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Literature and Literary Criticism, Rhetoric and Composition, and Professional Writing as Supporting Sub-Disciplines of English Studies and Composition Pedagogy through Language and Discourse

Literature and literary criticism, rhetoric and composition, and professional writing are three sub-disciplines within the English department. Scholars in each of the specific fields carry their own opinion as to how they would like to advance their individual field; however, it is important to keep in mind the three perform together as sub-disciplines in one department. With the evolution of literary criticism, literature analysts have embraced being a part o f the humanities. According to the Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, theory involves “investigating and criticizing values, practices, representations, and affects embedded in cultural texts and surrounding institutions" (Leitch et al, xxxiv). This is being part of a larger discourse, one of our society’s, through the composition of written language. Rhetoric and composition teach writers how to write appropriately for their audiences, and therefore cannot be completely separated from literary scholarship. Rhetoric, once only considered to be rhetoric through

speaking, evolved into composition studies. It does not make sense to separate technical writing from composition departments, as composition crosses disciplines weaving together discourses.

There is a history in the studies of humanities, and also specific to the English department, to divide sub-disciplines, creating hierarchies. Rhetoric in ancient Greece was placed on a pedestal, only granting certain knowledgeable men to be considered rhetoricians. There was a particular authority considered to be true. The same has been consistent throughout literary criticism ranging from Formalist Theory to Poststructuralist to Postmodernists. The Formalists, similar to Aristotle, argued for a separation of the scientific discourses and literature discourse. The Formalist Theory claims, “What most separates literature from other modes of discourse is that it draws attention to its own medium, that is, to a complex texture of formal devices and strategies that include versification, style, and narrative structure” (Leitch et al, 18). Through the unfolding of theories building on each other, modern literature theories view rhetoric as a contribution to society through discourse.

Michel Foucault, one of the beginning contributors to this theory of thinking, argues a different way of looking at the author, what he calls "author-function." Whereas critics would seek to find the name of an author primarily for authenticity purposes, Foucault argues to diminish the status given to the author and to bring attention back to the subject matter as an ongoing conversation. He states, "the essential basis of the writing is not the exalted emotions related to the act of composition or the insertion of a subject into language. Rather, it has been primarily concerned with creating an opening

where the writing subject endlessly disappears" (Foucault, 1477). The author's name in relation to texts "establishes different forms of relationships" (Foucault, 1481). The "author-function" provides vitality to discourse and "points to the existence of certain groups of discourse," then allowing the status of the "author-function" to be one of society and culture, not the individual. The author's purpose is to circulate and expand ideas within society.

Foucault continues to explain that while speaking of "author-function," he has limited the author solely to writing as a mode of discourse. However, Foucault later acknowledges in "What is an Author?" that authors are "transdiscursive." Authors can take on a variety of forms such as artist, musician, technicians, etc. One of the main "discursive properties" of the author is the assumption of the "different forms of relationships (or nonrelationships)" (Foucault, 1489). Being able to see the author in this light may allow critics the opportunity to analyze texts historically. He suggests a new way of critiquing writing of all forms:

> Perhaps the time has come to study not only the expressive value and formal transformations of discourse, but its mode of existence: the modifications and variations, within any culture, of modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation. Partially at the expense of themes and concepts that an author places in his work, the "author-function" could also reveal the manner in which discourse is articulated on the basis of social relationships. (Foucault, 1489)

Foucault argues that the subject of the text, or any rhetorical work, be removed from its "creative role and analysed as a complex and variable function of discourse" (Foucault, 1489). A way of looking at society and culture is to read the literary works of the time period. Dobie presents New Literary Historicism as a theory that can be used when analyzing texts. Her thoughts are that a reader can learn from the ideologies represented throughout history in literary works. She also argues that "Even a work that is not overtly political or ideological affects the culture that reads it and is in turn affected by that culture," making it impossible for texts to be isolated in the time period they were written. This idea reflects E.D. Hirsh Jr.'s term "significance" compared to meaning in Reader Response Theory.

Hirsh claims that the meaning of a particular text will not change over time, but the significance of the text will morph with changing society. Reader Response Theory "endorses the idea of reading as private consumption, and it construes *experience* as a straightforward, unconditioned, conscious, and knowable process" (Leitch, 19). Reader Response Theory allows the reader to experience language transcribed into personal messages, whereas New Literary Historicism and Cultural Studies views rhetoric as the discourse of society as a whole, rather than the individual reader's viewpoint. The author as a master creator though, is still removed from each of the three theories, and allows "an era's various discourses" to "become coparticipants in a complex interaction that is the subject of study" (Dobie, 181). What Formalists once considered "high art" is dismissed recognizing that "all texts are social documents and, as such, they both reflect and affect the world that produces them" (Dobie, 181-182). The modes of discourse for

social interpretation evolve throughout time, also reflecting society. As discourse evolves, it is impossible to forego current knowledge as an interpreter, thus creating vitality of literature. New meaning can be created through "accepting a new understanding of what a text is" (Dobie, 182). To create not only a personal interpretation, but to also discern cultural discourse, according to Cultural Studies, New Literary Historicism, and Reader Response Theory it is necessary to analyze their various modes.

Sidney Dobrin, English Chair at the University of Florida, forwards these theories in explaining their relevance in Composition Pedagogy. Dobrin summarizes Toulmin's anti-theory argument that claims, "developing theories requires abstraction" and "argue away from real life and deny direct application to specific situations" (Dobrin, 5). However, Dobrin argues the validity of theory in teaching rhetoric and composition saying, "our task as teachers and scholars seems to be twofold: to participate in a practice, our pedagogy; and to produce theory that explain the nature, function, and operation of written discourse" (Dobrin, 6). He explores the necessary connection between theory and practice in rhetoric and composition, beginning with an explanation of his definition of theory.

Similar to Foucault, as well as the principles of Cultural Studies, New Literary Historicism, and Reader Response Theory, Dobrin contends that theory is established with new experiences and new observations. But unlike some assertions that theory is diminishing, it is important to see that theory "provides a framework within which one can operate, ask questions, even alter or refine principles, "which creates fluidity of thoughts and knowledge" (Dobrin, 9). Theory continues to evolve, just as knowledge

expands and provides "room for revision" where "universal explanations can be rethought" (Dobrin, 9). According to Dobrin, this is the strength behind theory, and the very reason why it cannot be dismissed, specifically in Rhetoric and Composition studies.

Dobrin also asserts the need for variety in the modes of Rhetoric and Composition studies. He explains that theory and practice in composition studies "rely on each other in transformative flux" and "are depended upon continued multimodal inquiry form various locations within the field" (Dobrin, 25). Building knowledge relies on evolving theory and practice and continuing to understand the uses of language in order to teach composition. Composition should not be confined to the four walls of a classroom, but rather be a part of a larger conversation -- the discourse stretching beyond the classroom. However, composition pedagogies desire more practice over theory. According to Dobrin, "rhetoric and composition is in the awkward position of having a built-in 'de-theorizer' that insists on practice, while at the same time, our desire to exist beyond the service role insists that we theorize in order to have our own 'body of knowledge' (Dobrin, 32). Writers and teachers of writing desire a need for application of the theories, and in turn, should urge for continuing to build new theories.

Postmodern and poststructuralist theories serve the rhetoric and composition field warranting exploration of discourse and its functions. Advancing active conversations about discourse then unfolds more possibilities within the theories themselves. However, the theories themselves do not implement practice.

Bartholomae argues similar viewpoints in his essay, "Composition," a discussion explaining composition studies within the university, more specifically -- the English

department. He begins by quoting Edward Channing, a Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard from 1819-1856. He says that Channing "makes a claim for the teaching of writing that remains familiar" (Bartholomae, 103). Teaching composition often falls in first-year writing courses, where professors often feel as if they did not adequately instill the knowledge of rhetoric. First-year writing students progressing in their fields without fully understanding the depths of rhetoric is a common worry of professors. Channing is quoted saying, "Perhaps they hope that more was taught than forms and proprieties, and that they led the mind to feel that there was some bond between the forms and proprieties and its own action" (Bartholomae, 103). The interconnected feeling described is similar to the conversation Sartre expresses as fundamental in writing rhetorically. Composition instruction in the university typically fall on the shoulders of the English department, the scholars and artists of rhetoric. The challenge has been condensing years of studies into one, maybe two, courses on writing and communication before sending the students into their prospective fields of study with the knowledge of effective communication through composition.

The discussion that seeks pedagogical solutions for first-year composition courses also seeks answers to: "What topics and genres are appropriate for undergraduates?" "What do students do when they sit down to write?" "How do they imagine and enact the work of writing?" and "If writing can be taught, what are the appropriate goals -- preparation for advanced education, for advanced thought? For citizenship and vocation? And how might scholars value and support that work, particularly in relation to the structure of value that had produced English departments and literature as an area of

study?" (Bartholomae, 104). Bartholomae separates these questions that remain in composition pedagogy from the new inquiry of teaching writing across the disciplines (104). He explains the uncertainty of needing to teach "forms of ordinary or unauthorized writing, writing outside of school" (Bartholomae, 104). If students do not gain knowledge in writing within their disciplines, then how can they effectively converse with other scholars in their field? If writing is a mode of discourse, of conversation, and a form of expanding on current ideas to build new ones, then should it not be more of a necessity to teach students how to write proactively in their fields? Of course this also presents a mound of questions beyond the composition classroom that also cannot be ignored in the solution making process; however, these questions are not relevant to answer in discussing composition pedagogies in first-year writing classrooms. Writing instructions are already anxious thinking they have focused too much on mechanics, barely touching on what makes good writing, what creates rhetoric?

Still, there is inquiry on what is considered to be good writing. What creates good conversation that is sufficient for first-year writing students to understand? Bartholomae references Kinneavy's *Theory of Discourse* in saying, "While the filed no longer has scholars attempting to write a book like his *Theory*, the desire remains among some to create a writing curriculum that can connect student to all areas of advanced knowledge and that can prepare them to write and act on behalf of common concerns…" (Bartholomae, 106). What seems to be encompassing the continual arguments for composition studies is tension between two groups of rhetoric: Aristotelian Rhetoric and Discourse as rhetoric. Aristotelian Rhetoric, as the name implies, relates to

the rhetorical values set by Aristotle. Discourse is rhetoric, a conversation using the rhetorical situation.

Rhetoric, as determined by scholars in ancient Greece, is an art of oral persuasion. Aristotle makes a distinction between what he considers persuasion in the human arts, *technē* -- rhetoric and poetics -- compared to sciences, physic or logic. To Aristotle, "rhetoric seems to be able to observe the persuasive about 'the given,'" which is why he claims: "it does not include technical knowledge of any particular, defined genus [of subjects]" (Aristotle, 115). To invent a successful argument meant using *ēthos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. *Ēthos* gives the speaker credibility, reveals his character to the listening audience. The speaker relied on *logos*, the organization of his content, to be truly heard by his listeners. To be truly heard in Aristotelian terms meant to capture the audience with well-composed art, and to sustain character credibility, "for we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly [than we do others]" (Aristotle, 115). The art of persuasion is a creation of those with higher status, as they seemingly accommodate the necessary qualities of character, knowledge, and credibility.

Considering the value placed on persuasion being an art, understanding style is crucial. Part of style in speech includes tone, which Aristotle references as *pathos*. To be persuasive also means knowing audience, as well as being aware of their emotions in order to draw on them. This tactic is one of understanding the causes of particular human emotions, discerning "their *state of mind*" (Aristotle, 118).

Style also consists of clarity and ease of understanding. Aristotle emphasizes the importance of clarity, "(speech is a kind of sign, so if it does not make clear it will not

perform its function)" (Aristotle, 118). Rhetoricians will not be successful if their audience does not easily comprehend the content. Language should be inviting, "ornamented rather than flat" (Aristotle, 118). He instructs artists of persuasion to use "nouns and verbs in their prevailing meaning" (Aristotle, 118) and to use appropriate, natural language based on the subject.

Writing is a tool for communication that uses language. Rhetorically speaking, producing written language involves structure and style, which is clear through Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*. However, Steven Pinker asks, "What is style after all, but the effective use of words to engage the human mind?" In *The Sense of Style*, Pinker says that his "focus is on nonfiction, particularly genres that put a premium on clarity and coherence" (Pinker, 7). Writing of all kinds, even technical writing, can adopt similar rhetorical techniques as writers of literature. He claims, "You can write with clarity and with flair, too" (Pinker, 7). Writing, in all forms is artistic, according to Pinker.

Pinker encourages his readers to re-think their views on language evolution. He asserts, "there is no dichotomy between describing how people use language and prescribing how they might use it more effectively" (Pinker, 303). He reminds scholars, writers, and language users of the "reasons to strive for good style," which is "to enhance the spread of ideas, to exemplify attention to detail, and to add to the beauty of the world" (Pinker, 304). Pinker offers a modern approach to style in writing, but we still ponder the true definition of writing in relation to ancient rhetoric.

Fredrich Nietzsche enters the conversation, scrutinizing the use of *pathos* passed down from the Greek rhetoricians, explaining the illusions veiling human minds. He

challenges: “What do human beings really know about themselves?” (Nietzsche, 765) and “Is language the full and adequate expression of all realities?” (Nietzsche, 766). Chastising the naïve tendencies of humans to be deceived by language, he positions that “concepts are formed” through words and “each word immediately becomes a concept,” implying how words are simply symbols and metaphors. For example, what is honesty? According to Nietzsche, it is a concept formulated from “*qualitas occulta*,” a Latin term for “hidden property” (Nietzsche, 767). There is no truth in the meanings of the concepts language interprets. Rhetoricians, valued with holding truth, actually are only presenting illusions, trickeries to coax the human mind into believing spoken words. He continues to explain:

> As creatures of *reason*, human beings now make their actions subject to the rule of abstractions; they no longer tolerate being swept away by sudden impressions and sensuous perceptions; they now generalize all these impression first, turning them into cooler, less colourful concepts in order to harness the vehicle of their lives and actions to them. Everything which distinguishes human beings from animals depends on this ability to sublimate sensuous metaphors into a schema, in other words, to dissolve an image into a concept” (Nietzsche, 768).

Nietzsche argues that “cooler, less colourful concepts” are similar to what he considers logic, what is “peculiar to mathematics” (Nietzsche, 768). Rhetoric has taken on a different shape in terms of arguing for a truth. Intellects grow in result of experience, and with gained knowledge, it is nonsensical to believe the power of persuasion continues

to be gripped through emotions encompassed with deceptions. He asks, “What then is truth?” (Nietzsche, 768), a question that continues to baffle rhetoricians today. Perhaps the more relevant question now is: What then is rhetoric?

Heidegger advances Nietzsche's argument of rhetoric in "Language," declaring language is more than an expression of man's environment; language is the existence of man. Where Nietzsche explored human consciousness and how we shaped concepts through words as symbols, Heidegger poses that language is a component of our thoughts. He begins his lecture asserting, "Man speaks. We speak when we are awake and we speak in our dreams" (Heidegger, 985). Humans are naturally inclined to speak, to use language, and to communicate. Heidegger presents speaking language as man's way of expression and notes many times in his lecture that "language speaks." He says to say that "language speaks" "would be to say: 'It is language that first brings man about, brings him into existence'" (Heidegger, 987). Language is the existence of man and of his society.

He presents verses from poetic sources in his lecture, analyzing the use of words and structure of language to present ideas. But then he says, "the content of the poem might be dissected even more distinctly, its form outlined even more precisely, but in such operations we would still remain confined by the notion of language that has prevailed for thousands of years" (Heidegger, 990). His explanation of this idea is that language is man’s production in order to express his perspective and emotion towards his environment. Language is communication and therefore requires an active participant in the conversation.

A conversation, whether in writing or in speaking, requires the listener's response to the speaker. Heidegger explains the act of responding as both "receiving and replying" (Heidegger, 997). Receiving is explained as hearing the words. The sounds heard, or the symbols interpreted, create meaning of language. When content is heard, man responds using language. This simple concept is used every day without effort because it is natural for humans to use language, but his forwarded ideas on language allow it to be studied using a different perspective. Language is common and Heidegger provided a notion that rhetoric can also be everyday language.

Language, writing, and communication are all necessary for being active members of society. It was Socrates who said, "An unexamined life is not worth living," an argument continuously passed through generations. Jean-Paul Sartre, a philosopher who forwarded Heidegger's conversation on the meaning of language states, "One of the chief motives of artistic creation is certainly the need of feeling that we are essential in relationship to the world" (Sartre, 1201). Sartre responds to Heidegger by extending his ideas on writing as a mode of communication. Like Heidegger, he explains that when an artist creates a painting, he then awaits reaction. The same is true for a writer. The writing artist requires a responder; a reader is his responder. Therefore, a writer does not simply write for himself, he writes for his reader.

Sartre provides the audience to composition, originally an audience who primarily listened to speech. He claims that reading is a "synthesis of perception and creation" and "To write is to man an appeal to the reader" through language. Aristotle taught that effective rhetoric was the ability to understand "*state of mind*," and similarly, Sartre

advises the write to appeal "to the reader's freedom to collaborate in the production of his work" (Sartre, 1203). What he means is authors' language use should be inviting their readers to engage in conversation. To accomplish the appeal, a writer would need to understand what is important to the reader, what their interests are, and how to phrase language that is inviting to the reader. Sartre presents the importance of a writer's audience, not only for conversation, but to accomplish the original purpose of writing.

If writing is the use of language to communicate and express thoughts about the world, to actively engage in society, then the author must have an audience. If the reader does not respond to the writer in conversation, then the writer has not fulfilled the purpose of rhetoric as composition. Sartre repeats the idea that to write "is to have recourse to the consciousness of others in order to make one's self be recognized as *essential* to the totality of being" and "the novelist's universe would lack depth if it were not discovered in a movement to transcend it" (Sartre, 1210). Sartre clears all doubt his reader may have regarding the importance of recognizing audience as a writer. To write is to extend a conversation. Reading provides involvement with the work of the composition artist. Responding in conversation demonstrates success in a writer’s use of rhetoric.

Rhetoric, according to Jarratt, is "a composition crafted to fit a particular situation" (Jarrett, 76). In explaining Rhetoric as a form of art based around crafting rules, Jarrett compares rhetoric to being like a textbook, which can also be "referred to as theory" (Jarratt, 76). Beginning with Plato, there has always been an argument as to what the definition of rhetoric is or where it belongs. The argument continues in rhetoric and

composition studies today with varying opinions on the evolution of rhetoric. But Jarratt offers, "Approaching the subject dynamically, we place it in motion, locating rhetoric in circuits of contingency and change, the elements of historical inquiry" (Jarratt, 76). Historically, rhetoric has drastically evolved from the original creation of the elite to holding a questionable home within the university, often falling in first year writing classrooms, of course unless the students continue in English studies.

The first of the five rhetorical canons is invention, from the Latin root word *inventio.* Jarrett explains how the rise of freshmen writing courses encourage more rhetoric scholars to research ancient Greek and Roman education theories and practices, shifting focus to "the ways writers compose" (Jarratt, 83). Kinneavy developed the field of composition as a research field by introducing what is now known as "the rhetorical situation." He saw rhetoric as a communication process that included: "the produce of a communications (a speaker or writer); the receiver (a listener or reader); and the message itself, including form and content" (Jarratt, 83). Communicating through the rhetorical form of writing, rhetorical scholars began analyzing genre. Genre studies allow writing studies to go beyond first-year composition courses and into "sites of social action" (Jarratt, 91). Genre also opens doors to study rhetoric in more modes.

One mode of particular interest is visual rhetoric. Jarratt points out that "Aristotle dwells on the power of words to bring images before the eyes," reasoning that rhetoric transforms to a wide range of discourse modes. The rise of computer technology is another relation to images, words, and language. Rather then the classical view of "elite discourse," rhetoric can be seen in every day communication. Then, the use of common

language, how it is used in both individuals and in groups creates "social realities" for scholars to study and understand. Rhetoric shape-shifts based on the languages within cultures. In ending "Rhetoric," Jarratt asserts, "Occupying the spaces of street, schoolroom, and cyberspaces, rhetoric can be as stable as a monument or as slippery as an octopus" (Jarratt, 93). The conversation can continue to evolve as rhetoric and language continues to evolve.

As scholars of language and all forms of rhetoric and composition, including the form of professional writing, we have a job. The job is not one of occupation in this particular sense, but more of duty. We have a duty to society, and according to Robbins: "our job is not to change the world, but to interpret it" (Robbins, 312). Robbins encourages scholars to reflect on "the scholar's affiliations with society (312). He notes the anxiety caused by diminishing funds provided to public universities, therefore the lack of positions available. This in turn creates what he refers to as an "uncertainty about how committed our society is to the continuing existence of any jobs in departments of literature" (Robbins, 312). What scholars continue trying to clarify is how to move the humanities forward, how to adapt, and how to remain classic. Society relies on literature, both new and old. Literature contains the conversations throughout history and the current discourse building knowledges.

Scholars then, according to Robbins, should be encouraged to think more specifically about their areas of interest. He urges scholars to think more distinctly about what area of society they would like to contribute. He poses his suggestions towards more of legitimation, and the influence conversations in literature can have in politics.

Society and culture, though two different terms, can really be viewed similarly. Robbins exclaims "Society remains that to which we must hold ourselves accountable only because it is acknowledged to have expanded, only to the extent that it can successfully claim to include and represent the expanded field of cultural and national particulars that are now the objects of scholarly attention" (Robbins, 323). As there seems to certainly be legitimate concerns with funding for the vitality of the humanities, our duty to society is continually expanding. Robbins' argument to be proactive and create involvement in political discourse from the humanities then makes more sense as a call to action.

He addresses the evolved argument from theorists, philosophers, and rhetoricians to seek power with truth. Knowledge is power. How are we as scholars using the rhetoric that we teach to be active in our society? How are we using rhetoric in all areas of composition studies to serve students? Students should be better prepared for effective communication in the professional world, not just composition classrooms.

The Art of Technical Documentation references a "*work methodology"* to provide structure to professional writing. It is "the development and internalization, through training and experience, of four precepts," which include the writer knowing their subject, their reader, the rules, and their tools (Haramundanis, 24). The methodology Haramundanis outlines does not stray far from the structure of composition. After all, technical writing is a form of composition. Understanding audience, however, seems to be opposite of rhetorical norms. Classic rhetoric separates the language of humanities and the languages of the sciences, and the typical audience in technical writing is accustomed to a more scientific approach to communication. Haramundanis provides examples of

"typical readers" of technical documentation being: software consultants, programmers, information systems managers, engineers, etc.

She explains writing to this sub-group of people includes using active voice, present tense, using consistent terms, offering parallel construction, using short words over long words, and using clarity in sentence structure in the second person (Haramundanis, 61-61). She demonstrates through her writing the process of the suggested methods of writing technical documentation. The language is simple and to the point without offering aesthetic appeal as rhetoric encourages. So then the question is how to use persuasion in technical documentation if the emotion, the *pathos*, is left out.

Ewing enters the conversation with explanation of persuasion tactics for technical writers. He says, "The explanation lies in a set of relationships among the communicator, the reader, the message, and the time-space environment" (Ewing, 230). He addresses the common thought about technical writers being "witless" (Ewing, 231), but asserts, "Good writers vary their approaches in response to their readings of different situations" (Ewing, 231). He reminds technical writers that they are still writers, more than likely with background knowledge of the rhetorical situation. He discusses the need for credibility, and then focuses his advice on the reader's reaction. He offers strategies for understanding a technical writing audience, which advises clarity and simplicity. This is similar to Pinker's suggestion to use clarity with style and not forego rhetorical strategies with "flair."

The opposing viewpoints on rhetoric and composition, language, and literary studies have not fully been addressed. In his essay "What are We Talking about When We

Talk about Composition?," Foster attempts to bring the disciplines together. He addresses the distance between literary scholars and the rising interest in composition scholarship. There is also the lurking need to define the term "rhetoric" and its use in disciplines, specifically composition. Foster argues "rhetoric's continuing impact on composition" in the "rhetorical studies which emphasize the interactive or 'relational' character of discourse" (Foster, 456). He attempts to bridge the divide created between literary scholarship and composition scholarship through the evolution of rhetoric. Not only does he address the similarities in the two scholarships, but also he reminds scholars that "We know some things as humanists, some things as scientists, and we can accommodate each way of knowing into our total field of awareness – so that we prevent ourselves from being trapped into dualistic either-or thinking" (Foster, 457-458). His goal here seems to try to join scholars of rhetoric in a larger issue, one that has been deemed a "crisis" in the humanities.

As humanities scholars, we enter into many conversations across the disciplines. He urges scholars to "be wary of those who, uncomfortable with the ambiguities of discourse and complacent with the quantitative, empirical perspective, would have us assume that perspective alone" (Foster, 458) because the field of composition allows for the continuation of that discourse. Scholars in the fields of rhetoric and composition are "informed readers" who apply critical analysis to all disciplines. As many other scholars have taken the position, Bazerman offers support to Foster saying, "Writing is a social action; texts help organize social activities and social structure; and reading is a form of social participation" (Bazerman, 505). Composition is able to intertwine with and connect

disciplines because it is social. We enter society's conversations through the tool of writing.

Bazerman revisits on the age-old question of "What is the fundamental goal of the study of writing?" and responds simply with "I have been able to find no better answer than the practical goal of helping people to write better" (Bazerman, 505). Writing involves being part of a conversation, interacting with others through language, and structuring a readable document for the right audience. He claims that "Both the writer and the postmodern critic consider language as a human activity shaping human consciousness," which ties literary criticism directly with composition and language. We use language to communicate, we formed symbols to communicate language through writing, and in turn continue to converse and build on each other's ideas.

Language is the connection that brings the sub-disciplines, literature and literary criticism, rhetoric and composition, and professional writing together in English studies. Literature is discourse that takes multiple forms and communicates through various modes a writer's message to their audience. Literary criticism theorizes meanings behind the messages, whether with specific purpose or including a meta-message. Criticism is necessary to understand the messages of societies, both past and present. Using theories, critics engage in active conversation through responding to an author, as well as inviting their readers to respond. Writing creates discourse throughout not only society, but within the university, and should not be separated from literature and literary criticism.

Since rhetoric and composition studies cannot be independent from literature and literary criticism, then any sub-field of composition studies must also be included.

Professional writing is a sub-field of composition studies and therefore should be encouraged as an active voice with the sub-disciplines. Also, if literature creates discourse across other disciplines, professional writing is necessary when merging any division of the art of classical rhetoric with evolving rhetorical situations. Classical rhetoric argues for a different scientific language from the humanist language that creates art. For this reason, technical and professional writing has been taught separately. The art of persuasion and rhetorical style has often been left out of that particular field of composition. But, Pinker approaches a more vibrant style when writing non-fiction, which includes professional writing, encouraging all forms of writing to be considered art.

Scholars of English studies and composition instructors should take into consideration the provided support of the three sub-disciplines of English: Literature and Literary Criticism, Rhetoric and Composition, and Professional Writing. Each sub-discipline can individually grow through conversations that build knowledge. It is also important when considering the practice of composition in first-year composition classrooms. Students enrolled in these courses are scholars of many disciplines who will become effective leaders in discourse if taught the rhetorical strategies. They must understand how to write for audiences beyond the classroom, as well as think critically about rhetorical situations and the use of language in culture. Thinking of composition pedagogy in this manner insists on including each of the three sub-disciplines to adequately teach composition. As scholars of English, we cannot dismiss any sub-disciplines in theory or practice as they bind discourse as mode to actively converse. Any

mode of discourse builds knowledge, and ultimately that is the responsibility of scholars in conversation with each other.

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