

The Art of Queering Voices: A Fugue

Hannah Ashley

ABSTRACT: Reported discourse—as theorized by Bakhtin, bringing the voices of others into our own writing through quotation, citation and paraphrase, as well as more subtle means—is at the heart of all academic writing, including basic writing. This article, both in its texture and its analysis, demonstrates that reported discourse must be regarded, and taught, as more than a simple set of surface conventions, but differently—as a resource for student writers simultaneously to be read as insiders (to harness the power provided through academic discourse), and to maintain outsider status and perspectives (to push at the constraints of academic discourse). Several intertwining metaphors and theories will be used to illustrate these seemingly paradoxical desires, including musical composition, mental illness, and queerness. These representations help this essay find its tonic as a call for contesting coercive conventions.

KEYWORDS: composition, basic writing, Bakhtin, voicing, reported discourse, queer theory

In a fugue stretto is the device by which a second voice The ideological becoming of a human being **enters with the subject overlapping a first voice** *Toddler: Beach. Me: First school, then beach. Toddler (pauses, then thoughtfully): First beach, then school, rather than starting after the completion of the subject by the first voice (Naxos)* . . . is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others. (Bakhtin)

An individual with dissociative fugue suddenly and unexpectedly takes physical leave of his surroundings and sets off on a journey. . . . (Psychnet-UK)

-- the mobilization, subversive confusion, and proliferation of genders
-- and therefore identity . . . 'gender trouble.' (Theory.org.uk)

Movement One: “Have To?”

Fugue has been described as a texture rather than a form. It is, in essence, a contrapuntal composition. The normal fugue opens with a subject or theme in one voice or part. A second voice answers, with the same subject transposed and sometimes slightly altered . . . while the first voice continues

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with an accompaniment that may have the character of a countersubject that will be used again as the piece progresses. Other voices enter one by one . . . (Naxos)

As soon as a critical interanimation of languages began to occur in the consciousness of our peasant, as soon as it became clear that . . . the ideological systems and approaches to the world that were indissolubly connected with these languages contradicted each other and in no way could live in peace and quiet with one another—then the inviolability and predetermined quality of these languages came to an end, and the necessity of actively choosing one’s orientation among them began. (Bakhtin 296)

Bakhtin offers the account above of what happens when a “peasant” becomes conscious of the code shifting done among different languages in different situations—in church, with family, for government activities, in song, etc. One’s thoughts, one’s languages, are not one’s own—an expression of self—they are imposed by the external exigencies of situation, convention, history, and politics. Bakhtin’s imagined peasant engages in linguistic performances for the most part unconsciously, and so “the place of each [language is] indisputable” (296). But if and when “critical interanimation of languages” arises in the awareness of the peasant, the “predetermined quality” of these languages becomes ambiguous, the “peace and quiet” of language becomes unstable and contested, and “the necessity of actively choosing” a discourse—a self-conscious performance of “self”—ensues.

How does such interanimation occur? It is not simply noticing that one activates different language features to appear competent in different situations. Most first-year students easily identify that “you have to write different in school” than *u text w/ yr frnds*, even if these same students, especially basic writers, struggle with exactly what those differences entail on paper. What most students do not identify is *why* you “have to” (ought to? should? must?) write differently in school, nor what these exhibitions of writing might mean. When discussing these questions in my classes, students typically say that *the way we talk is slang*, that *you can’t (oughtn’t? shouldn’t? mustn’t? can’t able to?) say That’s tight to your professor*. Why? I push further. Who (or what) shouldn’t you be, that you must be (perform being) one who writes an *effective* paper, not a *tight* one? Silence . . . the Bakhtinian explanation for which is that I have asked students to articulate themselves out of the interanimation paradox.

According to Bakhtin, interanimation—a self-conscious performance of self—occurs when “have to” means more to students than “ought to.” Ought purports neutrality. But for basic writers, who occupy an academic counterpart to Bakhtin’s peasants, have to must also convey its coercive meaning. *Effective* and *tight* flank conflicting ideological systems that cannot live in peace and quiet together. When we admit that there are likely to be consequences if we violate discursive boundaries [two women lovers camping alone are shot], and that some users of the discourse have greater investment [the wages of sin is death] in those boundaries than others [our daughters, birthed one each of our bodies and raised by two women—we are the proverbial fish without bicycles—and I am scared for our safety and theirs as I write that sentence]—it is then that we might be able to see that such boundaries are arbitrary, contingent and historical. Paradoxically only when they (we) understand the political, material, power-laden meanings attached to language choices might “have to” change to “decide to.” And then we can (ought to, must) violate them. Actively choosing one’s indeterminate orientation—troubling the “have to”—a necessity, a liberation. A pedagogy.

Movement Two: The Trouble—Discourse Is Unprincipled

Discourse is queer.

Devoted to both normalcy and perversion, queer theory revises these categories as arbitrary, plastic scoops of culture, and any solidified identity pertaining to sex, gender, or desire is the result of a sustained series of temporary performances (Butler). These revisioning moves not only construct the whole of the hetero-homo continuum as legitimate, but they help to analyze and authorize more contested or ambiguous practices and identities—drag kings, fag hags, mashing, etc. That is, a queered reading of a practice such as drag endorses drag as a valid expression of gender, and also it forces the reader of the “drag text” to look for new methods and systems of understanding the meaning behind the form of that particular “text”—what the person in drag is expressing, not just about any “self” in play, but about gender in general. The slippage of gender which perhaps could not be expressed without this form. Gender itself is troubled. Reading queerly any practice outside heteronormalcy contributes to the more abstract notion that gender, sex, and desire in general are always shifting, contingent qualities; they must be performed to be at all. The self-evident teleology of *all* sex and desire is called into question from a queer theory standpoint.

Discourse is queer. This axiom is illustrated in the 2002 volume *Alt/Dis: Alternative Discourses in the Academy* (Schroeder, Fox, and Bizzell). In that volume, one contributor writes that when other discourses are brought into play with traditional Western styles of academic discourse, the heterogeneous contact “foreground[s] the shifting, contingent nature of our discourses” (Mao 122). Many contributors to *Alt/Dis* assert similar queer justifications for hybrid or alternative discourses: alt/dis pushes at traditional ways of knowing, validates often-marginalized experiences for those both in- and outside of those experiences, and provokes readers to focus on finding new meanings through unfamiliar forms. The heuristics provided by queer theory direct compositionists to examine troubling performances of academic writing, those that are unpredictable, unstable, responsive to context, heterogeneous, uncomfortable, partial, peculiar—queer. That is, alt/dis operates on discourse similarly to how queerness operates on gender and eroticism: the self-evident teleology of *all* discourse is called into question from an alt standpoint.

This idea is, perhaps, nothing new—just a queered re-viewing of discourse theory. At least some of my colleagues will already consent to the line of reasoning that “little-d discourses” are contingent and shifting representations and instantiations of “Discourses” (Gee), and what this suggests is that Discourse is not fixed, and is ideological.¹

But those same colleagues differ, fitfully, about whether and particularly how academic D/discourse can or should be prescribed, given that it can only be fleetingly (though deeply) described. Down one end of the hall, conferencing on student autoethnographies: *Any attempt to portray D/discourse as fixed is an effort to regulate those engaged in the D/discourse*. Down the other, student-led lessons on semi-colons: *Expectations, opportunities, means to ends, genre, privilege, power*. And then we switch offices.

Most of my students, further, will not consent even to the opening bars, let alone the ensuing crescendo. The students who show up in my first-year writing courses hold quite foundationalist beliefs about everything from the five paragraph essay to standard English: beliefs taught to them by previous English teachers, their families, their communities, beliefs both reinforced and parodied in the media, beliefs which have rarely changed by the time students show up in capstone courses their senior year. So I and my colleagues, up and down the hall, even though we present alternatives as often as we teach orthodoxies, appear to be reinforcing these foundational beliefs, at least to an extent.

Let me clarify: I am not going to advocate that students stop studying academic D/discourse(s). I am not advocating that Students' Right to Their

Own Language should trump students' right to "our" language. To do so is likely, as Delpit advises, to deny many students access to a crucial language of power. Flipping through *Alt/Dis*, I notice that all of the contributors write at least in part in variations on the dominant-in-academe, prestige discourse. Sure, they break form in many ways. But each contributor slips into Academic through linguistic features such as syntax (varied, complex), lexis (discipline-specific), and grammar (purposeful). Sometimes these features intrude through more alternative voicings of themselves, but, perusing this volume, I am not confused about whether or not I am reading the work of people in the drag of composition scholars and writing professionals. Students recognize that they too must weave themselves such an ethos in school, attempted through syntax (often stiff), vocabulary (big), and grammar (hypercorrect). Studying (and at least at times being able to convincingly perform) dominant academic discursive conventions is necessary for students.

But again: "A problem inherent in Delpit's position [is that] . . . asserting that there is *A* discourse of power erases the multiple voicings that occur even in prestigious discourses" (Tischio). Discourse is always already queer. Academics, especially in composition, sporadically contend with these episodic conditions (the way my straight brother contends with heteronormativity), but our pedagogies are even more rarely troubled enough for students to gain a sense of the queerness of discourse, including academic. Part of the work that we accomplish in our writing courses should focus on the general principle of discourse as unprincipled. An always unstable, contingent performance, reflecting and affecting relations of power. Students (and we) are always already actively choosing our indeterminate discursive orientations—the locations and inviolability of those performances are merely, in general, not in dispute.

Fugue is often thought to be malingering, because the fugue may remove the person from accountability for his actions, may absolve him of certain responsibilities, or may reduce his exposure to a hazard. . . . (Psychnet-UK "Differential Diagnosis").

What classroom practices can productively, practically, assist students in studying the ideological character of language, without alleging that language and literacy are fixed, essential (even if that essentialism is a result of a hegemonic academic culture, not an ahistorical "nature" of English)? Are there discursive practices that we can point to, in the classroom, which dip into the playfulness of conspicuously queer practices, like drag, poking at fixed categories, disputing them as they are performed, rather than reifying them?

Movement Three: Who Is Responsible (for this Mess)?

Reported speech—bringing the voices of others into our own writing through quotation, citation, and paraphrase, as well as more subtle means—is, arguably, the convention most central to first-year students’ classroom writing success (Ashley and Lynn, Graff and Birkenstein-Graff, Peele and Ryder, Giltrow). I have been teaching students to hear the voices marked as Other by an author: to circle embedding phrases, to list metapragmatic verbs (verbs of saying), to separate and analyze the effects of summary here and quotation there. We notice together how much of academic writing is the drawing across of the authority of others, the insertion of thoughts among thoughts.

“Where is your toothbrush?” I ask. Toddler: “I have no idea, says Mommy.”
How precious.

Adriana Podesta defines polyphony as “the presence and interaction of different voices, in the [author’s] discourse. . . . The [author] is held responsible [by interlocutors] for the linguistic material used in the utterance. . . . The enunciator [the other speaker] is included in the utterance by the [author] who *organises* the enunciator’s point of view, which *may be shared or not* by the [author]” (emphasis added). That is, language-users can overtly signal detachment from (not to be understood necessarily as disagreement nor agreement with) the legitimacy or meaning of any given statement by ascribing it to someone else (Caldas-Coulthard). The most direct and common way to do this is by utilizing “report structures,” clauses which embed a statement as a quotation or a paraphrase:

- Podesta defines
- Bakhtin notes, “. . . .”
- . . . (Mao 122).

To report discourse is to present another speaker whom the interlocutor is supposed to hold accountable. To report discourse is to establish a relationship, a location, an intimacy of sorts.

Schizophrenia is characterized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) by

the belief or experience that . . . thoughts that are not one’s own are inserted into one’s mind (thought insertion); that thoughts have been removed from one’s head (thought withdrawal); or that one’s

feelings, impulses, thoughts, or actions are not one's own, but are imposed by some external force (delusions of being controlled). (American Psychiatric Association)

In 1973, queerness was removed from the DSM. Schizophrenia lingers.

Far back in the last century, the Bakhtin circle recognized the partial (queer), and crucial, nature of reported discourse. According to Voloshinov, the “linear style” of reported speech keeps the boundaries strong between the author and the reported speakers. A great deal of direct quotation might be used, or, when paraphrase is used, ideas are restated in such a way as to make author and reported speaker sound alike. The purpose of using a linear style of reported speech is to “screen [the reported speech] from penetration by the author’s intonations” (119). On the other end of this continuum, Voloshinov’s “pictorial style” of reported speech has at its core the move toward indirection, toward playful paraphrase, “breaking down the self-contained compactness of the reported speech, to resolve it, to obliterate its boundaries” (120). The boundaries between reporting context and reported speech/discourse are flexible, permeable, sometimes difficult to ascertain. In a pictorial style, quotation tends to be used more sparingly and more acutely, and paraphrase maintains some of the particular lexical and syntactic qualities of both the author and the reported speaker. Words or phrases particular to the reported speaker might dot the speech of others. The reverse can also be true, that lexical items or speech patterns “belonging to” the author and/or narrator might intrude into the reported discourse of those being reported (Bakhtin 316).

Doctor, I’ve been malingering. Lingerin’. Exposure to hazard. Set off on a technique.

Movement Four: Paraphrase Perverted—Analyzing an Accomplished Display

An interesting type of harmonic tension can be achieved by keeping the bass note constant while allowing the chords to change above. This technique is called pedal point. . . .(Sabatella).

An Accomplished Display²
by MC carmen k

I am also not speaking for my students as a teacher of color from a working-class background. I am not interested in providing

Booker T. Washingtonian formulas for moving students *Up from Slavery*. This belongs to the historical process of choosing a black middle-class elite (chosen by whites) as the Race Leaders. These leaders direct their aims toward white supremacy and dummy-talk conservative agendas while pimping a discourse of race upliftment (you can only lift someone up when you prop yourself along the superior upper ranks). I am also not interested in a middle-class self-help ideology of taking responsibility for improving the lives of the people in my community. As Reed also reminds us, this notion is located in capitalist privatization schemes. This is not a social critique or demand. I am also not interested in providing formulas for grammarizing/skills-traditionalizing *Other People's Children because they need the explicit, direct, tough instruction* (which sounds like slavery to me). I refuse to be a chocolate or honey-dipped Miranda of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* who will give students, as the embodiment of the savage Caliban, THE language of the university. . . .

As Sylvia Wynter argues, teachers are mainstream-initiating and mainstream-bearing. . . . [A]ll students of color in America need do is simply speak and write in the 'standard' and material success, economic mobility, and equity will come shining through. Now if that ain't a lie, I don't know what is. . . .

Let me break it down like this. . . . (kynard 33-34)

In this excerpt from *Alt/Dis*, carmen kynard pictorially transmits, formulates and frames others' speech. How is carmen kynard's performance accomplished? She adroitly perverts the style (the "how") and content (the "what") of others' words, and organizes the enunciators' points of view. As she avails herself of the words of the "enunciators" above, she portrays them and the D/discourses they represent, and herself in relation to them.

kynard aligns herself with Reed and Wynter, replaying the "how" of their speech in strong, positive terms through embedding phrases and metapragmatics. They are given studious metapragmatic verbs; they "remind us" and "argue." By contrast, Washington, Delpit, and Shakespeare do not merit embedding phrases to introduce their ideas at all. Instead, their names or texts are freely referenced without a metapragmatic verb, or, in the case of Booker T. Washington, a nominalized form of a metapragmatic is used, the derisory "formulas." Delpit is not cited directly in-text at all, Washington only craftily, and, in a final subtle move, none of the three is given a citation in the end-of-text references list. Thus, kynard playfully utilizes

report structures to authorize one set of speakers and their points of view and to contest others. Reed and Wynter are cited conventionally, clearly and collegially, voiced as offering valuable “arguments,” “reminders,” or “notions.” The Washington, Shakespeare, and Delpit “characters” are heard only partially, their power to speak destabilized, framed as “formula[ic],” “dummy-talk[ing],” and rigid.

kynard continues to situate herself in relation to these contrasting discourses as she gives these “characters” content (“what”) to speak. Delpit is the most-nearly quoted, often a signal in academic writing of an authority being shown respect and recognition. However, kynard undercuts the reverence by multiple levels of parody. She sets up her voicing of Delpit with a linguistic twist, reversing the presuppositions in the nominalized forms by turning what many regard as neutral nouns (“grammar,” “skills”) back into menacing-sounding processes: “grammarizing” and “skills-traditionalizing.” Then, instead of giving Delpit her props with quotation marks, kynard marks the near-quote with italics, the sarcasm of which is finalized with the parenthetical aside comparing “explicit, direct, tough instruction” to slavery (“... sounds like slavery to me”). Thus, kynard skillfully acknowledges Delpit’s *voice* as powerful, yet kynard’s *voicing* of Delpit is distant and sarcastic, played in counterpoint alongside other voices with which kynard wishes to align herself. For example, Wynter is voiced in a brief, uninterrupted paraphrase and given voice through discipline-specific terminology (the role of teachers in “initiating” students into the “mainstream”). Wynter and Reed (“capitalist privatization schemes”) allow kynard to activate the Discourses of critical race studies and neo-Marxist critique, and through her affirmative voicing of them, she aligns herself with them.

Finally, kynard “orchestrates” these enunciators in direct counterpoint to her own voice, inserted in the text through negation of others’ discourses (“I am not . . .” “I am not . . .”) and stylistic rupture (“Let me break it down like this. . .”).³

When kynard voices a conservative commonsense—“[A]ll students of color in America need do is simply speak and write in the ‘standard’ and material success, economic mobility, and equity will come shining through”—she not only perverts it through irony (scare quotes and mocking sunny imagery), she also creates her own speaking “I” presenting its own commonsense as counterpoint: “Now if that ain’t a lie, I don’t know what is. . . .”

kynard skillfully “obliterates the boundaries” between reporter and reportee; she queers voices, including her own, at least the voice(s) she tags as her own. Nevertheless, although she ruptures expected style and contradicts

powerful disciplinary voices, she sustains her relationship to her intended audience. Reported discourse is the pedal point for this open performance of insider/outsiderness, balancing harmony and tension. Her academic drag is conspicuous, enigmatic, legitimizing, troubling.

Thus, even in out of the ordinary, multi-generic writing, reported discourse often takes center stage. Reported discourse is a ubiquitous feature in almost every essay (fourteen of the fifteen) in *Alt/Dis*, a volume endeavoring to challenge “straight” portraits of academic writing. Nevertheless, although reported discourse is a dominant expectation, it has only been of late that scholarship in composition has stopped taking its imperatives for granted (e.g., Robillard, Rice, Connors, Howard).⁴ It is infrequently examined as more than a surface convention; our interest is most often manifested through our obsessions with “avoiding plagiarism,” rather than through examination of a normative code, open for critique. Perhaps one reason is discomfort with making explicit precisely how we allow ourselves to be regulated as academics, thereby signifying how unresisting we are concerning this particular set of normative codes and how ludicrous it seems to practice deviance.

Paradoxically (schizophrenically?) it is in the detachment afforded by reported discourse that its liberatory potential can be found. “*Maw bubbles.*” *When the appeal is ignored: “I wish deh was maw bubbles over deh.”* Despite that reported discourse tends to be an essential(ized) convention, there are ways to utilize its power to push against the dominant D/discourse, as in kynard’s piece.

The detachment inherent in reported discourse—it is, by definition, not meant to be read as the author’s own, clearly not an expression of an authentic, enduring self—allows an author to self-consciously perform an identity, a voice, a discourse. That performance can be in earnest, or queered: performing a voice in part, or out of context, or juxtaposed alongside other voices, in order to poke fun at it, pervert it, break down the reverence for it. To teach my own students to queer voices—that is why I am composing this, on the hottest day on record in June, with my kids in daycare for only four more precious hours and the dishwasher gaping open with three smudged water glasses like teeth.

Further, if we frame the intrusion of the “first person” as another example of reported discourse, we can help students examine examples of that too, in the same way. The entrance of “I” in student papers not as expression of authentic self, but as a voice in play. Students might then be able to ask: What voice is being portrayed by the “me” here? And what about there, on the next page? And of others’ texts: With what character traits am I, as the

author, choosing to invest this speaking “I”? With what D/discourses is this (reported) “I” aligned?

All forms involving a narrator . . . signify . . . the author’s freedom from a unitary and singular language. . . . such forms open up the possibility . . . of saying ‘I am me’ in someone else’s language, and in my own language, ‘I am other.’ (Bakhtin 314-15)

Movement Five: Queer I

Fugue is an abrupt liberation from home and past with the “assumption of a new identity (partial or complete)” (American Psychiatric Association 273).

Movements One and Two suggest that students, like their instructors, should understand the “queer” or “unprincipled” nature of academic discourse. This understanding, according to Bakhtinian theory, is the precursor to activating multiple D/discourses within a variety of contexts—interanimation. This consciousness, though, is not enough. The stakes are high for students, and they (we) must have tools to enact interanimation which do not ask them to risk their standing at the university. This consideration should be taken especially with students who enter our institutions on the margins, as basic writers, marked as Other bodily and/or D/discursively.

Thus, Movements Three and Four demonstrate reported discourse as an effective resource for students to utilize—discursive props for academic drag. Reported discourse is already used by students and taught by teachers (though it is not usually framed as such) to help students to “pass.” Passing—to be taken in earnest for an academic insider (or straight, or white, etc.)—is, perhaps, what we most frequently ask of students.

A Complicit Display

by D. W. Student

Toni Morrison also raises an important issue that relates to the language often seen in distinguished literary works by, Edgar Allan Poe and other popular authors who are in the literary canon. Morrison describes:

Just as the formation of the nation necessitated coded language and purposeful restriction to deal with the racial disingenuousness and moral frailty at its heart, so too did the literature, whose founding

characteristics extend into the twentieth century, reproduce the necessity for codes and restriction (6).

This quote is a prime example of race and language's impact on society. Toni Morrison submits the idea that literature often contains coded language for the purpose of dual representation.

The student writer quoted above attempts to be read completely as an insider, to pass for a member of the academic community, using the linear style of reported discourse. The wordings surrounding the quotation are fairly empty of content, signaled by vague phrases: "an important issue which relates to," "a prime example," "impact on society." When these reverential phrases are taken out, we are left with embedding phrases and liftings from Morrison's essay. Halasek describes Voloshinov's linear style as follows: "the reporting discourse. . . ushers in the privileged word. . . . students are conditioned not to engage the words of others but to present them, like precious gifts, to their readers" (165-66). The decisive ushering move: the actual words and ideas of the reported speaker are not to be touched immediately, not engaged without a deferential approach. Morrison's words are "screened from penetration" by this student's "intonations." Not only does this linear style mean that the student does not speak back to Morrison, but Morrison also cannot be "made to speak" to the student. The linear boundaries work both ways, to screen the author's discourse/worldview from penetration by the reported speaker's, as well as the reverse. Discourses are presented alongside each other but remain stable, predictable, preset. Voloshinov and Bakhtin both argue that a linear style marks the dogmatic reception of authoritarian worldviews, or at best, a relativism that allows for different worldviews that are kept separate and distinct. The relation between reporter and reportee is typically one of hierarchy; either the reported speaker or the author is the authority figure.

The central purpose, for Bakhtin, of orchestrating meetings among voices is "coming to know one's own language as it is perceived in someone else's language, coming to know one's own belief system in someone else's belief system" (365). Teaching linear reported discourse means teaching students to pass, rather than to perform practices which queer, which cause discomfort and question who is a member of what, and why, and how. Sometimes sincere efforts at passing are successful and sometimes they are not, but they tend to do little to suggest that the categories of authority themselves are imposed and under dispute.

By contrast, in my analysis, kynard queers voices, using reported dis-

course to take on the mantles of authority conferred by Delpit, Shakespeare, etc., while she simultaneously dismantles them. This type of writing can serve as a model for students, if we provide the tools to read it and produce it.⁵ kynard exposes “herself” as heterogeneous, multiple, particular, peculiar—queer. The introduction of a narrator, an I who is telling the story, parades radical uncertainty.

“A unitary language is not something given but is always in essence posited—at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia” (Bakhtin 270). Queerness is not androgyny, a moderation between female and male, homo and hetero, depravity and prohibition. Queerness is an exposed both/and—a rimming of practices which recognizes form but is not rationed to form.

I write my daughters’ names on their lunch Tupperware, identifying them from loss among dozens of other diminutive meals; the black permanent marker always seems to fade after a few cycles through. In the next room, the baby throws toys out of her way, a bulldozer, and I hear my precociously verbal toddler at her easel, dock dock dock dock, repetitively drawing bright dots representing each member of our family, real, imagined. Sometimes there is Dad, sometimes not.

Too confessional, too sentimental. In this site, raising those innocent girls.

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Notes

1. Gee points out that even highly pervasive and institutionalized discourses—what he calls “big D Discourses”—are not determinative of particular instances of language-in-use, what he calls “little d discourses.”

2. I provide an analysis of a single example of “queering voices” here. There are many other texts which might be read this way, using this operationalization of Bakhtinian theory. For example, Babb’s reading of Douglass’s narratives as “pay[ing] homage to vernacular forms” (375) and ideologies while engaging in the dominant conventions of white literacy practices might be built upon by looking specifically at Douglass’s use of reported discourse.

Babb's reading in some ways invites such further analysis: "... Douglass's strategies indicate a writer skilled enough to adapt convention to honor the forms of his cultural traditions. . . . [His] skill foreshadows other writers who will use style to symbolize cultural emancipation" (375-76).

3. Podesta provides a helpful overview of various concrete manifestations of polyphony, which includes negations and stylistic ruptures.

4. For example, Rice's 2003 essay on hip hop or sampling pedagogy is one such exception. This and several other essays cited here all point, from a variety of directions, toward a necessity to continue to re-theorize reported discourse, as well as re-position it pedagogically.

5. I mean for the brief analysis in this essay to serve as an example. See Ashley and Lynn for an elaboration of these tools.

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