

6 Frontiers of Style in Rhetoric and Composition

A number of specialized areas in the discipline have expanded our conceptions of what writing is and does. As such, they can also expand our knowledge of style and its relevance. Work in language difference challenges the dominance of written Standard English, and therefore destabilizes the idea of style as simply adhering to or departing from norms. Likewise, feminist accounts of writing and rhetoric recuperate alternative styles and argue for their place in traditional academic writing. Work in genre studies and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) shows the variations of style different disciplines and the importance of understanding how different discourse communities shape different stylistic conventions. Finally, work in digital rhetoric and multimodality broadens our understanding of writing as a textual, printed-based practice to engage its imbrications in a range of new genres and also in visual and aural forms of argument. Research in these digital and multimodal genres ushers forth new frameworks for style and stylistic possibilities for composing across genres and mediums.

This chapter synthesizes work over the past several decades, and states their implications for researching and teaching style as a wide range of options for engineering effective and engaging discourse—options that draw on the stylistic resources of multiple Englishes, languages, genres, mediums, and modes of communication. Discussion of these areas helps flesh out exactly what it means to think of style in relation to norms, and to promote style as making linguistic decisions not simply within one variety of English or set of conventions, but across many. The first section of this chapter shows that even students who we see as monolingual can benefit from a greater awareness of how the Standard English they speak is constantly under the influence of other languages, dialects, and registers—and therefore

express an openness to non-standard codes as resources for stylistic experimentation.

LANGUAGE DIFFERENCE, LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY, AND STYLE

Scholarship on language difference does not always use the term style explicitly, but it often addresses the struggles of linguistically-diverse students to preserve their own voices in the face of pressures toward linguistic conformity. A progressive theory and pedagogy of style encourages students to write their voices into the language of the academy, making academic style itself more diverse and dynamic. We can think of language difference as modifying the idea of style as deviation from a norm. Recent work by authors such as Min-Zhan Lu, Bruce Horner, and Suresh Canagarajah encourage teachers to recognize deviation itself *as* a norm of language practices. In this sense, there is always a stylistic component to writing, a choice, and a degree of agency—even in sameness.

Basic writers in particular form a diverse student population that needs an approach to style that values the languages and dialects they bring into the academy. Their styles of writing are often the most at odds with the demands of Standard English and academic writing. Rhetoric and composition has evolved to better meet their educational needs and is, in fact, challenging conventional thinking about the academic styles by which writing teachers judge their linguistic performance. The current conception of basic writers can be traced back to the landmark book *Errors and Expectations*, in which Mina Shaughnessy performs error analysis on student texts to illustrate their attempts at reasoning through conflicting codes and conventions. Shaughnessy's book garnered national attention and shifted scholarly discourse away from the correctness model of the early twentieth century. Shaughnessy revealed the logic behind students' error patterns, dislodging the prevalent perception of them as arbitrary and random.

Shaughnessy's lasting contribution to basic writers was to propose that they are not simply "bad students," but are writers trying to make decisions about discourse conventions of which they had incomplete knowledge. Although her pedagogy focuses on the acquisition of Standard English and academic writing, she nonetheless maintains that style varies among different codes and conventions, "none of which is inferior to others but none of which, also can substitute for the oth-

ers” (121). Unlike later work on basic writers, Shaughnessy’s book does not explicitly treat the other dialects of students as a stylistic resource for their writing. Laura Gray-Rosendale has historicized Shaughnessy’s work on this issue, performing a close reading of *Errors and Expectations* to show latent though intentional gestures toward dialogic and poststructural theories of language that were, in her era, still new and not widely accepted. Gray-Rosendale concludes that Shaughnessy herself may have been less inclined to accept the dominance of Standard English and academic writing than her book reveals.

Regardless, teachers may learn from Shaughnessy that “errors,” whether mechanical or stylistic, are not all arbitrary or random. Errors often reveal a great deal about a writer’s struggle to reconcile competing rules and conventions. A teacher’s job is not to condemn students for such problems, but to give them the knowledge they need to make more informed decisions. Subsequent generations of basic writing scholars, such as Min-Zhan Lu and Bruce Horner, advanced pedagogies that place more value on students’ other languages and dialects, showing that error does not simply need to be “corrected,” but instead discussed in a way that does not presume the superiority of dominant conventions. We might say that Shaughnessy ultimately wanted students’ styles to conform to academic discourse, whereas later generations of basic writing scholars called into question the privileged position of academic style itself.

Not all writing teachers openly accept the idea of equality among dialects and registers of English, and so resist them as stylistic resources. A minority of scholarship has, for some time, maintained the superiority of Standard English and academic discourse. Such positions on style are fundamentally about the mastery of standard forms of English and, as such, they are more allied with the dominant public on style than any counterpublics within composition. According to them, only when a writer can demonstrate a superior command of conventions can that writer be permitted to exercise linguistic choice. As one of these conservative voices, Thomas J. Farrell’s 1983 *CCC* article, “IQ and Standard English,” sought in a more controversial way to reveal the cognitive deficiencies of Black English by analyzing what he argued were incomplete or fragmentary rules owing to its ostensibly oral nature. Those who make such arguments not only reject the dialogic and heteroglossic qualities of language, but also close off dialect and vernacular as a stylistic resource for students. Farrell’s view was

challenged by a range of compositionists, including Karen Greenberg, Patrick Hartwell, Margaret Himley, and R. E. Stratton. Work by linguists such as Geneva Smitherman also further undermined the view of non-standard Englishes as deficient through in-depth analysis of their rule structures.

Nevertheless, opposition to such work survived in basic writing scholarship for several more years, evidenced by Donald Lazere's partial defense of Farrell in a 1991 *Journal of Basic Writing* article, "Orality, Literacy, and Standard English." Lazere questions the transferability of dialectology to composition, since its foundational research by William Labov centered on oral rather than written discourse (89). In Lazere's view, the misappropriation of sociolinguistics fails to disprove the position that "restriction to Black English or any other oral language with a nonscholastic vocabulary and syntax *is* an impediment to successfully dealing with the complexities of college-level reading and writing" (93). Lazere goes on to argue, following Lisa Delpit in "Skills and Other Dilemmas of a Black Educator," that language minority students often desire to learn standard codes "in addition to, not instead of—[other] dialect[s]," and often "dislike the current neglect of standard form and mechanics" (94).

Arguments such as Lazere's frame the question as either-or, rather than both-and. No scholarship on language difference argues that we teach only one form of discourse. Work promoting language difference asserts that linguistically-diverse students perform better when they learn to see many types of discourse influencing each other. We learn about and teach many styles, and understand style itself as drawing from many types of language. Academic style possesses norms, but we do not have to adhere to all of them all of the time; when we choose to deviate, we might do so because we want to incorporate rules and conventions from vernaculars or dialects that seem better-suited to the ideas we want to express.

During the early 1990s, scholarship emerged that problematized the idea of "error" itself and emphasized the porous nature of academic discourse styles, subverting prior tendencies to think of Standard English and academic writing as unitary or monolithic. This work sought a redefinition of error away from an arbitrary or even reasoned failure to meet norms to a paradigm of linguistic negotiation and hybridity. This definition of linguistic difference builds on definitions of style as deviation from a norm, as articulated by Paul Butler and in line with

stylistic studies in general. In a 2000 *Journal of Basic Writing (JBW)* article, Patricia Bizzell argues that

the field of basic writing instruction still relies upon relatively obvious features of student writing as a basis for sorting students We quickly read a large number of writing samples . . . and the ones exhibiting many features of non-Standard English and non-academic discourse forms lands their authors in basic writing classes, where their writing “problems” are supposed to be addressed. (5)

Bizzell’s arguments in “Hybrid Academic Discourses” and “Basic Writing and the Issue of Correctness” look to then-recent publications by Keith Gilyard, Geneva Smitherman, and Victor Villanueva as examples of “‘hybrid’ forms of academic discourse” that draw on multiple codes in order to produce a unique academic style particular to that author’s negotiation of conventions, including Standard English (5-6). In the second of these essays, Bizzell extends her initial idea of hybridity to recognize “the profound cultural mixing that has already occurred in the United States” (9).³⁶ In effect, Bizzell argues that academic discourse has always been a blend of other styles.³⁷ Although addressing basic writing, Bizzell’s combustion of the “myth” of a static academic discourse anticipates a similar case by Matsuda, who exposes the “myth of linguistic homogeneity” and introduces the metaphor of linguistic quarantine to describe composition practices toward second-language writers in particular (“Myth” 637).

The mixed discourse approach is complemented by Min-Zhan Lu and Bruce Horner, who published a number of articles questioning the definition of “error” and the extent to which students should be expected to simply concede to academic discourse and written Standard English. They envisioned the possibility of students’ language prac-

36. It should be noted that Bizzell’s notion of hybridity itself, as she acknowledges, is borrowed from Deepika Bahri’s scholarship and its diffusion throughout postcolonial studies.

37. In a 2002 issue of *JBW*, Judith Hebb situates hybridity within the oral-literacy binary, arguing that “When viewed along a continuum in which characteristics of oral and written—home and school—languages are mixed, a place will be opened up for hybrid academic discourse that serve both writer and reader” (28).

tics altering written Standard English itself, and called on teachers to attend to the contingent nature of language, along with the fallibility inherent in the idea of language governed by static, inflexible rules. Canagarajah describes this development:

Teachers of critical writing should consider grammar usage as an activity not of reproducing the rule-governed system but of negotiating from a range of available options to represent the writers' identities, values, and interests in the most satisfactory manner possible. What we may reject as an error may be motivated by serious concerns of values and identity for the student. Rather than imposing uniform usage unilaterally, and thus suppressing the creativity of the student . . . it is important to negotiate the best way in which his or her purpose may be achieved through the range of grammatical resources available. (52)

One of Lu's most cited works from this era includes "Politics of Style in the Contact Zone," in which she proposes stylistic interpretation as an alternative to error analysis in order to understand the linguistic motivations for a student's use of the phrase "can able to." For Lu, Shaughnessy's model is insufficient for discovering the cultural, gendered, and socio-political dimensions of the perceived deviation, as the "error" is only an error inasmuch as it departs from standard usage. A typical solution is to advise the student to use either "can" or "is able to." However, this solution misses the student's struggle to account for the difference between the physical ability to do something and the cultural norms that one must confront for permission to do that thing. (In the student's case, her Malaysian family had discouraged her from attending college, despite her intelligence.) For Lu, the student makes a stylistic decision that is carefully negotiated, not a confused error.

More recently, research on language difference embraced deviation and difference as a new norm, and offered the term *translingualism* to describe new discursive practices in which global language users blend codes in their writing. Vershawn Young and Suresh Canagarajah both refer to these new textual practices as "code-meshing." Young first used this term in a 2006 *CCC* article, "Your Average Nigga," in which he discusses African-American students as "natural code meshers" who blend academic discourse with dialect and vernacular

(697).³⁸ Young contrasts code-meshing with the concepts of code-switching and linguistic pluralism, a phrase used by Keith Gilyard. For Young, these approaches to language difference accept that White English Vernacular, Standard English, and Black English Vernacular are mutually exclusive and that they should be used in different social settings. Code-meshing undermines this opposition, along with “the erroneous assumption that the codes that compose BEV and WEV are so incompatible and unmixable because they’re so radically different” (Young 706).

Young elaborates on the term code-meshing in a 2009 *JAC* article as “the blending and concurrent use of American English dialects in formal, discursive products, such as political speeches, student papers, and media interviews” (51). The argument for code-meshing rests on sociolinguistic evidence (discussed in Chapter 7) that Standard English is not different from other varieties of English, but is itself composed of multiple dialects. It is not possible to separate varieties of English in the ways that textbooks and dominant teaching practices attempt, making arbitrary distinctions between appropriate and inappropriate discourse strategies. For Young, code-meshing recognizes the continuum of compatible varieties of English, and it even “has the potential to enlarge our national vocabulary [and] multiply the range of available rhetorical styles” (65). Students already tend to appropriate and mix words, phrases, and syntax as they develop their own unique styles of speaking. It stands to reason that academic writing may need to adapt to this linguistic reality. If students see academic writing as open to stylistic innovation, perhaps they might not dread it.

Canagarajah makes similar arguments in favor of code-meshing in his *College English* essay, “Toward a Writing Pedagogy of Shuttlung Between Languages,” and the *CCC* essay, “The Place of World Englishes in Composition.” In the *College English* piece, Canagarajah declares that teachers “must consider [textual deviation] as a strategic and creative choice by the author to attain his or her rhetorical objectives” rather than as “unconscious error” (591). To illustrate, Canagarajah analyzes the research articles of a Tamil scholar who makes different stylistic decisions that deviate from American academic expectations

38. Young references an earlier work by Kermit Campbell, titled “Real Niggaz,” that does not use the term code-meshing but that, nonetheless, analyzes African-American students’ diverse linguistic performances in academic papers, blending slang and formal Standard English.

(e.g., thesis statement, citation, sign-posting, rigid linear structure) in order to craft a civic ethos that is more suited to his readership. The analysis of a second article, published years before, shows that the scholar is capable of producing more standard conventions when needed. Canagarajah hopes to convince teachers that “students should not treat rules and conventions as a given,” but instead “think of texts and discourses as changing and changeable” (603). The *College English* article asserts this same point with a more specific argument in favor of allowing students to use their various Englishes in final drafts of papers. This approach contrasts with one described by Peter Elbow in “Vernacular Literacies” to allow deviations in drafts for the sake of editing them into Standard English later on. For Canagarajah, students need more affirmation, because “To use a language without any personal engagement, even for temporary and utilitarian reasons, is to mimic not speak” (597).³⁹

From a translingual lens, promoting style must see other Englishes as part of students’ stylistic repertoire, as something they can practice using in their writing as they develop their voices.⁴⁰ A 2011 *College English* article by Lu, Horner, Trimbur, and Royster builds on prior work in language difference to affirm the recent understanding of difference as a norm. A later 2011 *CCC* article by Horner, Lu, Donahue, and NeCamp makes a similar case for seeing language practices—such as code-switching, code-mixing, code-meshing, and borrowing—as increasingly normal for speakers of multiple languages. Min-Zhan Lu and Bruce Horner’s 2013 *College English* article reveals the presence of agency and difference even in the ostensible production of sameness or adherence to stylistic conventions (“Translingual Literacy”). All three articles define deviation as a normal practice, suggesting that there is no longer a “Standard English” or a set of stylistic conventions to begin with—if there ever truly was such a standard outside of rulebooks. Whether style is defined as deviation and difference,

39. A variety of positions on the appreciation of linguistically diverse teaching and writing appears in two recent collections: *Code-Meshing as World English* (contains original essays) and *Cross-Language Relations in Composition* (contains some original and many previously-published articles).

40. Canagarajah’s 2013 book, *Translingual Practice*, makes the case for this new term given the monolingual historical contexts in which terms describing bilingualism or multilingualism emerged.

risk, voice, or as the manipulation of grammar, it has always involved informed decision-making between ever-shifting rhetorical situations.

Seeing style as translingual benefits all students, including those seen as either monolingual or less linguistically-diverse because they grew up speaking the prestige variety of English. Globalization is already immersing us in linguistic environments, where we encounter varieties of languages far different from what we are familiar with. We can help students see such global difference as exciting, and potentially transformative to the ways they write and speak. If teachers initiate students into a tradition of style that values the development of an authentic voice, and because voice itself is polyphonic (composed of many other voices), then teachers are preparing students to appropriate and adapt new words, phrases, and structures of language for their own writing. The wider their repertoire, the closer students approach the classical ideals of copiousness and facility with language—the difference from classical style being that their copiousness is drawn from many cultures.

STYLE, VOICE, AND FEEDBACK IN SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING

The last section showed that style changes at a conceptual level when working with linguistically diverse student populations, because writers negotiate multiple varieties of the same language as well as altogether different languages. Scholarship on second language writing approaches this student population somewhat differently from work in rhetoric and composition on language difference. Second language (L2) writing research focuses more on differences across languages rather than varieties of a single language, and it tends to treat style equally as a matter of divergence from and accommodation to norms. Multilingual writers are directly confronted with the reality that different languages afford different possibilities for stylistic expression. They also contend with the fact that different languages give rise to different conventions and attitudes about what constitutes an effective style.

Ilona Leki, Alister Cumming, and Tony Silva give a brief overview of stylistic issues in L2 writing in *A Synthesis of Research on Second Language Writing in English*, covering articles on the subject appearing over the past two decades. This body of research suggests that second language writers perform style differently from native speak-

ers, in ways that go overlooked. For instance, Indrasuta (“Narrative Styles”) and also Stalker and Stalker (“Acquisition”), observe no intentional use of stylistic patterns from the target language, although second language students may transfer stylistic conventions from their first language in a way that readers fail to recognize. Reynolds (“Linguistic Correlates”) notes a tendency among second language writers to rely on what appear as more objective and less overt characteristics of style, rather than overt metaphor or turns of phrase. A comparison of first language (L1) to L2 writers by Maier in 1992 concluded that L2 writers struggle to negotiate between registers such as casual, personal, formal, and professional because of their unfamiliarity with different text types in the target language. The last article by McCarthey, Guo, and Cummins indicate that second language writers adapt to the stylistic expectations of local language use, rather than developing what we might call a “unique voice” or a set of language choices that mark them as distinct. In short, the conservative view is that second language writers try to blend in rather than stand out.

This research asks us to question the idea of style as always a clear deviation from a set of norms, or voice as individual expression. Many L2 writing scholars have explored the use of voice in multilingual contexts, and the *Journal of Second Language Writing* devoted a special issue to the topic in 2001—inspired by an earlier article by Vai Ramanathan and Dwight Atkinson on the problematic use of voice in L2 writing contexts (“Individualism” 45). In this issue, Paul Matsuda makes a compelling case for approaching voice with L2 students not as the expression of a true self, but rather as the acquisition of and experimentation with linguistic resources writers encounter (“Voice in Japanese” 35). Moreover, Matsuda advises teachers to resist stereotypes of other cultures as somehow resistant to voice and style, illustrating particular discursive features of Japanese that permit the expression of voice, including “variations in personal pronouns and sentence-final particles. . . which simply are not available in English” (40).⁴¹ Matsuda’s point converges with research cited above that L2 writers have a sense of voice and style, though it may be difficult to convey in English

41. Matsuda defines “sentence-final particles” as “morphemes that can be attached at the end of a sentence” to stress different meanings (48). For example, particles such as *desu* and *masu* mark formality (48). These particles are part of discursive conventions, but can be negotiated and re-purposed as well.

and often manifests in subtle negotiations of norms rather than obvious deviations. If we use such lenses of voice and style, we might find relevant textual features in any multilingual writer. Likewise, an understanding of voice as the result of stylistic and grammatical choices could help teachers and scholars better identify the presence of style in multilingual writers, and to help them “develop a personal repertoire of discursive features and strategies in the [target] language,” including conventions and norms, so that they can learn to negotiate different sets of conventions while still remaining intelligible (51). Understanding the nuances of voice and style in multilingual contexts may also generate interesting perspectives in the debate on error feedback in second language writing.

College writing teachers unused to working with multilingual students may take for granted that they should provide a substantial amount of feedback on grammar and style on students' papers. They may see corrective feedback as unproblematic. Richard Haswell's minimal marking paradigm has become standard practice in training instructors, and many of us may accept the negotiation models outlined by Horner and Lu, and echoed by Kevin J. Porter in “A Pedagogy of Charity.” If there is occasional discussion on the issue in major composition journals, then there is more uncertainty on the same issue among scholars in ESL and second language writing. Theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) may explain the difference, as discussed by Charlene Polio in a 2012 issue of *the Journal of Second Language Writing*, while also helping to specify certain conditions under which feedback can be effective. Because some college L2 students are still acquiring English, their teachers express much more caution about the impact error feedback can have on the development of their language abilities. Stephen Krashen originally argues that language monitoring and learning (e.g., attention to rules, line-editing) can interfere with the natural acquisition of a language.

Contemporary debates about error feedback began as early as 1996, when J. Truscott advocated abolishing corrective feedback on L2 student writing for reasons similar to Braddock, and later to Hillocks: that it often inhibits writing development, causing more long-term harm than good. Over the next ten years, studies appeared regularly in the *Journal of Second Language Writing* and in various monographs and collections, each conducting studies that reached different conclusions about the value of feedback. A 2008 article by J. Bitchener,

appearing in a special issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing* on error, sketches the decade-long debate before describing a study in which four groups of students were given different types of feedback. Students who received direct, corrective feedback on their use of articles (“a” and “the”) showed measurable improvement between a pre-test, immediate post-test, and delayed post-test, over and above a group receiving no corrective feedback. However, Truscott and A. Y. Hsu’s study in the same issue contests such conclusions, and the authors provide their own study, in which two groups of students show little to no difference in error reduction on subsequent assignments after one group received direct, corrective feedback, while the other did not. Although the group receiving corrective feedback revised that specific paper, the students did not transfer any “lessons” from one paper to the next any differently than the non-feedback group. Truscott’s point is that L2 students progress at their own rate regarding mechanical errors.

Ken Hyland and Fiona Hyland explore prior studies on this matter in detail in their 2006 edited collection, *Feedback in Second Language Writing*, as does Dana Ferris in an accessible introduction to L2 writing in *Teaching College Writing to Diverse Student Populations*. Christina Casanave’s *Controversies in Second Language* also contains a chapter overviewing the debate on error feedback. Among them all is a consensus that marking every error in L2 writing has an undesirable effect on student writing that discourages them from the necessary linguistic experimentation—including explorations of style and voice—that accompanies learning. This basic view informs Lu and Horner’s pedagogy, and is also echoed in Suresh Canagarajah’s *Critical Academic Writing for Multilingual Students*, an early book that presents a premise similar to the language-shuttling model, specifically aimed at Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) scholars and L2 writing teachers.

As discussed in the introduction to this book, many teachers still correct stylistic and grammatical “errors” in student writing, and feel pressure to grade writing harshly for repeated mistakes. A common misconception is that multilingual students only learn to write well with a great deal of explicit feedback. Research shows that teachers need to provide feedback on a continuum, according to individual student’s needs—there is no “one size fits all” approach to providing stylistic and grammatical feedback the writing of language learn-

ers. Based on current research, perhaps the best course of action is to provide some feedback on these issues for multilingual writers, with knowledge that style itself is socially determined, that too much correction can stymie the development of their voices, and that language learners may fare as well or better if they are simply allowed to try on the voices and styles they encounter in their reading.

WOMEN'S WRITING AND BREAKING RULES

Prescriptivism in style has also undergone criticism by feminist, poststructuralist theorists. Similar to hybrid academic writing, Helene Cixous's *écriture féminine* (women's writing) promotes styles of writing resistant to conventions of linearity, cohesion, objectivity, skepticism, clarity, and directness deriving from masculine assumptions and perceptions of reality. Women's writing enables escape from these phallogocentric constraints, and allows writers to search for alternate modes or styles of expression. It flouts rules from the level of punctuation and syntax to that of textual structure and organization (e.g., thesis statements, paragraphs). Cixous maintains that as a practice, women's writing is not exclusive of gender, and she refers to James Joyce and Jean Genet as examples of male writers who are not bound by phallogocentric discourse. One may also think of Gertrude Stein and—more recently—Gloria Anzaldúa and Adrienne Rich as exemplars of feminist styles. A similar position is also made by Virginia Woolf, who made the case for a feminine sentence “of a more elastic fiber than the old, capable of stretching to the extreme, of suspending the frailest particles, of enveloping the vaguest shapes” (204-205).

Julia Kristeva indicates poetry and poetic discourse as another linguistic code that provides alternative routes beyond phallogocentric discourse. Moreover, Kristeva's theories of feminine *juissance*, the semiotic, and *chora* outline ways of expression that employ silence and non-linguistic signs, including pre-verbal utterances. Kristeva reveals the limits of language and the need for such non-linguistic modes of meaning production—ones that have been marginalized and excluded by masculine forms. The act of transposition enables movement through and between these different languages and non-verbal modes of expression. Despite such gestures toward a feminine style, feminist scholars have also expressed ambivalence about defining it. Both Cixous and Kristeva resisted the idea of codifying alternative practices,

as it would go against the very idea of operating outside of traditional language boundaries. Sara Mills provides a thorough account of these issues in her book *Feminist Stylistics*, including a synthesis of research over gendered differences in spoken discourse. (Also see the section on stylistics in the next chapter).

The movements and shifts narrated in previous chapters defined eloquence in style according to a specific set of standards that most often originate from a privileged class of male theorists. These prescriptions have enjoyed a status as “the” way to write stylistically engaging prose. Such principles still dominate public discussions about style and the way it should be taught in higher education. A major part of Paul Butler, T. R. Johnson, and Tom Pace’s project has involved reviving style to counteract these phallogocentric norms. Mainly, they point to the sophists as counter-models, and these parallel those of feminist poststructuralists. Susan Jarratt’s work on the sophists directly connects early, pre-classical Greece and Cixous’s theory of women’s writing. Jarratt shows how both rhetorics employ paradox, non-linearity, emotional utterance, and experimentation in discourse that are discouraged under Aristotelian conceptions of style. In a 1985 issue of *College English*, Pamela J. Annas applies feminist theories of language to the teaching of style in college writing classes, specifically a course designed for women writers that encourages risk-taking over conformity to the correctness model. Citing Robin Lakoff’s early work in feminist linguistics, Annas describes women writers as bilingual, as always navigating conventions in the ways that Kristeva describes via the act of transposition.

Feminist rhetorical pedagogies, such as Krista Ratcliffe’s rhetorical listening, point our attention to how language choices that are often identified with style reflect larger cultural logics, specifically ones that either mask or reveal race and gender. Ratcliffe defines style as “(un)conscious sentence-level choices with both personal and cultural functions” that students can “learn to recognize and employ,” along with the “tropological functions of language” (143). By “tropological,” Ratcliffe means how individuals use terms like “white” and “female” or “feminine” to figuratively represent various objects, behaviors, and attitudes. Ratcliffe asks students “to think about how whiteness as a trope plays out in US culture, including in their lives” (144). These cultural items that “white” often acts as a trope for include golf, classical music,

suburban living, and polo shirts (150). When people describe these as “white,” they make a stylistic choice that reveals cultural attitudes.

Ratcliffe’s use of style as an analytical tool for observing racial and gender issues differs from the standard conception of style as means of expression, further highlighting the inventive potential of style. Here, style becomes epistemological, a way of learning about culture and grounding discussions about language in tangible experiences. The appendix to *Rhetorical Listening* includes part of a syllabus in which students spend several weeks analyzing works stylistically (including use of tropes, figures, and schemes such as parallelism) in order to uncover how the author constructs and defines gender and race. The authors assigned include Lillian Smith, James Baldwin, Nikki Giovanni, Adrienne Rich, and Greg Jay. The book provides specific lesson plans for each week, listing steps for pairing up students to explore how each author’s language use might indicate constructions of race and gender (175–186).

This basic idea seems to drive research on sentence-level issues in hybrid academic writing, language difference, creative writing, and postcolonialism. Scholarly and pedagogical projects on style can benefit from considering such stylistic experimentation, as theorized by feminist poststructuralists, but also as manifested in iconoclastic writers and poets. Namely, feminist theories of style can help us think radically and question the explicit and invisible rules that might hinder our abilities to convey non-phallogocentric ideas. These theories can liberate our thinking and foster greater creativity in terms of what style can do, how we can teach it, and how we might engage in public debates about style and grammar.

STYLE, ACADEMIC GENRES, AND WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM (WAC)

The last chapter examined style from the perspectives of voice, grammar, and language difference. All of these understandings of style must take genre into account as informing a writer’s language choices. Work by Amy Devitt, Charles Bazerman, Anis Bawarshi, Mary Jo Reiff, and Carolyn Miller define genre as a set of socially-determined conventions that arise over time as writers produce similar types of texts in typified situations. There are numerous examples of genres in our academic and everyday lives. We see clearly defined genres in

novels, plays, and poems. We may not always be aware of magazine ads, billboards, and public service announcements as genres, but all of these examples function as types of texts that are governed by conventions that have formed over time. These conventions include expectations about style. We expect precise meter and rhythm in certain types of poetry, for instance, and commercial slogans often use the stylistic features of poetry to sell products.

Recently, composition scholars have connected genre with style and grammar. In the collection, *The Centrality of Style*, Zak Lancaster brings together studies in genre theory with aspects of rhetorical grammar and systemic functional linguistics (SFL)—in particular, SFL’s attention to field (an author’s topic), tenor (the relationship of writer and speaker), and mode (language choices). Lancaster uses this framework for “tracking the choices that speakers/writers make to encode attitudinal meanings, adjust degrees of evaluations, and contract and expand” their discourse (201). These choices contribute to a sense of the writer’s style and, over time, they accumulate across authors and texts to shape a genre’s stylistic expectations. A functional approach to style hinges on considering writers’ choices, with special attention paid to the possible grammatical alternatives available for expressing their ideas. Paul Butler’s earlier 2007 *Rhetoric Review* article, “Style in the Diaspora of Composition Studies,” links genre and style, proposing a more complicated understanding of pronouns in a stylistic analysis of a syllabus discussed by Anis Bawarshi in *Genre and the Invention of the Writer*. Like Lancaster, Butler also employs SFL, drawing on Halliday and Hasan’s definition of pronouns in *Cohesion in English* in order to show how a teacher switches between “you,” “I,” and “we” at various points to construct a power dynamic between instructor and pupil. At times, “we” invokes the spirit of cooperation, while other times signaling a more hierarchical “we,” in which the students are a dependent but not equal part of the pronoun. When a teacher uses “I,” it is often to assert the power of the instructor rather than responsibility. In turn, “you” often indicates the responsibilities or duties of students. Butler hypothesizes that such a dynamic could be reversed if the teacher included more discussion of how “you” (the students) will evaluate “I” (the instructor).

Butler’s specific example of the difference between exophoric (situational) and endophoric (textual) references in pronouns may not do complete justice to his point. In fact, it is possible to summarize his

analysis (as I have done) with a simpler understanding of pronouns, as performed originally by Bawarshi. Butler's extended analysis of the same syllabus and its pronouns shows that style is a matter of concern to genre theorists. Readers may more readily accept Butler's argument that being clearer about when we use style can help bring together the various areas of composition, and begin to provide us with a set of common terms—even if those terms include words like exophoric.

Mikhail Bakhtin focuses on the relationship between genre and style in "The Problem of Speech Genres." Bakhtin stresses attention to stylistics as part of genre analysis, and maintains that any kind of stylistics must be "based on a constant awareness of the generic nature of language styles" (66). He goes on to declare, "Where there is style there is genre. The transfer of style from one genre to another not only alters the way a style sounds, under conditions of a genre unnatural to it, but also violates or renews the given genre" (66). Two other major points Bakhtin makes are that different genres tolerate different levels of stylistic innovation, and that the problems otherwise skilled writers and speakers encounter can derive partly from their lack of familiarity with new genres.

From Bakhtin's theory of genre and style, we can produce four main points: Genre can determine a writer's style, the extent to which a writer is able to craft a distinctive voice, and even affect a writer's ability to compose. Finally, styles can cross genres in ways that change both the text and the genre itself. These ideas apply directly to discussions of style in academic writing in this chapter. When scholars on language difference argue in favor of altering the norms of academic discourse by encouraging students' use of non-standard dialects and vernaculars, they forward the fourth idea from Bakhtin's work on speech genres. They also recognize that students' performance issues may not derive from their language inability in general, but from their struggles to construct a definitive voice for themselves within a strange and intimidating genre that is referred to broadly as academic discourse, one that favors the stylistic traits of Standard English or White English Vernacular (WEV).

Some research on academic writing and WAC attends to the relationship between genre and style. As Charles Bazerman et al. state in their book, *Reference Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum*, WAC "opens up the issue of differences of situations and styles and forms of presentation," with careful attention to how writing is conceived of

and imparted within particular programs and departments (88). An especially good example is Susan Peck MacDonald's analysis of the stylistic conventions in psychology, history, and literary studies in *Professional Academic Writing in the Humanities and Social Sciences*. MacDonald argues that larger goals and agendas in these respective fields determine preferences in sentence structure and word choice. Chapters 6 and 7 of her book focus on the tendency of writers in psychology to use an epistemic, synoptic style of writing that enables them to make broad, synthetic claims about trends across individual studies. This style is characterized by a greater tolerance for nominalization, passive voice, and abstractions. By contrast, historical and literary academics tend to use active constructions and more particular words that psychologists would find subjective or overly personal. MacDonald recommends making the relationship between purpose and style clearer to college writing students, even in first-year courses, and exposing them to research in their majors that they can then analyze and imitate in order to understand more fully how style shifts between fields.

Greg Myers's essays, "Stories and Styles in Two Molecular Biology Articles," "The Pragmatics of Politeness in Scientific Journals" (*Applied Linguistics*, 1989), and "The Rhetoric of Irony in Academic Writing" (*Written Communication*, 1990) study the stylistic traits of scientific writing that promote the appearance of consensus, irony, and deference in an effort to subdue contention and conflict. Another important text to stylistic issues in WAC is Jack Selzer's 1993 edited collection, *Understanding Scientific Prose*. The collection includes approaches to textual analysis informed by linguistics and pragmatics. All of the work on style and genre in this section acknowledges that while we can attribute disciplinary conventions with particular styles, those styles are still contingent and emergent. A recent article by Andrea Olinger stresses this point in her discourse-based interviews of three scientific writers, showing how "distinctly individual knowledge permeates disciplinary writing and how that writing comes to be perceived as writing 'in the style of the discipline'" (473). The three writers interviewed in the study showed differences of opinion regarding what constituted an appropriate style in their field, and they even changed their own minds on such issues over time.

English for academic purposes and English for specific purposes have emerged as fields in which a great deal of work is done on the intersections between style, grammar, voice, and genre. Research ap-

pears in the *Journal of English for Specific Purposes* and the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*—both present analyses of specific conceptual and stylistic aspects of academic discourse, as well as the use of such knowledge in the instruction of advanced second-language learners. Ken Hyland's 2000 book, *Disciplinary Discourses*, examines global and local structures, including linguistic features of academic prose at the sentence level. Hyland in particular has published a large body of work on stylistic strategies and their grammatical counterparts in academic writing, including hedging, boosting, and circumlocution. Academic genres and their connections with style are also explored in great depth in Anis Bawarshi and Mary Jo Reiff's 2010 *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy*.

STYLE, DIGITAL GENRES, AND MULTIMODALITY

If Bakhtin had lived to see the Internet, perhaps he would have written "The Problem of Digital Genres." No digital stylistics has come about, per se, but some scholarship has begun identifying style as a point of inquiry in digital and multimodal writing. Much of what the last section posited about the relationship between style and genre applies to digital rhetoric, an area that studies how forms such as blogs, wikis, tweets, and text messages have undeniably impacted literacies and composing processes. Just as older genres such as the poem and various types of academic research have distinct stylistic expectations, so do these newer genres. As David Bolter and Richard Grusin explain in *Remediation*, in fact, these newer genres often remediate or alter older ones, appropriating many of their conventions (including stylistic preferences). For instance, email now serves many of the same rhetorical purposes as memos did a few decades ago. From Bolter and Grusin's work, we can extrapolate that as newer genres remediate older ones; they borrow and adapt stylistic traits. Consider that professional emails, much like memos, are defined at least partly via their tendency toward the plain style—literal language, formal diction, and short simple sentences.

Some genres constitute a more complicated remediation, such as the blog—a genre that certainly has a range of distinctive stylistic conventions. Carolyn Miller describes blogs as a kind of remediation and synthesis of earlier genres, ranging from the captain's log to the daily journal and to Renaissance-era commonplace books; yet, it is

profoundly more public than any of these genres, owing to its appropriation of features from newspapers and websites. The paradox of the blog is that it is both personal and public, an observation by Miller that indirectly invites study from stylisticians.⁴² Bloggers most often identify self-expression and disclosure as their primary rhetorical motives, but their audience ranges from personal friends and colleagues to complete strangers. Following Bakhtin's analysis of speech genres, we would agree that speakers already use different styles in different social, private, and professional situations. Blogs fuse these different situations into one, prompting writers to draw on different styles within a single string of text.

David Crystal makes a similar observation about the style of blogs in *Language and the Internet*. Here, Crystal describes the blog as a genre that invites use of oral linguistic styles in writing, nearly rejoicing that it is "as close to the way writers talk as it is possible to get," adding that "the style drives a coach and horses through everything we would be told in the grammatical tradition of the past 250 years about how we should write" (244–45). In other words, bloggers often feel freed from the stylistic constraints of Standard English, and are more willing to experiment and take risks. Part of the reason for the presence of vernacular speech in blogs lies in their lack of editorial oversight. As Crystal explains, bloggers have complete control over their content, and can publish whatever they want to say (sometimes to their detriment). There are no copyeditors and censors to please. For Crystal, this situation is unprecedented. No prior genres have granted individual writers such direct, immediate access to such a wide range of audiences.

According to Jason Tougaw, the generic flexibility of the blog can help students learn to develop a voice that blends personal and academic writing. Recognizing the openness of blogs to multiple discourse styles, including the vernacular, Tougaw assigns his writing students at Princeton to write about their dreams in a series of blogs. He analyzes a few entries in "Dream Bloggers Invent the University" for their blends of academic and personal voice. One student often begins sentences with statements of uncertainty, before sliding into more confident, academic interpretations of his dreams. Phrases used

42. In *Rhetorical Style*, Jeanne Fahnestock briefly discusses blogs as a prime example of double-voicing, given that they continually synthesize information and discourse from other sources.

by the student include “Several things I can guess are,” “I think,” “I am also not sure about,” and “Maybe.” These phrases contribute to a more personal, inquisitive voice when they preface such statements as “it is an embodiment of my suppressed refusal of normal surroundings around me or mere product of my imagination” (qtd. in Tougaw 256). By close-reading passages from these blogs for their personal-academic voices, Tougaw shows how students implicitly harness the interactive and liberating features of blogs to craft voices for the discussion and analysis of dreams that do not merely mimic the conventions of the academy. Stylisticians such as Butler and Holcomb may resist Tougaw’s preference for research on voice over a more rigorous stylistic analysis, given Butler’s critique of Bawarshi outlined in the last section. However, his reading of students’ voices as facilitated by blogging is an important step toward creating a stylistics of digital genres.

The features of blogs identified by Miller, Crystal, and Tougaw apply in other digital genres, especially social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. Social media users often employ vernacular speech patterns, and appear more willing to write in personal voices or styles that disrupt the norms of Standard English. Such sites serve as a significant catalyst of stylistic innovation and experimentation. The conventions of Facebook encourage users to express opinions or insights in memorable ways, and the fact that we compete for attention with hundreds of other friends prompts us to draw on our linguistic resources to craft the most interesting and memorable sentences we can.

The same premise drives activity on Twitter, in which the character limit functions as a further occasion to experiment with spelling, punctuation, and spontaneity in language in order to convey ideas and information in the most efficient but memorable manner possible. The 140 character limit forces users to employ creativity in conveying information, whether they are news flashes, anecdotes, or complaints.⁴³ As Chris Vognar writes for the *Dallas Morning-News*, “I’ve found that paring down my tweets has made my prose leaner. I chop out more adverbs than I used to” (“Twitter’s Character Limit”). Vognar interviews a range of authors and poets who have used Twitter for literary purposes, and who praise its influence on their style. The memoirist and poet Mary Karr tweets lines from famous poets while meshing them with her own voice:

43. It is worth noting that William Carlos Williams’s poem, “The Red Wheelbarrow,” meets Twitter’s character limit.

Shelley on Keats, dead at 25: “Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth.” Like earth’s a bauble swinging from a chain, keeping time.

Karr blends Shelley’s voice with her own, and thus appropriates a line from his poetry as an utterance, while also navigating Twitter’s character limit by drawing on at least three genres—the newspaper headline, the poem, and the casual remark. The statement “Shelley on Keats, dead at 25” plays on famous headlines such as “Ford to New York: Drop Dead,” conveying, in just a few words, a complex set of relations between the poets Percy Shelley and John Keats. Karr then selects a representative line from Shelley that conveys the sentiment. She then integrates that line into her own metaphor by beginning the next sentence with the word “Like,” smoothing over the period and forging a connection between these two utterances, making them virtually part of the same statement. Understanding short poems or meditations like Karr’s through Twitter illustrates all the meaning one can create with 140 characters, and prompts analysis of a digital genre’s remediation of other genres and mediums. Teachers may devote a class period or more to discussing these issues—including how a poem or a line from a novel changes meaning when taken up in another, digital genre.

In addition to fostering attentiveness to style, students can also use Twitter critically to examine how rhetorical ecologies and media converge in manageable ways. The tweet blends voices, genres, and styles, but also links pathways to other texts and spaces through hyperlinks, hashtags, and re-tweets. The hashtag, for example, enables users to quickly search and survey hundreds of tweets on the same topic. Typing “#Occupy” or “#Libya” into Twitter’s search box generates pages of results that show how politicians, celebrities, and ordinary citizens worldwide who have shared information or opinions on the given topic, so long as they add a hashtag to the end of their tweet. Users can also gather information such as dates and times of posts, as well as how many times a post has been re-tweeted, as an indicator of audience reception. Studying aggregates of these tweets provides a snapshot of everyday, vernacular discourse.

Internet memes are also an interesting phenomenon to study from a stylistic perspective. As a cultural studies term, the “meme” was originally coined by Richard Dawkins, who borrowed the concept from evolutionary biology to describe the circulation of ideas, images, and phrases in popular culture. The emergence of the Internet meme “Phi-

losoraptor” illustrates the blurred lines between “error” and stylistic innovation. The web series “Know Your Meme” attributes the first-known use of the term to a ten-year-old who posted on an educational website that “I like the philosoraptor because it spits an acidy type of substance in its victims’ eyes . . . this dinosaur is da bomb.”⁴⁴ A classical rhetorician might describe the invention of the word “philosoraptor” as a kind of *metaplasm*, specifically *antisthecon*, where a rhetor substitutes a syllable or letter for another to achieve an effect.

As a genre, meme generator sites impose a number of stylistic constraints and conventions that inform the rhetorical decisions of users—the spatial limitations of the image box and the precedent of prior meme captions. In the case of the “Philosoraptor” meme, all captions are expected to parody the conditional phrase structure of analytical philosophy, the “If p, then q” construction. For instance, in one caption, the Philosoraptor asks: “If ‘pro’ is the opposite of ‘con,’ then is progress the opposite of congress?” As another recent meme caption reads, “If guns don’t kill people, people kill people, does that mean that toasters don’t toast toast, toast toasts toast?” This caption promotes gun control through an ironic analogy with something mundane, one that also toys with language by using the same word as a subject, verb, and object. The unexpected repetition is all the more effective because it is memorable.

Many of the memes available through websites facilitate stylistic experimentation that is closely affiliated with code-meshing, as well as a similar linguistic act that linguists refer to as *calquing*, or “loan translations” of words and phrases from one linguistic code to another (Richardson 250). The “Crafty Interpreter” meme features captions in which users blend English, Russian, Spanish, Chinese, and French in order to make puns or to highlight and parody the difficulties of intercultural communication. The meme “Joseph Ducreux,” a character based on a portrait artist from the court of King Louis XIV, serves a similar purpose. The character is explicitly described by *Memegenerator.net* as someone who “translates current sayings [often from vernacular dialects] into the verbiage of his time” by “rewording current slang, sayings, or catchphrases into ye olde speak” of the eighteenth century. When users caption this meme, they are code-meshing. The results may be humorous, but they are also socio-linguistically significant.

44. Technically, the child seems to mean dilophasaurus.

At first, memes may appear to possess only entertainment value. However, they fulfill a number of goals for bridging academic and vernacular styles. In my own teaching, I have introduced students to some basic principles of style, and then illustrated them through the Internet meme. Students work separately and in small groups to study the ways users adapt these memes for a variety of socio-political agendas. I encourage students to consider the relationship between content and stylistic aspects of the captions, how diction and figures of expression animate the messages expressed, and how the spatial dimensions of the macro image template have a bearing on these decisions. Students must often employ abbreviations and text-speak to fit their captions into the template. Finally, they compose short reflections on their language choices. Such use of style inspires creativity and generic inter-animation, bringing together many genres and modes of discourse.

The rise of new media has also led to conceptions of style beyond the idea of textual literacy as sufficient alone. Style has always possessed a visual component, as far back as Aristotle's discussion in *Poetics* of the purpose of style to make readers feel as if they are seeing what they read, accomplished through *enargeia*, or vivid language. The proliferation of digital genres and design choices pushes composers toward even deeper engagement with the multimodal elements of style. These new design choices necessitate reinventing frameworks for talking about style. In *The Centrality of Style*, Moe Folk proposes style as technical prowess, difference, and subservience regarding the manipulation of text and graphics for rhetorical effect. She also synthesizes multimodal rhetoric with classical style when analyzing a web text retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood" by a Swedish design student. Folk shows how classical devices such as synecdoche, metonymy, and metalepsis can operate visually as well as verbally. In the same way that words and phrases substitute for larger ideas, images serve a similar symbolic function. The design student employs visual metonymy and synecdoche when zooming in on Red Riding Hood's feet to indicate walking and when focusing on widened eyes and twitching noses to amplify emotions (Folk 223).

Richard Lanham and, later, Collin Gifford Brooke offer perhaps the most substantial alternatives to linguistic definitions of style. In *The Economics of Attention*, Lanham discusses digital media as prompting a kind of revolution in how we view language, looking *through* it

(the conventional reading) but also *at* it for meaning, given the range of choices that graphic designers now enjoy regarding text font, color, size, spacing, and other manners of manipulating words in relationship to images. Words always possess a visual element, but Lanham argues that new media confronts us with this fact like never before. In *Lingua Fracta*, Brooke introduces the term *perspective* to Lanham's conception of style, defining it as "an emergent quality of a specific interaction among user, interface, and object(s), drawing on each without being reducible to any of those factors" (140). To illustrate, Brooke analyzes the interface of *World of Warcraft*, a popular online game that requires users to link the style of the interface itself with their gaming strategies. Users have to look "through" the action bars and status icons to feel immersed in the world of the game, but they also have to look "at" these displays to play the game. Furthermore, users also have the option of adjusting their perspective between more "first-person" views *through* the eyes of their characters, and more "third-person" views in which they can see their character move around the landscape.

An even more striking example might involve the recent phenomenon of the "selfie." Because social media sites now permit users to upload and manipulate their own photographs, they now experiment with style linguistically while also making decisions in the *at/through/from* continuum when they post images. Ostensibly, simple decisions such as whether or not to include oneself in a photo qualify as stylistic. In social media, uploading a self-portrait has become known as a "selfie," and it is not always as trivial as it sounds. Consider the stylistic decisions made by *Buzzfeed.com* writer Matt Stopera, who took a "selfie" with a lion to emphasize the cowardliness of hunter Melissa Bachman, who was banned from South Africa after she posed next to a lion she had stalked and killed: "Just to show you how incredibly difficult it is to hunt a lion . . . here's a selfie I took next to one" (2014).

Stopera's article fits into the genre of the photo-essay, and so we cannot account for its style simply by analyzing his language choices. Here, Brooke's *at/through/from* apparatus is helpful, pushing us to see how vital the "selfie" is to Stopera's verbal argument that, despite the stereotype of lions as ferocious animals, it would not be heroic or even difficult to shoot one with a modern rifle. Stopera made a stylistic decision to include himself in the photograph, his head unexpectedly

jutting in sideways with a somewhat comical expression on his face. Even his use of the term “selfie” is as a stylistic choice meant to amplify the mutual attitude of nonchalance between people on safari and the lions who, at one point, lounge in the shade of Stopera’s van. He invites readers to look *through* the medium of the photograph to see the lounging lion, but also *at* the photograph itself and his authorship of it. As such, the photograph not only provides visual evidence for his claim, but also influences the tone of the piece. It is the half-serious style of the “selfie” and its brief caption that mock Bachman more than any particular construction of words. Stopera’s “selfie” epitomizes style as the management of language as well as visual perspective.

In *Toward a Composition Made Whole*, Jody Shipka articulates the need to think of composing as a practice that always integrates non-alphabetic modes, as teachers may forget such modes in their awe over new technologies. In these terms, a text is anything that produces meaning for an audience, and can be as simple as an overhead transparency or a set of instructions with accompanying diagrams. As one example, Shipka describes a dance designed and performed by a student named Muffie, who engages a wide range of modes and sign systems that include “*listening* to the song she had selected for the performance, *writing* out project notes, *drawing* up a solo chart, *watching* the classroom footage, and *reading* the in-class writings” (80). It is this navigation of different ways of producing meaning that Shipka highlights. Each decision to take up a new genre or mode, and its particular execution, ultimately constitutes a kind of stylistic decision that goes beyond the textual frameworks of grammar and classical rhetoric. Here, a new set of terms may be less important than an appreciation for how these discrete choices contribute to the larger rhetorical effect of the performance.⁴⁵ Shipka’s pedagogy reflects similar mindsets in a range of composition textbooks, including Bartholomae and Petrosky’s *Ways of Reading: Words and Images*, Wendy Hesford and Brenda Brueggemann’s *Rhetorical Visions*, Lester Faigley’s *Picturing Texts*, and Donald and Christine McQuade’s *Seeing and Writing*.

45. Derek Mueller takes a similar approach in a 2012 *Kairos* article, explaining how his students transformed a three-paragraph passage of their choice through the use of digital genres such as the tweet, the web comic, imagtext triptych, or a conventional semantic analysis.

Style in digital rhetoric and multimodal composition is a matter of the interplay of genres and language; it is also the manipulation of modes that are not explicitly textual. Today, writers use multiple styles while moving through a number of genres, many of them digital. Increasingly, the stylistic decisions they make have visual dimensions that function as part of the rhetorical situation. As they navigate these spaces, writers cross-pollinate by using elements of each style in new situations, inevitably changing these genres as they compose. Some of these genres remediate older genres, just as email has adapted the rhetorical purposes and overall style of the memo and as the blog has pulled from a rich collection of antecedent genres. Each of these forms has its own linguistic and visual stylistics, some of them more flexible than others. Nonetheless, these genres and their constraints foster innovation, as we saw in the discussion of Mary Karr's tweet about Keats and Shelley. Understanding style in digital environments reinforces what this chapter asserts about the continual evolution and proliferation of style.

CONCLUSION

The last several chapters traced the major strands of thought regarding the role of style in rhetorical discourse and writing instruction. While rhetoric and composition may stand at odds with public conversations about writing and style, teachers and researchers can work with one another to form counterpublic discourses in which style is valued as more than the transmission of meaning. A dialogic conception of style that values polyvocality and the negotiation of norms is best-suited to help students learn to write well. Also, grammar does not have to pose a threat to a writer's sense of ingenuity or limit his or her linguistic resources if we place it in service of rhetoric. At this point, we should stop to review the major conceptions of language explored in the last three chapters, and summarize their implications for the study and teaching of style:

1. Linguistic theories of style tend to emphasize its structural qualities and focus on grammatical choices, as seen in the discussion of Williams, Kolln, and Christensen in Chapter 5.
2. Classical theories of style prioritize study of figures, schemes, the value of imitation, and the use of *progymasmata*.

3. Dialogic theories of style define a writer's voice as a synthesis of other voices, and see style as multiplicitous.
4. Feminist theories of style, such as Cixous's and Kristeva's, advance women's ways of writing that resist and subvert dominant, patriarchal systems of meaning while inscribing linguistic choices with gendered qualities.
5. Sociolinguistic theories view style as a series of choices and identity performances made between languages and social languages (e.g., dialects, registers) that either accommodate or resist group norms.

At one point or another, most scholars of rhetoric and composition have drawn from these theories and the methodologies informing them to make claims about writing, or simply to write. These theories and methodologies do not work in opposition to one another. In fact, they overlap in many ways. The section on postmodern imitation and classical rhetoric observed commonalities between Bakhtin's theories and the classical tradition on writers' innate tendency to imitate and appropriate aspects of others' styles. Likewise, we can use the language of grammar to analyze the stylistic moves of any writer or speaker as they make language choices within and across varieties of English. We would characterize all of these theories as inventive, positioning style as an integral part of writing and vital to meaning, not as an ancillary or after-the-fact consideration of editing or polishing discourse once it has been fully formed. The next chapter presents different methods of research and how they have already begun informing theories of style. It also considers the potential of research in related fields to strengthen the approaches to style laid out here.