unconscious thought more readily than a male since her superego is not as strongly developed. Lacan claims that a female is not completely alienated from the real, "nor enjoys as full an association with the symbolic as does the male subject" (Silverman 186). Furthermore, since Lacan believes that the unconscious is not chaotic, but a signifying network (Silverman 166), it would be possible for a woman to write with language mediated through a different avenue than a male.

Cixous agrees with Lacan and claims that poetry gains strength through the unconscious and that the unconscious is a "limitless country ... where the repressed manage to survive: women ..." ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 1946). She pleads, "Write yourself. Your body must be heard. Only then will the immense resources of the unconscious spring forth" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 1946). She is linking the unconscious to a territory reserved for the repressed. In her view, this is the place where a woman can write authentically and truly express her desires. This is not to say that a man cannot use the same avenue and thus write as a female. In fact, Cixous leaves this possibility open when she refers to the female body. She does not necessarily view a female biologically, but in terms of repression. In doing so, Cixous creates a new opposition: the female body represents repression and the male body represents power and authority. From this

perspective, Cixous's *écriture féminine* allows for anyone to write with a female body ("Hélène Cixous" 1941).

On the other hand, Cixous does acknowledge that it is impossible to define the feminine practice of writing through a phallogentric system. Yet, she does claim that a feminine discourse can "surpass" it, though it is only possible by those who can never be subjugated ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 1949). Cixous reminds us that women are not obligated to view themselves through what they lack or "pledge allegiance to the negative" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 1951).

Furthermore, women do not have to operate within the language of men. As Cixous explains:

If woman has always functioned "within" the discourse of man, a signifier that has always referred back to the opposite signifier which annihilates its specific energy and diminishes or stifles its very different sounds, it is time for her to dislocate this "within," to explode it, turn it around, and seize it; to make it hers, containing it, taking it in her own mouth, biting that tongue with her very own teeth to invent for herself a language to get inside of ... For us the point is not to take possession in order to internalize or manipulate, but rather to dash through and to "fly." ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 1953)

Here she is clearly referring to the Lacanian view that women are defined by men (the signifier) through opposition which claims she is passive and impotent. This passage also supports her notion that a woman can write differently when she does it aggressively and potently. She reiterates this in another passage when she warns, "Beware, my friend, of the signifier that would take you back to the authority of a signified! ... Take a look around, then cut through!"

A review of Cixous' writing will further deepen our understanding of her sentiments. *La Jeune Neé – The Newly Born Woman*, was co-authored with Catherine Clément, and published in

1975. The following excerpt comes from one of her best known pieces, “Sorties” – translated into English as “Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/Forays” (*Reader 37*):

Where is she?
Activity/passivity
Sun/Moon
Culture/Nature
Day/Night

Father/Mother
Head/Heart
Intelligible/Palpable
Logos/Pathos

Form, convex, step, advance, semen, progress.

Matter, concave, ground – where steps are taken, holding-and dumping-ground.

Man

Woman

Always the same metaphor: we follow it, it carries us, beneath all its figures, wherever discourse is organized. If we read or speak, the same thread or double braid is leading us through literature, philosophy, criticism, centuries of representation and reflection.

Thought has always worked through opposition,

Speaking/Writing

Parole/Ecriture

High/Low

Through dual, hierarchical oppositions. Superior/Inferior. Myths, legends, books. Philosophical systems. Everywhere (where) ordering intervenes, where a law organizes what is thinkable by oppositions (dual, irreconcilable; or sublatale, dialectical). And all these pairs of opposition are *couples*. Does that mean something? Is the fact that Logocentrism subjects thought – all concepts, codes and values – to a binary system, related to the couple, man/woman? (*Reader 37-38*)

In this excerpt, Cixous breaks free from using either prose or verse using a combination of both to write in a bold and striking way. Her poetry gains strength as she responds to it through prose. In addition, she evokes a sense of the real by examining symbolic language giving us the sense that she is expressing herself through her unconscious – language she has invented to get inside of (“The Laugh of the Medusa” 1953). The structure she uses demonstrates the power of writing *écriture féminine*.

In contrast, the following excerpt from *Angst*, published in 1977, is written only in prose and has more of a conventional structure. As Cixous pointed out in “The Laugh of the Medusa,” it is not really possible for women to write in a way that is strictly feminine, “an impossibility that will remain” (“The Laugh of the Medusa” 1949).

He talked to me without hesitation in his own language. As if he were sure that I would understand it; that I had to hear it. It wasn't mine. It was a strange language whose pronouns came straight for me at every turn, pitilessly. A positive language. I couldn't say no. And he left no place in his voice for doubt. It was a voice that checked me, frightened me; made me want to run away, kept me willingly riveted to the bed which I couldn't leave, where I had gone to ground; buried myself; shrunk, felt myself getting younger and forgetting. (*Reader* 72)

In both excerpts, Cixous seems to be writing from what Lacan would describe as the unconscious. In this piece, she is calling forth raw emotion that recalls a time when she felt under the control of a man and also repressed by him. She depicts herself as shrunken and buried, as opposed to depicting the man as powerful (she couldn't say no). Cixous' portrayal is reminiscent of Lacan's proposal in “The Agency of the Letter of the Unconscious,” that the signified is “incessantly sliding” under the signifier. As a result, dialogue has a transformative effect on the subject (Lacan 1175).

When searching for a way to understand how the mind develops and creates meaning, the pairing of semiotics and psychoanalysis provides a clear path. The inner workings of the mind can only be articulated through language. Language is comprised of signifying chains that are produced through Freud's topography of the mind - unconscious, preconscious, and conscious. This is the process by which signification occurs and how subjectivity emerges. Freud's model

explains how males achieve identity through a tight rein on the preconscious moving them further away from the unconscious. However, Freud's model suggests that due to a woman's lack, the preconscious is not as tightly controlled making it easier for her to tap into her unconscious. Her ability to draw from the unconscious leaves room for the possibility that she can write differently than a man from a place of authenticity. As Cixous reminds us, all women have the capability of "starting the history of life somewhere else" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 1959).

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Literacy Narrative Unit

Rationale:

Learning how to read and write is personal, whether we learned it from our mothers, fathers, grandparents, caregivers, teachers, siblings, other students, and so on. We all have memories of how we obtained literacy, but it is easy to overlook the early process of learning how to read and write. The process of becoming literate is complex—the experiences before preschool, into kindergarten, then K-12 with higher acquisition of literacy. We make associations with books and the people reading them to us when we were young, we make associations with books and the people who write them, and we make associations with books and people who teach us subjects and academic literacies. Our learning processes are as different and delicate as they are unique to each of us. Each of us develop at a different pace emotionally and cognitively. Our environment also plays a huge role, thus the social and cultural contexts essentially shape our literacy development. And so do economics.

With this in mind, students will draw on required readings about literacy to examine their own literacy history, habits and processes. The purpose of this inquiry is for them to get to know themselves better as readers and writers. The more they know about themselves as a reader and writer, the more control they are likely to have over these processes.

To help students mine their memories, they will be asked to reflect on where they are as a reader and writer. Questions for them to consider focus on the how they learned to read and/or

write, what their earliest memory is of reading/writing, what types of reading/writing they have done in the past, how much they enjoyed the various types of writing they have done, what has frustrated them regarding writing consideration, and who has acted as a literacy sponsor for them. As they consider what all these memories and experiences suggest, they should be looking for an overall “so what?” – a main theme, a central “finding,” an overall conclusion that their consideration has led them to draw. Their consideration and analysis of their previous experience will lead them to a *main point* that their literary narratives will demonstrate and support. Because their literary narratives tell their particular stories, the shape will depend upon the particular experiences they have had and the importance they have attached to them.

The required readings from the class text *Writing About Writing* by Elizabeth Wardle and Doug Downs have been chosen for their relevance to the topic of literacy. They are as follows: “Sponsors of Literacy” by Deborah Brandt, “Learning to Read” by Malcolm X, “From Outside, In” by Barbara Mellix and “All Writing Is Autobiography” by Donald M. Murray.

Along with reading about others’ literacy journeys, grammar will be discussed in this unit to encourage students to write in an engaging and creative way. These are two of the habits of the mind outlined in “Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing,” developed by the WPA Council. The habits of the mind serve as a foundation for college-level writing. A variety of topics will be discussed: complex sentence structure, parallelism, introductions and conclusions, transitions, and revision. Lessons will be taken from *Image Grammar* by Harry R. Noden, *Grammar to Enrich and Enhance Writing* by Constance Weaver, and *Rhetorical Grammar* by Martha Kolln and Loretta Gray. This is a four-week unit that is paired with a literacy narrative assignment (Appendix A). Each lesson plan is covered over two class periods or one week of college-level classes.

Lesson Plan #1: Painting with Words

Lesson Preparation

Grade level: College Freshman

Supporting Theory/Theorist (citation, is fine):

“Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing.” *WPA Council*.

<http://wpacouncil.org/files/framework-for-success-postsecondary-writing.pdf>

Noden, Harry R. *Image Grammar*. Heinemann, 2011.

Standard(s) to which this lesson adheres/supports (taken from “Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing”):

Engagement – a sense of investment and involvement in learning.

Engagement is fostered when writers are encouraged to:

- make connections between their own ideas and those of others;
- find meanings new to them or build on existing meanings as a result of new connections; and
- act upon the new knowledge that they have discovered

Creativity – the ability to use novel approaches for generating, investigating, and representing ideas.

Creativity is fostered when writers are encouraged to:

- take risks by exploring questions, topics, and ideas that are new to them;
- use methods that are new to them to investigate questions, topics, and ideas;
- represent what they have learned in a variety of ways; and
- evaluate the effects or consequences of their creative choices.

Lesson Plan

Materials and Technology Needed:

Handout, Computer, Projector

Student Objectives:

Students will learn how the use of participles, absolutes, appositives, adjectives shifted out of order, and action verbs can bring life to their writing in narrative writing. In addition, students will learn how to recognize image blanks and then replace vague nouns and verbs with specific ones.

The number of class sessions needed: 2

Descriptions of activities for each class period:

Class Session # 1: Five Brush Strokes from *Image Grammar*

- Discuss each grammatical concept (participle, absolutes, appositives, adjectives, and action verbs) with examples from a sample paragraph I created. Show the original

version and then show how using the “brush strokes” enhances and enlivens the sample.

- Allow time for students to practice by having them create a simple six-seven sentence story, then applying the brushstrokes.

Assessment - This exercise is due the following class period and will be assessed based on successfully applying the brushstrokes and including the post-lesson reflection. Two points will be awarded for each brushstroke for a maximum of ten points.

Post Lesson Reflection prompt:

Please answer the following questions in one to two paragraphs. How have these two lessons expanded your view of word choice and arrangement within sentences? Do you think these exercises were effective and enlivened your writing?

Class Session #2: Zooming in on Vague Nouns and Verbs from *Image Grammar*

- Discuss the concept of vague nouns and verbs. Project rough draft and subsequent revisions from *Image Grammar* on pg. 36-37 to use with discussion.
- Project a picture of N. C. Wyeth’s painting of the character Pew from *Treasure Island* and explain that the image is from the novel.
- Hand out a one paragraph description that is purposely written with weak images, point out that the abstract nouns are in bold and the verbs are italicized.
- Place students in groups of two or three and ask them to zoom in on italicized and bolded words and revise with stronger ones.
- Have groups share their revisions.
- Then project the actual passage from *Treasure Island* for comparison.

Session #1 - Example of Simple Story with Revision – Projected through Computer

Original:

The morning sun is warm and hazy. It is quite low to the horizon. As I sip my morning tea, something catches my eye. A perfectly formed spider's web hangs between tree branches. The web looks brilliant in the glow of the morning sun. Desperate to capture the moment, my husband quickly handed me his camera. In the end, I thought the photograph a poor substitute.

Revised using brush strokes:

Hanging low in the sky, the rays of sun peek through the haze. Leaning forward, tea cup lightly gripped, something catches my eye. A perfectly formed spider's web, swaying between branches of the towering pine tree, glistens in the golden glow. Scrambling to capture the moment, I quickly grab my husband's camera, black and shiny. Disappointed, I thought the photograph a poor substitute.

Class Session #2 - Sample paragraph with weak images based on a passage from *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson – Handout

Down the **road** late at **night**, the blind **man went**. He **made noise** with his **stick**. He **wore** something shading his **eyes** and **was bent** over. He said he lost his **eyes helping** England and King George.

Robert Louis Stevenson's Description of Pew – to be shared through projector

So things passed until the day after the funeral, and about three o'clock of a bitter, foggy, frosty afternoon, I was standing at the door for a moment full of sad thoughts about my father, when I saw someone drawing slowly near along the road. He was plainly blind, for he tapped before him with a stick, and wore a great green shade over his eyes and nose; and he was hunched, as if with age or weakness, and wore a huge old tattered sea-cloak with a hood, that made him appear positively deformed. I never saw in my life a more dreadful looking figure. He stopped a little from the inn, and raising his voice in an odd sing-song, addressed the air in front of him:

"Will any kind friend inform a blind man – who has lost the precious sight of his eyes in the gracious defense of his native country, England, and God bless King George! – where or in what part of this country he may now be?"

"You are at the Admiral Benblow, Black Hill Cove, my good man," said I.

"I hear a voice," said he, "a young voice. Will you give me your hand, my kind young friend and lead me in?"

I held out my hand, and the horrible, soft-spoken, eyeless creature gripped it in a moment like a vice. I was so much startled that I struggled to withdraw; but the blind man pulled me close up to him with a single action of his arm.

"Now boy," he said, "take me in to the captain."

"Sir," said I, "upon my word I dare not."

"Oh," he sneered, "that's it. Take me in straight, or I'll break your arm."

And he gave it, as he spoke, a wrench that made me cry out.



Image of Pew to be projected for Day Two of Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan #2: Sentence Structures

Lesson Preparation

Grade level: College Freshman

Supporting Theory/Theorist:

“Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing.” *WPA Council*.

<http://wpacouncil.org/files/framework-for-success-postsecondary-writing.pdf>

Kolln, Martha, and Loretta Gray. *Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical Choices, Rhetorical Effects*.

Pearson, 2017.

Standard(s) to which this lesson adheres/supports (taken from “Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing”):

Developing Logic of Conventions:

- Investigate the logic and implications of different conventions

Lesson Plan

Materials and Technology Needed:

Handout, Computer, Projector

Student Objectives:

Students will learn to recognize and write sentences that are compound and complex, along with developing an understanding of how parallel structures create cohesive writing.

The number of class sessions needed: 2

Descriptions of activities for each class period:

Class Session # 1: Coordination and Subordination within Sentences

- Discuss compound and complex sentence construction based on Chapter 4 from *Rhetorical Grammar*
- Handout sample paragraphs from “Learning to Read” by Malcolm X from *Writing About Writing*
- Pair students up and have them underline each instance of coordinating and subordinating sentences
- Discuss student findings as a class

Class Session #2: Parallelism

- Handout sample paragraph from *Dracula* by Bram Stoker and have students circle each use of the word “and”
- Discuss how “and” is used to create a parallel structure within the paragraph and how its use creates cohesiveness
- Follow-up by having students place a rectangle around all the synonyms used for mountains in the paragraph

- Discuss any other parallel structures students notice

Class Session #1 - excerpts from “Learning to Read” by Malcolm X - Handout

It had really begun back in the Charlestown Prison, when Bimbi first made me feel envy of his stock of knowledge. Bimbi had always taken charge of any conversation he was in, and I had tried to emulate him. But every book I picked up had few sentences which didn't contain anywhere from one to nearly all of the words that might as well have been in Chinese. When I just skipped those words, of course, I really ended up with little idea of what the book said. So I had come to the Norfolk Prison Colony still going through only book-reading motions. Pretty soon, I would have quit even these motions, unless I had received the motivation that I did.

I woke in the morning, thinking about those words – immensely proud to realize that not only had I written so much at one time, but I'd written words that I never knew were in the world. Moreover, with a little effort, I also could remember what many of these words meant. I reviewed the words whose meanings I didn't remember. Funny thing, from the dictionary first page right now, that “aardvark” springs to my mind. The dictionary had a picture of it, a long-tailed, long-eared, burrowing African mammal, which lives off termites caught by sticking out its tongue as an anteater does for ants.

Class Session #2 – excerpt from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* - Handout

Beyond the green swelling hills of the Mittel Land rose mighty slopes of forest up to the lofty steeps of the Carpathians themselves. Right and left of us they towered, with the afternoon sun falling full upon them and bringing out all the glorious colours of this beautiful range, deep blue and purple in the shadows of the peaks, green and brown where grass and rock mingled, and an endless perspective of jagged rock and pointed crags, till these were themselves lost in the distance, where the snowy peaks rose grandly. Here and there seemed mighty rifts in the mountains, through which as the sun began to sink, we saw now and again the white gleam of falling water. One of my companions touched my arm as we swept round the base of a hill and opened up the lofty, snow-covered peak of a mountain, which seemed, as we wound on our serpentine way, to be right before us.

Lesson Plan #3: Beginnings and Endings

Lesson Preparation

Grade level: College Freshman

Supporting Theory/Theorist :

“Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing.” *WPA Council*.

<http://wpacouncil.org/files/framework-for-success-postsecondary-writing.pdf>

Noden, Harry R. *Image Grammar*. Heinemann, 2011.

Standard(s) to which this lesson adheres/supports (taken from “Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing”):

Developing Logical Conventions:

- Investigate the logic and implications of different conventions

Lesson Plan

Materials and Technology Needed:

Handouts, Computer, Projector

Student Objectives:

Students will learn to craft effective introductions and conclusions and insert them into the narrative they are writing.

The number of class sessions needed: 2

Descriptions of activities for each class period:

Class Session # 1: Effective introductions

- Discuss different types of introductions based on Chapter 9 from *Image Grammar* – pg. 207-212
- Project the narrative lead listed in the text and discuss why it is a narrative lead
- Students practice writing an introduction to their literacy narrative

Class Session #2: Ways to Conclude

- Discuss different types of conclusions based on Chapter 9 from *Image Grammar* – pg. 215-216
- Project the three ways to conclude based on Chapter 9 from *Image Grammar*
- Students practice writing a conclusion to their literacy narrative

Lesson Plan #4: Revising

Lesson Preparation

Grade level: College Freshman

Supporting Theory/Theorist (citation, is fine):

“Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing.” *WPA Council*.

<http://wpacouncil.org/files/framework-for-success-postsecondary-writing.pdf>

Noden, Harry R. *Image Grammar*. Heinemann, 2011.

Standard(s) to which this lesson adheres/supports (taken from “Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing”):

Developing Flexible Writing Processes:

- practice all aspects of writing processes including invention, research, drafting, sharing with others, revising in response to reviews, and editing
- use feedback to revise texts to make them appropriate for the academic discipline or context for which the writing is intended;

Lesson Plan

Materials and Technology Needed:

Handouts, Computer, Projector

Student Objectives:

Students will learn to use checklists that will lead to meaningful revision.

The number of class sessions needed: 2

Descriptions of activities for each class period:

Class Session # 1: Grammatical Errors Checklist

- Review “Connors and Lunford’s 20 Most Common Errors” Handout – printed from *Image Grammar* CD
- Divide students into groups and have them evaluate a short story containing errors using the handout
- Discuss group results with entire class

Class Session #2: Reflecting on Content and Transitions

- Review “Reflecting on the Shape of Content” Handout – printed from *Image Grammar* CD
- Review Transition Handout
- Pair students up for peer review of literacy narrative. Students will use the content handout as a guide for the peer review.

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Assessment: Lessons 2, 3, and 4

Students will review rough draft of literacy narrative using a checklist containing the 20 most common errors. The checklist will be turned in with the rough draft and will be worth 20 points.

APPENDIX A

Ms. Daugherty
GSW 1110
Fall 2019

LITERACY NARRATIVE

Welcome to your first essay of the semester. As a way for me to get to know you as a writer and help me detect, if any, immediate writing weaknesses that you might have, I would like you to write a diagnostic essay that will serve as your Essay #1, which will go in your Canvas ePortfolio.

Task/Objective (adapted from Kitty Burroughs and *Writing about Writing: A College Reader*)

Learning how to read and write is personal, whether we learned it from our mothers, fathers, grandparents, caregivers, teachers, siblings, other students, and so on. We all have memories of how we obtained literacy, but it is easy to overlook the early process of learning how to read and write. The process of becoming literate is complex—the experiences before preschool, into kindergarten, then K-12 with higher acquisition of literacy. We make associations with books and the people reading them to us when we were young, we make associations with books and the people who write them, and we make associations with books and people who teach us subjects and academic literacies. Our learning processes are as different and delicate as they are unique to each of us. Each of us develop at a different pace emotionally and cognitively. Our environment also plays a huge role, thus the social and cultural contexts essentially shape our literacy development. And so do economics.

Drawing on what you have read in this chapter, examine your own literacy history, habits and processes. The purpose of this inquiry is to get to know yourself better as a reader and writer. As Malcolm X argued, awareness gives power and purpose: The more you know about yourself as a reader and writer, the more control you are likely to have over these processes.

Getting Started - Invention, Research, and Analysis

Start your literary narrative by considering your history as a reader and writer. Try to get at what your memories and feelings about writing/reading are and how you actually write/read now. Do not make bland generalizations (“I really love to write”), but go into detail about how you learned to write/read. Mine your memory, thinking carefully about where you’ve been and where you are as a reader and writer. You might begin by answering questions such as these:

- How did you learn to write and/or read?
- What kinds of writing/reading have you done in the past?
- How much have you enjoyed the various kinds of writing/reading you’ve done?
- What is your earliest memory of reading and writing?

- What frustrated you about reading and writing as you were learning and then as you progressed through school? By the same token what pleased you about them?
- Where do you think your current feelings about habits of writing and reading come from? How did you get to where you are as a writer/reader? What in your past has made you the kind of writer/reader you are today?
- Who are some people in your life who have acted as literacy sponsors?

As you consider what all these memories and experiences suggest, you should be looking for an overall “so what?” – a main theme, a central “finding,” an overall conclusion that your consideration leads you to draw. Your consideration and analysis of your previous experience will lead you to a *main point* that your literary narrative will demonstrate and support. Because your literary narrative tells **your** particular story, its shape will depend the particular experiences you’ve had and the importance you attach to them.

Audience and Purpose

You are to select a specific audience for your paper (noting such things as age, sex, religious beliefs, income, education, experience with the topic, opposition to or agreement with your point of view, etc.). You are also to have a clear sense of purpose for this paper. What exactly do you want your target audience to do or to believe after reading your argument?

Length

As a general guideline, the final revised draft should be at least four full pages in content. See Achievement Requirements or Purdue OWL on the format of your drafts.

Essay Submission

Save all writing associated with this essay, including all prewriting, proposal, first and subsequent drafts, and the final draft. All of these must be turned in at the end of the unit or your work will not be accepted. Late drafts (rough or final) will not receive any comments.

Final Note

Remember that I am here to help you at any stage of your writing process, so do not hesitate to make an appointment with me if you need assistance. Also remember that you may consult The Learning Commons for assistance; call 419-372-xxx to set up an appointment. You do not have to have a draft written to go to The Learning Commons—they can help you brainstorm for ideas (including topics), plan, draft, and revise. If you have any questions, just ask. Feel free to talk to me in and outside of class.

Rough draft due: TBA

Final draft due: TBA

Narrative Essay Rubric
(maximum of 50 points)

	6	4	2	0
INTRODUCTION Background/History Thesis Statement CONCLUSION	Well-developed introduction engages the reader and creates interest. Contains detailed background information. Thesis clearly states a significant position. Conclusion effectively wraps up and goes beyond restating the thesis	Introduction creates interest. Thesis clearly states the position. Conclusion effectively summarizes topics.	Introduction adequately explains the background, but may lack detail. Thesis states the position. Conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all loose ends.	Background details are a random collection of information, unclear, or not related to the topic. Thesis is vague or unclear. Conclusion does not summarize main points.
MAIN POINTS Body Paragraphs	Well developed main points directly related to the thesis. Supporting examples are concrete and detailed. The narrative is developed with a consistent and effective point of view, showing the story in detail.	Three or more main points are related to the thesis, but one may lack details. The narrative shows events from the author's point of view using some details.	Three or more main points are present. The narrative shows events, but may lack details.	Less than three main points, and/or poor development of ideas. The narrative is undeveloped, and tells rather than shows the story.
ORGANIZATION Structure Transitions	Logical progression of ideas with a clear structure that enhances the thesis. Transitions are mature and graceful.	Logical progression of ideas. Transitions are present equally throughout essay.	Organization is clear. Transitions are present.	No discernable organization. Transitions are not present.
STYLE Sentence flow, variety, diction	Writing is smooth, skillful, coherent. Sentences are strong expressive with varied structure. Diction is consistent and words are well chosen.	Writing is clear and sentences have varied structure. Diction is consistent.	Writing is clear, but sentences may lack variety. Diction is appropriate.	Writing is confusing, hard to follow. Contains fragments and/or run-on sentences. Inappropriate diction.
MECHANICS Spelling, punctuation, capitalization	Punctuation, spelling, capitalization are correct. No errors	Punctuation, spelling, capitalization are	A few errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization	Distracting errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization

		generally correct, with few errors (1-2)	(3-4)	
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Introduction/Conclusion _____

Main Points _____

Organization _____

Style _____

Mechanics _____

*Checklist _____

Total Points _____

*Checklist of 20 Most Common Mistakes turned in with rough draft of narrative

Works Cited

“Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing.” *WPA Council*.

<http://wpacouncil.org/files/framework-for-success-postsecondary-writing.pdf>

Kolln, Martha, and Loretta Gray. *Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical Choices, Rhetorical Effects*. Pearson, 2017.

Noden, Harry R. *Image Grammar*. Heinemann, 2011.

Wardle, Elizabeth and Doug Downs. *Writing About Writing*. Bedford/St. Martins, 2017.

Susan Daugherty

Professor Wells-Jensen

English 6150

17 December 2017

James Crawford's Case for Bilingualism in Education

With the rise of nationalism, slogans such as “Make America Great Again,” and a call to build a wall along the Mexican border, James Crawford’s *Hold Your Tongue* (1992) is more relevant than ever. When President Donald Trump took office in 2018, immigration policy was thrust into the forefront of national news due to his campaign promise to secure the border. His solutions have spawned a contentious political debate between Republicans and Democrats highlighting what rights should be afforded to those who want to immigrate to the United States. In reality, this debate has been waging for decades and includes how to best educate non-English speaking students through public education. With the passage of The Bilingual Education Act of 1968, the federal government sought to intervene and make right a perceived social injustice (*Hold Your Tongue* 75). The passage of the Act spawned a bilingual education movement with political overtones that sparked an English Only movement from opponents. Crawford chronicles the rise of the English Only movement in the early 1990s and contrasts it with the call for bilingualism in the classroom. Crawford delves deeply into the complexities associated with both movements and presents what is at stake for proponents of each. He contends that the English Only movement’s stated objective, which is to maintain unity among citizens, is in actuality ethnic intolerance (*Hold Your Tongue* ix). Crawford provides an exceptional amount of research from reputable experts; however, his presentation leans heavily toward the benefit of bilingual education, along with a negative view of the English Only movement’s motivation.

An understanding of Crawford's background helps place his point of view in context. Crawford shares in the acknowledgements section of the book that he "came to the story as a journalist, an outsider" (*Hold Your Tongue* 309). He is currently Editor-in-Chief of *DiversityLearningK12* which is a publishing venture that specializes in bilingual education, civil rights, and related issues. He is also founder and president of the Institute for Language and Education Policy which advocates for ELLs and heritage-language learners. He has specialized for the past thirty years in language issues as a journalist, lecturer, and consultant. Crawford graduated with an A.B., cum laude, from Harvard College in 1971 ("James Crawford"). His commitment in advocating for bilingual education over the span of his career speaks to the credibility that he brings to the conversation. Today he is considered an expert in the subject of bilingual education. However, when Crawford wrote *Hold Your Tongue* twenty-seven years ago, he had just entered the debate by sharing his findings in the book.

Crawford organizes the book chronologically as he examines the political roots and rise of both bilingual education and the English Only movement. In the first chapter, he initiates readers into the debate by outlining what was occurring politically at the time the book was written and uses an abundance of anecdotal evidence, along with an overview of legislation, to begin building his argument. In the second chapter, he continues to build the case by stepping back in time to share the viewpoint of the framers of the United States Constitution with respect to proclaiming a national language. Reflecting on why the United States has never instituted a national language anchors Crawford's claim that subsequent attempts at enforcing a language policy rose up because of ethnic intolerance. He points out that efforts in the 1880s "to mandate English as the basic language of instruction in parochial as well as public schools" was just a bigoted attempt to bring about conformity (*Hold Your Tongue* 47).

In the following chapters, Crawford makes a convincing case for the benefits of bilingualism in education by focusing on the plight of the Spanish-speaking population living in the southwestern part of the United States. He provides a thorough history of the language debate, along with examples of the importance of transitioning from a native language to English. He notes, “Educational researchers were recognizing that, far from unique to the Southwest, underachievement was predictable wherever children were denied access to education in their vernacular” (*Hold Your Tongue* 78). He backs this assertion up with the notion that there is not any valid reason for such children to give up their cultural roots (*Hold Your Tongue* 83).

As bilingual education gains traction, an antibilingual sentiment rises up which Crawford identifies as tribal politics. The English Only movement rose up not as a result of ideology, but through everyday encounters between Hispanics and Anglos, particularly in Miami. Crawford does an exemplary job of providing both perspectives in that community while also garnering sympathy for a growing anti-Hispanic sentiment. In response, Hispanics insisted that racism was at the core of the English Only message. As Crawford points out, the growing opposition to this message was not enough to deter legislators and “by 1998, all but two of the fifty states had at least considered legislation to consider English their official language, and thirteen had adopted such measures ...” (*Hold Your Tongue* 150). Crawford maintains these measures were initiated due to the rise of the Hispanic population and he includes plenty of evidence. To back this assertion, he points to the fact that bilingualism becomes a problem [only] if it involves Third World immigrants. Euro-ethnics have never come under attack and many have joined it (*Hold Your Tongue* 122).

Crawford adeptly concludes the book by positing that what is really at stake are individual rights. He makes a compelling case when he claims that there are two kinds of rights that need to be identified: freedom from discrimination on the basis of language and affirmative steps to overcome language barriers. He rightly points to the United States Supreme Court's treatment of language discrimination "as a surrogate for national-origin discrimination, which is prohibited both by statute and the U.S. Constitution" (*Hold Your Tongue* 257). As Crawford aptly states, "...national unity cannot be coerced. 'American' identity cannot be propagated, nor harmony assured, by means that contradict our founding principles" (*Hold Your Tongue* 260). How ironic that the very people who seem to hold the Constitution as the supreme authority would seek to tear at its fabric by denying the rights of others.

Overall, the information presented by Crawford has stood the test of time, particularly perceived ethnic intolerance. The current racial divide in the United States has been exacerbated by comments made by President Trump. His policies fall in line with what Crawford would expose as underlying bigotry. As far as the importance of Crawford's work within educational confines, it is in line with current writing on the topic of bilingualism. For example, in "Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach," Bruce Horner, Min- Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, and John Trimbur claim that a translingual approach will allow a writer's language proficiency to be measured by the "range of practices they can draw on" and not on conventional practices. Therefore, the approach is aligned with the forms of bilingual education that do not seek to replace one language with another, but encourages the student to build on existing abilities (*Horner* 308). What's striking is that Horner, et al. are calling for the same educational considerations for bilingual students that Crawford was calling for twenty-seven years ago. It would appear very little gain has been made in the ensuing years.

Though Crawford presents a plethora of evidence in support of ethnic intolerance, there are instances when he makes general statements that do not seem to be backed up with any statistical evidence. Though he insists that bilingual education is without question beneficial, there were instances where he does not provide any hard proof. For example, when he comments that researchers were beginning to recognize that “underachievement was predictable wherever children were denied access to education in their vernacular” (*Hold Your Tongue* 78), he does not back up this statement with any specific data. While I don’t doubt this is true based on the thoroughness of his research, this statement would be even more convincing with examples of test results.

Crawford’s negative framing of the motivation of the English Only movement leaves no question regarding his stand on the movement’s efforts. Though he provides plenty of counterargument, he never wavers on his position that any attempt to present English instruction as a unifying force is a disguise for bigotry. It’s clear that the two main purposes of his book are to present bilingual education in a favorable light and the English Only movement in a negative one. As a result, his objectivity seems to be compromised leading to a less than honest portrait of those who believe in the benefits of teaching students solely in English.

As more and more immigrants enter our educational system, the debate on how to best educate will continue. Most people have an opinion about how multilingual students should be educated, but few have taken the time to really understand all that has transpired legislatively. Since Crawford’s research is significant in the field of education, *Hold Your Tongue* is a must read for those who want to understand the underpinnings of both movements and the specific legislation that has either been proposed or enacted. Those who view the right to liberty

guaranteed by the Preamble of the United States Constitution will be challenged by Crawford to consider how to best support bilingual citizens without violating their governmental rights.

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Susan Daugherty

Professor Jordan

ENG 6800-502

8 March 2019

Killer Elves: Remix Trailers and the Power of Editing

Imagine *Elf* as a thriller, *Dumb and Dumber* as an Oscar worthy drama, and *The Shining* as an upbeat romantic-comedy. That's exactly what the producers of remixed trailers of these feature films have reimagined for our enjoyment. As this genre has grown in popularity through the internet, fans have come to anticipate they will be treated to a parody of the film. Full appreciation of a remix trailer would be difficult without being fairly well acquainted with the actual film. What makes a remix trailer successful as a parody is masterful manipulation by the producers of shots, dialogue, text, and music to create the illusion that the movie is something very different than the original version.

Familiar shots from each of these movies are chosen to provide context for each trailer, along with an appeal to logos. It's imperative that shots from an original movie are used; otherwise, recreated scenes would greatly diminish the impact of the remix. The whole point of the remix is to use familiar images that the audience recognizes from the film. Anyone who knows the plot of *Dumb and Dumber* is well aware that in the beginning of the movie the lead actor, Jim Carrey, falls head over heels for a woman he chauffeurs to the airport. The resulting plot is full of slapstick humor that any viewer quickly realizes captures the essence of the title. The movie would never be characterized as a romance. However, by manipulating original shots of the opening scenes, such as the shot of a street sign, "Hope St." coupled with a succession of shots showing a lovely young lady opening a door and a young man who is clearly captivated by

her, the illusion is created that this movie is a romance. However, the shots turn highly dramatic in nature and reflect a man in crisis leading to the belief that Jim Carrey has created an Oscar worthy performance. When in reality, the movie is a highly exaggerated farce.

Similarly, the *Elf* remix uses shots that highlight the odd behavior of the main character, Buddy, who believes he is an elf. In the movie, these shots are used to depict the main character, Buddy, as very naïve, childlike, and compassionate. However, these same shots are used in the remix to build to a climax depicting Buddy as a deeply disturbed character. Take for example, the scene where Buddy wants to be tucked into bed by his father. In the movie, this is a touching scene depicting Buddy as a vulnerable simple-minded person who just wants to be loved by his father. The use of this scene in the remix casts Buddy as a sinister character who is capable of attacking his father.

While the two comedies, *Elf* and *Dumb and Dumber* are recreated as a thriller and a drama, respectively; *The Shining*, a horror movie, has been remixed as a romantic-comedy. The shots used create a storyline that shows a frustrated writer, Jack Nicholson, who ultimately finds happiness by allowing a woman and her young son into his life. In actuality, those very shots in the movie symbolize the influence of evil forces on the father and the son. This iconic horror movie based on a Stephen King novel becomes more disturbing and darker as the plot progresses. Instead of a fairy tale ending as the remix suggests, the movie ends with Nicholson freezing to death in the snow. In this remix and the other two previously mentioned, the careful arrangement of shots begins to build meaning; yet, other components are necessary for meaning to be fully realized.

In all three remixes, dialogue is a strategy used in many of the shots that is also key in building the narrative. It's apparent that the intersection of action and dialogue requires careful

editing so that the narrative of the remix is logically constructed. *Elf* and *Dumb and Dumber* use dialogue exclusively, so many times shots were used in which dialogue was voiced over a scene to create meaning. For example, in *Dumb and Dumber*, when Lloyd introduces himself to Mary the shot being used has dialogue that is a voice over. This shot drives the narrative because Lloyd is lovingly looking into the camera (POV Mary) and aids in developing the story. Another example, this time from *Elf*, shows thirty seconds of shots (10 different ones) almost exclusively with dialogue that is voice over. This strategy gives a sense of the plot while also building suspense at the same time. The rapidly moving images coupled with the voice over works well to create a sense of instability. *The Shining* remix uses a different technique in which an actual narrator is used along with dialogue. This combination stitches the preview of the plot together and allows for shots to be used that may not have been appropriate based on dialogue, but the images are useful in building the narrative.

Though the original shots and dialogue from these three movies are critical, the effective use of music is just as critical. After muting each remix, I came to fully appreciate how powerfully the music adds to meaning and provides an appeal to pathos. Over the years, the building of tension within a music score has emerged that is associated with suspense, thus audiences have a certain expectation when hearing this tension. *Elf* is a prime example. The producers of this remix adeptly use these musical cues to prime the audience. As the trailer progresses, tension builds to a terrifying climax. The thriller-like music evokes a sense of dread and thoroughly convinces the viewer that Buddy is deranged. Viewers are convincingly led to believe that something horrible is about to happen.

On the other hand, three different melodies are used to set the mood in the remix of *The Shining*. At the beginning, a typical upbeat score, common to many comedies, is used signaling

that this movie is going to be fun-loving. A poignant piano piece from the movie *Shawshank Redemption* creates a shift in the middle of the trailer that is very touching. The trailer ends with a well-known Peter Gabriel composition, “Solsbury Hill,” that is associated with a sense of well-being, and one of the verses reinforces the plot, “Son, grab your things. I’ve come to take you home.” The viewer should certainly be convinced that this movie has a very happy ending – like every good romantic-comedy. Similarly, the *Dumb and Dumber* remix uses several different melodies to build the belief that this will be a heart-warming movie. It begins with guitar and violin music that draws on a sense of romance – this is when the main character Lloyd meets his love interest Mary. The second melody is orchestral and has a slower cadence which brings about the sense of despair – this is when Lloyd comes to the realization that he needs to make changes in his life. The final shift in melody symbolizes Lloyd’s decision to break out of his unfulfilling existence and go after Mary. This melody is much more upbeat and builds to a crescendo that matches the shots that the music accompanies; thus, the audience can anticipate a satisfying end to the movie.

The use of text brings cohesiveness to two of the remixes and is also used as an appeal to ethos and pathos. *Elf* and *Dumb and Dumber* begin by stating that New Line Cinema has produced the film. The familiar logo builds credibility right from the start since New Line Cinema is a film production studio of Warner Brothers, a highly regarded media company. Announcing New Line Cinema gives an air of professionalism to the remix. Conversely, *The Shining* remix does not announce who produced the film, leaving a less than professional impression.

An individual look at the use of text in each remix is necessary since they are used in different ways. In *Dumb and Dumber*, shots of the movie alternate with text to create meaning.

The opening shot of the Hope St. sign cuts to a lovely young woman opening the door to greet someone in a very welcoming manner. From the beginning, hope, an appeal to pathos, is connected to this image of the young woman. Building on that theme, text is provided to round out the narrative. It's imperative that the audience is told through text that the movie is "The Story of a Man Overcoming All Odds." Additional information is provided by text that sets up the sense of drama by announcing Lloyd's crisis: "As He Struggles to Find Purpose in His Life." Finally, the producers use an appeal to ethos by alerting the viewer to the status of the actors who play the main characters: "Golden Globe Winner – Jim Carrey" and "Golden Globe Nominee – Jeff Daniels." All the text provides convincing evidence that this film is a drama, produced by one of the best media companies, performed by some of the finest actors. Finally, the typeface used is conventional which is appropriate given that the trailer is for a drama.

In the same manner, *Elf* is interspersed with images and text that create the narrative. As the suspense builds, the viewer is informed through text that Buddy was "Taken as A Child," "Tortured," and "Twisted and Broken." This information leads to the notion that Buddy is deranged. However, a bit of levity is used when we are alerted to the fact that "From Director Jon Favreau Comes a Snow Spattered Thriller." The use of the word 'thriller' confirms what the viewer suspects based on all the other information embedded in the remix. The text is also conventional, but during the description of Buddy, it momentarily breaks into pixels that leaves the impression that Buddy is shattering. Overall the text is useful, but not as necessary as the information conveyed in *Dumb and Dumber*.

In contrast, the remix of *The Shining* does not use any text except for announcing the name of the movie at the very end. Instead of building the narrative through a combination of

text and shots like the two other remixes, *The Shining* relies on an interplay of dialogue and narration. Both strategies work well and are effective in creating meaning.

After analyzing the main components of the remixes, I came to the conclusion that the combination of the four make for powerful messaging. It is difficult to single out one that should be considered paramount. Shots of movies can be manipulated through editing that creates a trailer that parodies the original. However, without music, the mood would be diminished and in some cases the message would not break through. Dialogue and text supply much needed information that leads the viewer in a convincing manner. In the end, the remixes are without doubt most appreciated by those who have seen the original movie. Without prior context, the effectiveness of the parodies would be greatly diminished, and we are left to worry about killer elves.

Works Cited

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