FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS: STYLE, DUALISM,

AND THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

By

RACHAEL A. MONTIN

Bachelor of Arts in English

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, OK

2011

FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS: STYLE, DUALISM,

AND THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Thesis Approved:

Dr. Rebecca Damron
_____
Thesis Adviser

Dr. Ron Brooks
_____

Dr. Richard Batteiger
_____

Dr. Mark E. Payton
_____
Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you Dr. J for inspiring these ideas and thank you Dr. D for cultivating them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Style is not mere decoration, nor is it an end in itself; it is rather a way of finding and explaining what is

true. Its purpose is not to impress but to express. (Primer 190)

-Richard L. Graves

Although the year was 1965 when Louis Milic remarked "no consistent theory of

style seems to underlie the several efforts to teach composition," he could very well be

delivering those same words in the most current edition of *College Composition and*

Communication. Style, as a workable pedagogy, remains elusive to scholars, not for its lack of

a definition, but because it seems to evoke a myriad of individual definitions. On the one

hand, style means voice—a unique voice rising up from the common diction. On the other

hand, style equals clear, effective writing or clarity of prose. Yet again, style refers to

symbolic patterns represented in a given discourse or the collective, societal standard

(Johnson and Pace vii); that is, some teachers and scholars define style as effective use of

rhetoric. Because style escapes denotative classification, it also evades containment in a

workable, pedagogical theory. This lack of a theory or this lack of a concrete definition is not

only the result of teachers and scholars approaching style from a variety of perspectives—

the mess that is style pedagogy and theory also stems from style's wavering popularity as a topic worthy of investigation over the last fifty years.

Style, as it relates to the composition classroom, reached high popularity from the sixties to late eighties, and, even within that period, it underwent considerable changes in both philosophy and practice. Regardless of its definition and theory, style dwindled in scholarly esteem throughout the nineties and into the twenty-first century with the inception of the social constructionist and post-process movements. Only recently has style made a comeback of sorts, receiving attention from newcomers such as T.R. Johnson and Paul Butler, as well as veteran composition scholars like Richard Lanham, who has studied style since the 80s.With the exception of a handful of researchers, many scholars more recent analysis of style seems to do one of two things: either they trace style's history and observe its disappearance or reappearance in composition studies, or they propose a pedagogy of style, and often times they rely on approaches like imitation or sentence combining that have been around since the fifties.

If style is to reemerge in the field as a viable area of study, and if it is to continue to be an area of study for years to come, then its scholars must consider style from a more practical lens, moving away from bemoaning the loss of style and from simply rehashing pedagogies that have been around for half a century. Otherwise, the topic of style is dead already. Both approaches leave little room for growth of new veins of study and are ultimately dead ends. Like these impractical ends, style has also been the victim of being a theory more than a practice, at least in more current studies. A more practical inquiry and discussion of style begins not with where style has been and where it is going, but with its present application in the first-year writing classroom and how that application aligns itself with theories of style, both past and present.

By understanding how teachers are currently addressing style in their first-year composition classrooms, scholars then have a more complete, contextualized vision of style's role in the field overall. It only makes sense that a field devoted to the teaching of writing and the theorizing of that subject marries its pedagogies and suppositions with actual practice in the classroom. By divorcing theory of style from praxis of style, it is no wonder that style is not a subject of serious interest—any theory, no matter how revolutionary, exists as intellectual masturbation until it finds application in reality. However, past theories and approaches to teaching style do remain important as a touchstone for modern permutations of style in the writing classroom. In knowing where style has been, in combination with knowing how teachers are currently teaching style, composition scholars have a more informed explanation of how past theories have influenced present practice. Moreover, these same scholars can then begin addressing style from a practical perspective, one that recognizes and notes the relationship between theory and practice and how the two correspond to create new veins of study. Before researchers can begin examining style in a more practical, useful way, however, they must catalogue the different shifts that style has undergone over the last fifty years in philosophy, practice, and popularity—these shifts undoubtedly color the perception and performance of style in composition classrooms today.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Style before Process

Style does provide a vehicle of thought, and style can be ornamental; but style is something more than that. It is another one of the 'available means of persuasion,' another means of arousing appropriate emotional response in the audience, and a means of establishing the proper ethical image. (Classical 30)

-Edward P.J. Corbett

In his 1965 essay "Theories of Style and Their Implications for the Teaching of Composition," Louis Milic outlined three basic approaches to style:

1. <u>Rhetorical Dualism</u>: style is dependent on context and "ideas exist wordlessly and can be dressed in a variety of outfits, depending on the need for the occasion" (67). Dualism implies "correctness," as in there is a correct style to use warranting the situation.

2. <u>Individualism/Psychological Monism</u>: style in not chosen but an expression of one's personality, like a person's handwriting or the way they walk.

3. <u>Crocean Aesthetic Monism</u>: style is of no concern, as the composition is a "unified whole, with no seam between meaning and style" (67).

Of note is Milic's distinction between the dualistic approach (style and meaning are separate), and the monistic approach (style and meaning are the same), as these two

4

approaches represent the treatment of style for the last fifty years, despite several paradigm shifts and the development of several "new" theories regarding style. Dualism asks a writer to attend to a rhetorical situation when choosing a style for their composition—their style should reflect the context in which they are writing and to whom they are writing. Monism, on the other hand, is less rhetorical in approach; in the 1970s, one could also call monism "voice," as noted expressivists like Peter Elbow argue that a student's voice is their style and accordingly, style should not be taught because it restricts the free expression of that voice. Aesthetic monists would argue there is no such thing as an additive style, because to change the style is to change the meaning. In other words, the same composition written in two different styles is essentially two different compositions because no boundary exists between meaning and style—they are seamless. Because dualism and monism differ so dramatically in their philosophical tenets, it is no wonder that they would find varying degrees of popularity over the years depending on the reigning paradigm at the time…and its rulers.

In the early 1960s through the early 1970s, before the process and expressivist movements were firmly established, many theorists regarded style as atomistic and, not surprisingly, imitation, sentence combining, or models dominated the scene. Another way to describe scholars' approach to style during this time period is to label it dualistic, because along with a focus on form came a focus on function or rhetoric. Those folks preoccupied with rhetoric in every dimension, including style, are commonly deemed as classicists or the new rhetoricians (Conners *Erasure*, 110). The classicists borrow a portion of their principles from current-traditional pedagogy, which highly emphasizes the product a writer produces, and from classical rhetorical theory. In addition to categorizing writing (narration, description, exposition, and argument), classicists also emphasize usage or style of language as a means of persuading an audience. Understanding the principles and time period of the

classicists inevitably begs the question: *who* were the classicists, and how do they shape modern theory and praxis of style?

Scholars undisputedly recognize Francis Christensen as a classicist (see Connors, "Remembering"), and as such, he approaches the study (and teaching) of style from a dualistic perspective. Style is something that can be taught, and for Christensen, that education begins with the sentence. When composition and rhetoric studies where in their formative years, Christensen recognized a need for a pedagogy illustrating how teachers might teach their students to write better. To that end, he pioneers a sentence-combining pedagogy in his 1963 essay, "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence." He explains that teachers can best spend their time teaching a cumulative sentence: a building-block writing strategy in which students add modifying words or phrases to a main clause. Certainly, Christensen teeters between a current-traditional approach and a process approach to teaching writing by emphasizing the structure of language as well as student appropriation and retention of language skills. More importantly, Christensen's stress on the form the writing assumes and his desire that his students become "sentence acrobats, [and] dazzle by their syntactic dexterity" (160) clearly indicates that Christensen considers style from dualistic perspective. In fact, a number of classicists regard style from a dualistic perspective, as a skill that is teachable.

More than Christensen, Edward P.J. Corbett is often labeled as a classicist. As such, he exemplifies Milic's dualistic theory of style, namely because his pedagogy relies on teaching style as rhetoric and the teaching of stylistic skill through imitation. Even as early as 1971 though, Corbett recognizes that an imitation pedagogy is not likely to gain popularity because it is in direct conflict with two emerging paradigms (the process and expressivist movements) that emphasize creativity, self-expression, and individuality over structured

training. Nevertheless, in his essay "The Theory and Practice of Imitation in Classical Rhetoric," Corbett illustrates the validity of teaching style through imitation. He claims that when students imitate the style of others, they internalize the structures of those styles and that internalization fosters later creativity, or as Frank D'Angelo remarks in his essay "Imitation and Style," "imitation exists for the sake of variation" (283). In addition, when students imitate the styles of others, they add to their stylistic repertoire, and are thus able to express themselves more creatively—they imitate so they might be different (Corbett, *Imitation* 250).Corbett's heavy emphasis on imitation illustrates that he considers style separate from meaning, as a tool that helps a writer achieve their rhetorical ends. In other words, Corbett pedagogy of style is philosophically dualistic and Corbett maintains that position from the 70s well into the late 90s, despite the number of ideological shifts in the field of composition during those years. For example, in the 1999 book *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, he, along with Robert Connors, suggests several imitative exercises to help students achieve an eloquent style. While close to forty years has passed between his 1999 book and his 1971 essay, Corbett maintains that his dualist position in arguing that imitation is a valid (if not the best) way to teach style and in arguing that students learn styles through imitation and choose from those styles warranting the rhetorical situation. He is not alone in this position, however, as imitation remains a valid way to teach style for many composition instructors, although the classroom particularities will differ from instructor to instructor, and from campus to campus.

Winston Weathers, although he moves away from classicism in the late 70s and 80s, mirrors classicist tenets in his early essays, and, not surprisingly, his style pedagogy is a dualistic one. He, like Corbett, advocates for imitation and style as rhetorical choice. In his essay, "Teaching Style: a Possible Anatomy," he explains how students add to their stylistic

repertoire by recognizing and imitating the styles of various writers. In addition, he argues that style can be made relevant for students by telling them it is a "gesture of freedom against inflexible states of mind" (369). Essentially, Weathers likes classicist practices but he personally adheres to expressivist attitudes. His emphasis on individuality and freedom are expressivist in attitude, but his students learn such free self-expression through imitation. Weathers, like many of the classicists, demonstrates what Milic describes as the dualistic approach to teaching style: style is separate from meaning and students are free to choose a style from their available options, options that they have obtained through imitating the prose of others. The dualistic approach never fades completely from praxis and, in fact, is rather popular during the process years. During these same years, the dualistic approach is in direct conflict with the monistic approach touted by expressivists who emphasize a writer's natural style over an affected one.

Style: the Process Movement and Expressivism

Style may be a vague concept to us because our own teachers spent little to no time talking about style.

(*Teaching* 23)

-Edward P.J. Corbett

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, some researchers and teachers departed from the current-traditional bent informing composition studies; instead of focusing on the "product" that the writer produced, theorists began to consider the writer's "process" in producing a piece of writing. Really, the process movement was a sign of the times—an

overall need to challenge authority, institutions, and the rules of the academy (Tobin 4). By the late 1970s to early 1980s, many compositionists either adhered to the traditional pedagogies that espoused standards, rigor, and quality or they supported the process pedagogy by asking students to think about what happens when they write, letting them choose their own topics for their essays, encouraging them to use an authentic voice, and showing them writing is "messy or organic" (Tobin 4).

In reality, the expressivist movement and the process movement are closely linked. The main difference between the two exists in expressivists resolute advocating of the student voice as opposed to process theorists concern with the cognitive moves students experience when composing. Even so, both movements place the student at the center of the pedagogy—a pedagogy that insists on the importance of student creation (invention), discovery, and voice (Tobin 5). While Lad Tobin intimates the latter statement in his study on the process movement, Christopher Burnham makes a strikingly similar claim in his essay on the expressivist movement:

> Expressivism places the writer at the center, articulates its theory, and develops its pedagogical system by assigning highest value to the writer and her imaginative, psychological, social, and spiritual development and how that development influences individual consciousness and social behavior. Expressivist pedagogy encourages…a sense of writer presence even in research-based writing. This presence—'voice'… functions as a key evaluation criterion when expressivists examine writing. (19)

Scholars researching and writing under the process/expressivist paradigms, in the name of upholding those paradigms, often reject current-traditional principles. However, when it comes to teaching style, many (but certainly not all!) of them cling to classicist methods and they advocate that style should be considered dualistically, where a student attends to the rhetorical situation in which they write. While works like those of Peter Elbow may be the exception, the majority of publications about teaching style during the 1970s and early to

mid-1980s are philosophically dualistic in their approach. Interestingly, even though dualism and monism are theoretically opposed, a number of individuals seek to combine the two, arguing that both methods can be present in the classroom,. For example, in his 1986 essay "Teaching Style", Corbett claims that two methods for the teaching of style: "(1) learning how to analyze someone else's style or (2) improving one's own style" (25). should be used in the classroom, as each helps the other. In recognizing what makes style effective, writers can begin to incorporate those effects into their writing, either consciously or unconsciously. Likewise, in improving their own style, writers are more aware of what to consider when they analyze another writer's style. Immediately after his fair treatment of monism and dualism, however, Corbett indicates his preference for a dualistic approach. He claims that studying style begins with the writer learning what to study in the writing of another (211), and in doing so, clearly indicates that he prefers to teach style from a dualistic perspective, likely because dualism is the only approach that really allows for style to be taught. Because dualism upholds the form/content dichotomy, it allows for a stylistic subject matter which can be taught (Farmer and Arrington 62).

A year later, in his 1987 essay "Approaches to the Study of Style," Corbett actually identifies and categorizes three methodologies of teaching style: analytical, imitative, and generative. Analytical methodologies ask students to observe and identify different writing styles while imitative methodologies ask students to mimic those styles. Generative methodologies encourage students to use form as a springboard for invention. As early as 1969, however, generative methodologies are criticized as not being generative at all, with many theorists' main complaint being that form does not necessarily generate content (Johnson 159). Regardless of the criticism that generative approaches receive, that approach, along with analytical and imitative approaches all work off the premise that style is a

teachable art—or, as Milic might remark, these approaches are dualistic in nature in that they perceive of style as a myriad of garments by which one "dresses up" ones language and ideas. Of course, one chooses one garments befitting the occasion, or sans the metaphor, one chooses ones style befitting the rhetorical occasion.

Like Corbett, Winston Weathers considers style the attendant of rhetoric. In his essay "Grammars of Style: New Options in Composition," Weathers encourages students to explore options "already established in the language but…also be alert to emerging ones, and in some cases…even participate in creating options that do not yet exist" (200). To ascertain all of these options, Weathers declares that the writer must understand her grammar of style—that is, define her composition's criteria (boundaries) and determine to whom her composition wishes to communicate (201). In other words, a writer must understand the genre in which she writes and the audience to whom she writes. But, not only should a writer understand her grammar of style, she should also seek to move beyond "traditional" style toward an alternate grammar of style. To that end, Weathers insists that the writer must master the stylistic maneuvers within that alternate grammar, aiming at assimilating a collection of styles to choose from depending on a given rhetorical situation. Weathers, like a number of scholars, approaches style from a dualistic perspective by arguing that students "dress up" their writing depending on their rhetorical milieu.

Jane Walpole in "Style as Option" works from a premise similar to Weathers: style is a series of rhetorical choices that the writer makes in the writing process (206). Ultimately, she contends that style fuses as one with rhetoric. Robert Gorrell's definition of rhetoric— the art of making choices among available alternatives—informs Walpole's argument that style and rhetoric are one in the same, in that style as *option* means making choices among available alternatives (if the alternatives exist). To teachers, she suggests that students analyze

readings for style, imitate that style, and then create texts in contrasting styles. Walpole's suggestions are not new ones though. She may have published these ideas in 1980, but they are classicist methods that essentially reflect a dualistic approach to style. Like many teachers who employ classicist techniques, Walpole separates style from meaning in simply describing style as option—students have an option to decide which style they should use depending on the rhetorical situation in which they write.

Again, such an approach is not new one, and neither is the imitation pedagogy that usually accompanies such an approach. Indeed, in 1973, seven years prior to Walpole's essay, Frank D'Angelo claims that students develop and understand a vast array of styles when they imitate a number of prose styles. He further argues that when students do not understand a number of styles, they can only draw on their own, perhaps meager understanding of style; the more choices a student has, "the more inventive he is" (290). In relying on traditional methods espoused by classicists, D'Angelo views style dualistically. He separates style and meaning, although he does not deny their inter-relatedness. For example, D'Angelo remarks when a student attends to "rhetorical principles within the individual sentences as well as within the paragraph, he is also aware of how content interacts with form to produce a mature style. It is not manner alone that counts nor is it matter, but rather the interconnection of the two" (288). Thus, while style and meaning might be connected to each other, they are still considered separate for D'Angelo, or else he could not begin to discuss how the two might intersect. For monists on the other hand, style and meaning are one in the same, not separate with various instances where they are layered upon one another. Although D'Angelo's view of style clearly indicates that he considers style dualistically, his pedagogy of style (imitation) further emphasizes the fact.

Richard Lanham is another scholar of style who uses imitation to teach style, as well as other classicist techniques and ideas, many of which he includes in his 1983 book *Analyzing Prose*. Like many of the classicists, Lanham regards style from a dualistic perspective. As an example, consider his claim that teachers of style should steer clear of considering the linguistic aspects of style—that is, considering a deeper structure beyond the superficial stylistic features. Instead, he argues they *should* consider (and build a pedagogy on) style as the form the writing assumes. Lanham makes this argument more complex in his 2003 introduction of the 2nd edition of *Analyzing Prose* in noting that "we are living in a time in which information is the new capital, an information rather than a goods economy," which means "prose remains our workaday method to communicate and preserve information" (x). Computers, then, are the intermediary that exchange information from writer to reader, and it is up to the writer to determine how they manipulate the "expressive space" that is the computer screen (*Analyzing Prose*, 2nd ed, x). Still, despite the overwhelming use of the computer as a medium for written word, Lanham's position regarding style remains very much the same as it did in 1983 in that he views style dualistically, as something to be discerned and then taught. Indeed, he writes the second edition because he sees a need for a common nomenclature that describes the various prose styles available to what is now an information society. Lanham thought such a nomenclature was necessary in 1983, but in the 21st century, in the wave of information design, it becomes more important because prose styles become more important. They "orchestrate human attention in different ways" (xiii) and are responsible for the delivering what is important to an information society: information. In considering style the necessary addendum to information, and even in titling his book "analyzing prose," Lanham argues that style should be considered dualistically.

Simply, style can be identified, named, and taught and Lanham maintains this dualistic position be it 1983 or 2003.

While there are several individuals who approach style dualistically during the process years (and beyond), there are also a number of individuals who approach style monistically at the same time. These individuals rely on expressivist tenets to support their position that style is inherent within a writer. For example, Peter Elbow, now infamous for his advocacy of voice in student writing, clearly shows his monistic leanings in his commentary on style in *Writing with Power*. Elbow argues that students should not be taught style at all, as it restricts their voice that would rise naturally given the freedom to do so. Elbow has famously remarked that "we all have a chest cavity unique in size and shape so that each one of us naturally resonates to that pitch alone" (282), not a pitch that we learn as style. For Elbow, style is an expression of one's personality that occurs naturally (if allowed to do so) when one writes; thus, the more a student writes, the better they harness and hone their natural, individual style (or voice). Learning a number of styles will only inhibit a student's natural exploration and discovery of their own prose style, which is why Elbow maintains his monistic position that style should not be taught in the composition classroom. Elbow's expressivist perspective influences him to reject the teaching of style, but he is one among several scholars who argue against teaching style, albeit for different reasons.

Interestingly, despite the fact that Sandra Schor's approach to style is in direct opposition to Elbow's, they both agree that style should not be taught. Schor is skeptical of teaching style because she believes that some writers may not be ready for an introduction to style. In her 1986 essay, "Style through Control: the Pleasures of the Beginning Writer" she suggests that some writers may need to consider other issues like control of their prose before they delve into the specifics of learning the craft of prose (Schor 204). She even

questions whether expressivists like Elbow should encourage their students to write in their own voice because after all, "how many beginning writers have one voice?" (Schor 208). Instead of putting undo pressure on students to "write in their own voice," Schor desires that students control the meaning of their prose, that they focus on what they want to say, that they invent and discover meaning, and that they understand their subjects better by connecting them to their experience. Certainly, she touts the process movement's philosophy in her emphasis on content and invention over form and imitation. Even so, her philosophical position toward style is a dualistic one: Schor, in believing that style is a subject that should be taught to more mature writing students, clearly differentiates one's style from one's meaning. Meaning is derived through the process of writing, and style is applied to the document later—it is a step that occurs later in the writing process, after the writer has already gained control over their ideas. In addition to representing a dualistic approach to style, Schor clearly aligns herself against monistic approaches that advocate the writer's natural voice over a learned one.

Unlike Schor and Elbow, John T. Gage seeks to combine dualistic and monistic notions of teaching style. His 1980 essay, "Philosophies of Style and Their Implications for Composition," contributes to the rhetorical discussion Louis Milic began in his 1965 analysis on style, in that he questions Milic's suggestion that composition teachers must choose a single theory of style to inform their pedagogy. Instead, Gage asserts that teachers should combine the theories because there are two powers at work when students compose: they draw on existing knowledge of language (rules), but they also discover and invent something new while writing (composing or revising). Gage aptly describes it as:

> In regard to the self, it means that what we discover as we write is both a "true" self and a self adapted to a rhetorical situation comprising of other selves. In regard to truth, it means that how we know is both something like a process with rules and procedures and also something like an adventure with leaps and risks. (621)

15

Essentially, Gage represents both the classicist and process viewpoints of style here. He does not deny that students draw on a set of learned knowledge when they compose, but he also contends that in the process of writing, students invent something new—they move beyond the rules. More importantly, Gage asks composition teachers to accept the paradoxical combination of monism and dualism in considering a writer's style both discoverable and emendable.

Elizabeth Rankin echoes many of Gage's sentiments in her definition of style: "style is both a 'product' and a 'process,' both a set of observable features of a finished text and a way of discovering what that text will become" (382). She defines style as both "broad and workable," because it allows teachers to distinguish style from other concerns of the writing process, and it allows for an overlap between style and invention. Furthermore, she contends that a new theory of style will also account for the psychological operations involved in making stylistic decisions. Likewise, that new theory of style must consider the nature of language and reality, and the nature of style as something that is fixed and orderly, yet flexible. While these notions seem opposed at their core, such a position relies on an interpretive community that acknowledges both the arbitrary and self-referential nature of language, but agrees upon a "flexible set of acceptable meanings and standards" (382). Interestingly, Rankin recalls Milic when she notes that the term 'style' alone seems to denounce monistic theories because it implies that the self and meaning are themselves created from language or style. But, if these constructs exist within a rhetorical (interpretive) community, then they can be both fixed and movable at the same time, and she claims it is this perspective that accommodates both dualistic and monistic concepts of style. While she argues that this theory attends to both views, she does not really account for style as voice, and she even postulates whether style is something that the writer discovers within herself,

of whether it is an interpretive concept that she creates in the process of writing. Such vacillating on her part seems to indicate that her theory is primarily dualistic, with philosophical underpinnings that are monistic in theory, but not practice. An exclusively monistic theory of style does not allow for a theory of style, or a pedagogy of style because, for monists, style is a natural manifestation of the writer, not a subject matter that is taught to and then applied by the writer.

Style: Social Constructivism and the Post-Process Movement

*We wish to recognize style in its social roles, and we wish to use the study of style as a means of rupturing the closed classroom. We advocate the teaching style in both reading and writing, with the focus on cultural meaning making. (*221)

-Howard et.al

In the mid-1980s, some scholars began to look at style from an academic standpoint, considering how they might integrate students into the stylistic standards of university discourse. While student-centered pedagogy undeniably enjoys popularity at this time as well, simultaneously, composition studies also branch out toward the community of writers entering the university. David Bartholomae's 1985 essay, "Inventing the University," marks this social turn in composition studies in that he highlights how students "invent" academic discourse (university) as a way of entering a perceivably unwelcome discourse. As Bartholomae's essay brings to light a new way of considering composition, so too does Lester Faigley's essay, "Competing Theories of Process: A Critique and a Proposal" consider the social view of composing that has long been neglected. Both theorists anticipate the

social constructivist view that would become the predominant theory in composition studies in the early 90s.

Constructivists in the 90s continued the work of early theorists like Bartholomae and Faigley in that they questioned how identity relates to what and how a writer composes. Likewise, with the recent inception of post-process theory in the late 1990s, race, gender, and class become even more predominant issues in the composition classroom. Really, social constructivism acts as a transition from process to post-process theory. Post-process theory, instead of being the antithesis of the process movement, enters a line of questioning that eventually leads to three basic assumptions about the act of writing: (1) writing is public; (2) writing is interpretive; and (3) writing is situated (Kent 2). Writing as a public act involves other language users therefore writing must be accessible to others. Thus, writing represents a communicative action among various individuals. Writing as an interpretative act requires writers to both enter into the reception and production of discourse. Thomas Kent notes it succinctly: "When we read, we interpret texts or utterances; when we write, we interpret our readers, our situations, our and other people's motivations, the appropriate genres to employ in specific circumstances, and so forth" (2). Writing as a public act requires a writer's interpretation—writers cannot write in a vacuum because they do not exist nowhere. Rather, a writer is *situated* and he or she communicates from that *situation* (Kent 3).

Of course, as a result of this shift in the broader theory, style's theory shifted as well. Then again, how could social constructivists and post-process theorists redefine style if, as Fortune remarks in 1989, style did not have a set theory to begin with? The answer: for the most part, theorists in the 90s completely disregarded style as viable research topic. They were caught up in the newness of the paradigm shift, and accordingly, they explored and researched topics that directly related to the problem of writer identity (Howard et al. 221).

Does that mean that no one wrote about style during this time period? Indeed, during the years of 1998 and 1999 no articles appeared discussing style in the composition classroom but that does not mean that style vanished from the field of composition altogether. Incidentally, those scholars who do write about style during the late 1980s and 90s define style as dualistic, not only because it allows them to teach style, but because they can pair it with social constructivist and/or post-process principles.

Min-Zhan Lu, for example, situates style in a cultural context but her pedagogy is methodologically dualistic. In her 1994 article "Professing Multiculturalism: the Politics of Style in the Contact Zone," she defines the composing process as an act of establishing agency and position through the use of language. In addition, Lu claims that style is a discourse defined by communities, disciplines, and institutions. She explains that writers find style when they "consider their choice of position in the context of the socio-political power relationships within and among diverse discourses and in the context of their personal life, history, culture, and society" (Lu 448). Lu incorporates this definition into her classroom by identifying authors' idiosyncrasies for her students and then diagnosing why those authors might use a certain phrase or word in repetition. Thus, while her definition of style reflects the social constructivist paradigm she writes under, her pedagogy is dualistic in nature. She asks students to consider the relationship between the form and meaning of words and in doing so, to map out a contact zone defining the range of choices within the given discourse. Again, Lu attends to the social constructivist paradigm by asking the students to add their own conditions (race, ethnicity, gender, sex, class, education, religion, etc) to the contact zone, but to separate form and meaning is to consider style dualistically. Instead of disregarding style, as many did in 90s, Lu maintains that style can be discerned and

appropriated, and she supports such a position by combining dualistic theory with a social constructivist ideology.

Although Lu presents a concrete definition of style that subscribes to the paradigm she is writing under at the time, many other theorists fail to do the same. Instead of presenting a resounding, overarching theory of style, the authors of "What are Styles and Why are We Saying Such Great Things About Them," describe how teachers might place style at the center of a writer's activities. Published in 2003, the authors are aware of how social constructivist principles have forever changed how composition scholars perceive style:

> Absent from socially engaged composition pedagogy has been any sustained, foregrounded engagement with prose style. Instead, community-oriented pedagogies have explicitly tended to focus on entering into the real-world experience of writing; learning new genres to fit writing in context; learning about social issues. (220-21)

They, like so many other scholars in the 90s and early 2000s, note the disappearance of style and they attribute that disappearance to the social constructivist paradigm. They argue, however, that many scholars still care about style, but they simply do not teach it because to do so is to mark oneself as an "elitist" or conservative, a label that may not necessarily be applied today. In the remainder of their essay they describe several possibilities for teaching style (genre analysis, attention to rhetorical situation, and production of academic discourse), but despite all these possibilities, they conceive of style in one way: dualistically. They separate form from meaning and consider style something that is teachable and applicable in a variety of venues. Their essay was published in 2002, but they consider style in much the same was as did scholars in the 60s, 70s, and 80s—as Milic argues in 1965, if style is to remain viable in the classroom, it has to be concerned with form.

<h1 style="text-align: center;">Style: Currently and in the Future</h1>

While style in composition has experienced the decline that several scholars in the field have noted, work currently being done seems to be laying the foundation for its reemergence as a major concern. (527)

-Ron Fortune

Because we are in the midst of another paradigm shift, it is hard to categorize current composition scholars with a label that neatly allocates them to a definable realm. Interestingly, it seems that the post-modern sentiment of current culture pervades modern research as researchers work to combine old theories and practices with fresher perspectives and branches of style. Instead of forsaking style's past presence in the field and its shifting role in both research and in the classroom, recent researchers remember where style has been; the good news is, however, that these same researchers are now asking where style may be headed. What is the future of style? In answering this question, researchers have investigated the origins and development of style, and they came to one resounding point: style has been out of the spotlight for quite some time, but is quickly becoming an area of renewed interest.

Johnson and Pace's 2005 book *Refiguring Prose Style: Possibilities for Writing Pedagogy* is a collection of essays that consider the history of style in the field, comment on the links between composition and literature, and provide practical classroom activities for engaging students with style. More importantly, the authors desire that understanding of style move beyond the paradigms that have ruled its role in composition studies to avoid what is often divisive categories. Instead, Johnson and Pace contend that style should be refigured as a bridge of sorts that travels past the boundaries and gaps created by oppositional binaries

such as form versus content, literature versus composition, and "writing as a service course versus a tool for critical and creative thinking" (x). Johnson and Pace would likely argue to do away with the categories of dualism vs. monism, as they seem to be oppositional binaries. However, may scholars have discovered that one does not have to do away with such categories—simply combine them. Many scholars have done so since the 1980s, and they continue to do so well into the 2000s.

Richard A. Lanham's most recent article on style "Style/Substance Matrix," published in 2010, refigures style as both dualistic and monistic. He bridges the dichotomies of form and substance, or what he calls "fluff and stuff," by explaining that an influx exists between these two categories. He insists that "style is always turning into substance and back again" (434). In other words, when we look at a house, a painting, or a piece of writing, we look *at* them and then *through* them, and back *at* them, only to look *through* them again—we naturally move along the spectrum of considering both the substance and style of a thing. Lanham applies a four-tier matrix to the reductive categories of form versus content to complicate the relationship between the two, and he maintains that it is important "to put style and substance into relationships that are as complex as human reality. Only then can we define either one" (448). More importantly, Lanham provides a bridge between dualistic and monistic perspectives of style. Like Gage and Rankin, Lanham considers both the form of style and the substance of style to exist simultaneously, and like those two, he clearly explains how the two might coexist. Newer perhaps, is Lanham's clear explanation of a combination theory, one that marries dualism and monism in both philosophy and practice, a quality that Gage and Rankin's theories lacked.

Not only are current researchers creating bridges between contending ideologies, but some researchers investigate alternative inquiries about style, as does Johnson in his 2003

22

article "Ancient and Contemporary Compositions That 'Come Alive': Clarity as Pleasure, Sound as Magic." Unlike many researchers of style, Johnson calls for a pedagogy of sound that asks students to listen, to *really listen* to their language more carefully. However, the end goal is not only better sounding prose, but to teach students to be more objective about their language, and to show them they can blur the boundary between reader and writer to experience "the infinite." Johnson explains that "the infinite" equals clarity, but not clarity as the "transparent window into an extra-linguistic reality," but clarity as simply (and complexly) an experience of connection between author and audience, an experience of the transpersonal element of language (344). In addition, Johnson does not mean that powerful writing is merely flowery words on a page; rather, powerful writing sounds pleasurable to the ear and resounds intellectually in the mind—stylistic choices are also ethical, rhetorical ones. Although he offers a fresh perspective regarding style, in defining style as a choice, Johnson shows his position to be a dualistic one.

Although several theorists have considered style in new ways, many current researchers continue to note the disappearance of style from scholarly consideration and teaching practice. Instead of simply cataloguing essays about style in the last four decades, and noting the small number of those essays, several researchers are now looking at style from practical perspectives, providing links between style's disappearance and it current and future role in the field of composition. For example, Elizabeth Weiser begins her essay, "Where is Style Going? Where has it Been?" by tracing style's history, and she ends by noting that as composition theory reinvestigates rhetorical practices, it will also reinvestigate the learning of style for a "rhetorical purpose." Weiser suggests that for style to inhabit a sizable niche in composition studies, it should be linked with rhetoric, if not renamed as rhetoric. Essentially, Weiser supports the same premise as Milic did in 1965—for style to

remain viable as a teaching tool, and therefore as a subject of research with composition studies, it must be approached dualistically. More specifically, when style is defined as the choices one makes in a rhetorical situation, style then becomes identifiable and thus both teachable and applicable.

Weiser is not the only author connecting style to other dualistic guises like rhetoric. Interestingly, and differently from several authors who have commented on the disappearance of style from composition studies, Paul Butler contends that perhaps style has not disappeared at all, but is, instead, exists under different appearances. In his 2007 article "Style in the Diaspora of Composition Studies," he indicates some of the diverse places where style can be found, naming genre theory, rhetorical analysis, and personal writing as masks of style. Like Weiser, Butler asserts that rhetoric, particularly rhetorical analysis, is synonymous with style. In arguing for the validity of teaching rhetoric as style, Butler reaffirms arguments that researchers like Weathers and Walpole put forth in the 70s and 80s by claiming that rhetorical analysis is another form of studying style, as style has always been concerned with the idea of *choice*. The two other categories Butler names as style under disguise are genre theory and personal writing. He explains that genre theory is inherently a study of style, whereby the genre is discovered or detailed through stylistic analysis. Butler's third category of personal writing seems to elucidate his point about genre theory—as the field of writing becomes more interested in autobiography, personal narrative, and memoir, it also has to become more conscious of the stylistic choices that define that genre. Ron Fortune's epigraph above, although written at the so-called demise of style, may apply to the current trend in composition studies. Recent research in the composition field suggests a renewed interest in the research and teaching of style. Noticeably absent from current research on style, however, is the study of how theory of style intersects with

classroom teaching of style. To put it another way, bridging theory of style with praxis of style seems to be a step that researchers have neglected as in resuscitating style as viable field of inquiry. Noticing what happens in the classroom in connection with what occurs between the pages of premier composition journals is of utmost importance if we are to move the study of style forward. Furthermore, the literature indicates that style retains its integrity as both a pedagogy and field of inquiry when it is defined and taught dualistically. Style may once again become a forgotten field if research continues to either bemoan its disappearance or wallow in monistic abstractions. Incidentally, before we can begin to provide harmony between the practice and theory of style, we have to begin by observing how teachers are actually teaching style in their classrooms. How do first-year composition teachers describe, teach, and assess style in their class.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

To better understand how teachers of first-year composition define, teach, and assess style in their classrooms, I asked first-year writing instructors to complete a survey about how they use style in their classroom.

Participants

The sampling population consisted of first-year composition instructors at Oklahoma State University and included assistant professors, visiting professors, lecturers, and teaching assistants. The participants were not required to be teaching a first-year writing course while answering the survey, but they were required to have taught a first-year writing course within the last two years. The participants were not required to have extensive teaching experience, as this study seeks to understand how first-year writing instructors with varying levels of experience use style in their classroom.

The instructors who completed the survey were asked the following demographic information: name (which was removed after coding), age, job title, number of years teaching first-year composition, and disciplinary area. Figure 1 below indicates the demographic information of the participants in this survey. A total of 17 instructors completed the survey and each instructor was coded with a letter of the alphabet to protect their identity. Under the Job Title heading, TA stands for Graduate Teaching Assistant, Lit

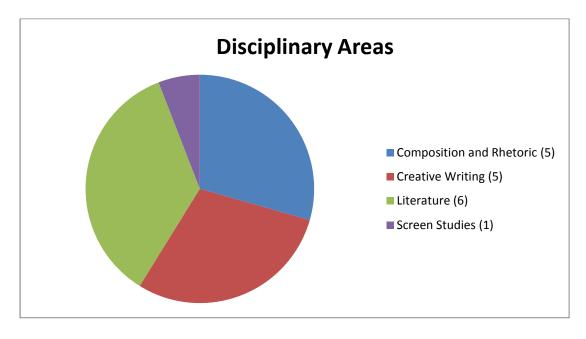for Literature, C & R for Composition and Rhetoric, CW for Creative Writing, and SS for Screen Studies.

As shown in Figure 1below, the age of participants ranged from 28-52, with the majority of participants falling between ages 28-35. Almost all the participants were graduate teaching assistants save for the two visiting professors and one assistant professor. Over half the participants in this study have taught first-year writing between 4-6 years, while several others have taught for as little as a semester to over a decade.

Figure 1: Demographic Information of Participants

Instructor	Age	Job Title	Years Teaching 1st Year Composition	Disciplinary Area
Instructor A	32	TA	5	C & R
Instructor B	39	VAP	15	CW
Instructor C	28	TA	4.5	CW
Instructor D	29	TA	1.5	C & R
Instructor E	29	TA	4	Lit
Instructor F	28	TA	4	CW
Instructor G	38	TA	4	Lit
Instructor H	—	AP	18	C & R
Instructor J	49	TA	14	C & R
Instructor K	28	TA	6	C & R
Instructor L	52	VAP	5	CW
Instructor M	28	TA	6	Lit
Instructor N	40	TA	4	Lit
Instructor P	48	TA	10	SS
Instructor Q	35	TA	1	Lit
Instructor R	30	TA	2	CW
Instructor S	—	TA	1	Lit

The participants in this study claim a wide-range of disciplinary backgrounds. That data is further highlighted in Figure 1a below. In general, there was an equal mix of participants from composition/rhetoric, creative writing, and literature backgrounds. Only

one participant had a screen studies background. The demographic information will prove more interesting in light of the participants' responses to the actual survey questions.

Table 1a: Instructors' Disciplinary Areas

Procedure

The surveys were solicited via email, where all composition instructors at Oklahoma State University were invited to participate. The Oklahoma State Department of English has a departmental listserv, and instructors were asked to complete a survey (see Appendix A) regarding their use of style through a message sent on this listserv. If they agreed to complete the survey, they were then asked to sign an informed consent form. Once instructors signed the consent form, they were sent the survey as an email attachment. In the email containing the attached survey, they were asked to send the completed survey as an attachment in a reply email. After the surveys were received, they were coded to remove the identity of the instructor.

Materials

First-year writing instructors were asked to complete a survey about style because theorists cannot begin to advise a pedagogy of style without understanding writing instructors' current conception, vocabulary, practice, and assessment of style in the composition classroom. The overall goal of the survey was to give instructors enough guidance to complete the survey having said something about their pedagogical view of style, while simultaneously providing them with an opportunity to express their individual position on style, especially if that position was not provided in the terminology of the survey. The survey was aimed at discovering how instructors regard, teach, and evaluate style in their classrooms. In understanding the connection between current classroom practice of style and field-specific theories of style, and the gaps that may or may not exist between the two, we can begin to develop a pedagogy of style that is both theoretical and applicable, instead of one or the other. Moreover, that very same pedagogy, because it marries theory with praxis, places style theory in an environment ripe for future innovation and development.

The style questions were of two types: one type asked the instructor to highlight style terms from a table and the second type asked instructors to discuss what they highlighted in more depth. For example, Question 1a asks instructors "What word(s) do you use for the term "style?" and they are asked to highlight all that apply from a table. Question 1b then, asks instructors, "Of the terms you circled above, which word do you use most frequently in the classroom? What definition do you provide of that term?" as an attempt to clarify how instructors conceive of and define style. Because style equals something different for almost every instructor, the questions were designed to determine where instructors agreed on terms and components of style, as well as how they singularly conceive of these same terms and concepts. Thus quantifiable questions were often paired with qualitative questions.

Questions 1a-4 addressed how instructors define and regard style. Question (1a) asked instructors to highlight terms that they use for style. Several common terms for style were included in a table and instructors were asked to highlight the terms they use in the classroom. The majority of these terms were collected from Joseph William's *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, 10th Edition, and Edward P. J. Corbett and Robert Connors' *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student,* 4th Edition. The terms taken from these sources includes: *voice, rhetoric, style, imitation, choice, tone, flow.* The other terms—craft, play, and grammar—are terms commonly linked with style in style manuals and creative writing textbooks (see Tufte grammar) and were included to provide instructors with more options. In this same table, instructors were provided with an "other" option to give them an opportunity to list terms they use that were not included in the table. Question (1b) asked instructors to explain which term they use most frequently in the classroom. This question is meant to determine which term the instructor most often links with style and which term students are hearing most often in the classroom. Questions (1a) and (1b) were designed to address how instructors define style.

Question (2a) asked instructors about the key components of a good writing style. Once again, several terms were included in a table and the instructors were asked to highlight characteristics of "good" writing style. The terms *clarity, grace, concision, cohesion, flow, coherence,* and *active verb choice* were taken from William's *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, 10th Edition. The term *voice* was taken from Peter Elbow's *Writing with Power.* The terms *metaphor, transitions,* and *persuasiveness* were taken from Corbett and Connors' *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student,* 4th Edition. *Correctness* is the only term not taken directly from a source, but theorists have debated whether a good writing style must be grammatically correct or not (see Tufte), which is why the term is in the table. Like the table for Question (1a), the table

for question (2a) provided instructors with an "other" option to allow instructors to describe alternate components of a good writing style, or components that may not have been listed in the table. Question (2b) asked instructors to rank the terms they highlighted in question (2a) in order of importance, with (1.) being the most important. Question (2b) was designed to understand what components instructors consider to be most important features of a good writing style. Questions (2a) and (2b) were designed to understand instructors' conception of style as it is exhibited in writing.

Question (3a) asked instructors what method they use to teach style, and like questions (1a) and (2a), instructors were asked to highlight terms from a table. These terms were drawn from a variety of sources that offer pedagogical suggestions for teaching style. The term *exercises* was taken from William's *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace.* Often, at the end of each style chapter, Williams asks the reader to perform exercises to test their understanding of the chapter; instructors often ask the same of their students when they teach style. The terms *imitation, readings,* and *examples* were taken from Corbett and Connors' *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student.* The term *grammar lessons* is the only term that does not come directly from a source, but is considered a traditional method of teaching style in elementary, secondary, and in the post-secondary classrooms. The term *sentence-combining* was taken from Francis Christensen's article "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence." He thought that students would exhibit more variety in their writing style if they understood how to build sentences through a process of addition and modification, a principle that many instructors still hold today. The last term, *genre analysis* was taken from Paul Butler's article "Style in the Diaspora of Composition Studies." In this article he argues that style has not disappeared from the first-year writing classroom, but it exists under different guises, with genre analysis being one of those guises. Thus this term was included to see if

instructors also consider genre analysis a viable method of teaching style. Like the table in

questions (1a) and (2a), the table in question (3a) also provided instructors with an "other"

option. Question (3b) asked instructors to explain the terms they highlighted in question

(3a). In this question, instructors were also asked to provide any examples or assignment

sheets that might exemplify their teaching methodology. They were told to attach those

examples to the same email in which they sent the completed survey.

Question (4), an open-ended question, asked instructors if a particular theory or

school of thought informs their teaching of style. This question was designed to understand

how instructors' practices may or may not intersect with past and present theory about style.

Question (5), also an open-ended question, asked instructors how they assess student

understanding and retention of style. Question (6) asked instructors if they provide a

progress report to their students, and this question was a yes/no question. Questions (5) and

(6) were designed to understand how instructors assess student apprehension and retention

of style. The final question (7) asked instructors if they would allow their students to

complete a questionnaire about style. Originally, this study planned to include student

perception of style and the investigator planned to compare student perception with

instructor perception. The student questionnaires were never administered, making Question

(7) then irrelevant for this study.

Analysis

The data collected from the surveys was analyzed in two ways. For questions 1a, 2a,

and 3a, the instructors' responses were tallied to determine the most frequently occurring

term(s). For some of the open-ended questions, questions 1b, 2b, 3b, and 4, instructors'

responses were analyzed thematically. As Richard Boyatzis remarks, "thematic analysis is a

process for encoding qualitative information," and the code can either be a list of themes or

complex model with themes, indicators, and qualifications that are all causally related. Too, a thematic code can be a combination of the two (vii). Boyatzis defines a theme as "a pattern found in the information that at minimum describes and organizes possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (vii), and, for this data, one pattern that seems to occur continually throughout the data is instructors dualistic position toward style. Thus, one of the thematic codes informing this analysis is Louis Milic's dualistic and monistic theories of style. In other words, instructors' responses were analyzed for their treatment of style as either dualistic or monistic in nature.

In addition, instructors' responses to the qualitative questions were analyzed with another thematic code, one that considers how instructor's current philosophy and practice of style intersects with the scholarship on style, both past and present. Thus, while one code is the binary opposition of dualism vs. monism, the other code further refines the dualism/monism categories. To put it another way, if an instructor has a dualistic perspective toward style, how does that dualism manifest itself? Do they define style as rhetoric? Or, do they teach style as tone or academic discourse? In the teaching of style, do they use imitation or sentence-combining techniques, or something different altogether? These questions were attended to by first determining whether the instructor considers style monistically or dualistically, and second describing how their philosophical position manifests itself in both their conceptually and the classroom.

Question (5) was analyzed in two ways: first, the instructors responses were thematically analyzed using an inductive thematic code. As Boyatzis explains, "themes may be initially generated inductively from the raw information or generated deductively from theory and prior research" (vii), thus the code for this data is the methods by which instructors assess style: essays, exercises, class discussion, and no formal assessment. Then,

their responses to Question (5) were analyzed thematically for dualistic or monistic underpinnings. Finally, Question (6), which asked instructors "Do you provide a progress report of any sort that indicates a student's progress in writing 'style'?" was tallied according to instructor's response of either yes or no.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Question 1a asked instructors to highlight words from a table that they use for the

term "style." The terms in the table included the following: voice, rhetoric, style, imitation,

craft, choice, grammar, tone, flow, play, and other. Instructors were encouraged to highlight

all terms that apply. Figure 2 below displays the terms from most frequently to least

frequently occurring.

Table 2: Terms Instructors Use for *Style*

Term	Frequency
Style	16
Voice	15
Tone	13
Choice	11
Rhetoric	6
Grammar	6
Flow	4
Craft	3
Other	3
Imitation	2
Play	0
Total	79

Figure 2 indicates that of the 17 instructors who participated in the survey, all

instructors except one use the word *style* for the term "style." Often, however, it seems these

same instructors use the word *voice* in conjunction with the word *style* in their classrooms, with 15 of the 17 instructors highlighting *voice*. Other frequently occurring terms for these instructors are *tone* and *choice*. In addition, one third of instructors agree that *rhetoric* and *grammar* are equivalent to the word "style." The other words *flow*, *craft*, *imitation*, *play*, as well as the terms offered in the "other" category, are more obscure, less popular correspondents to "style." In regards to the other category, instructors offered the following alternative terms for "style": *personality/humor*, *context appropriate*, and *command*. These findings illustrate that while "style" has been equated with terms meant to carry a singular definition of what "style" is, the term *style*, at least for this sampling population, carries the most inclusive definition of style. The sheer popularity of the word *style* as the instructors' choice (almost 95%) for the term they use most often for "style" implies that particular term embodies their understanding of style. However, their choosing of the term *style* may have been influenced by the use of "style" in the question.

Perhaps more interesting than the frequency with which instructors chose the word *style* is the frequency with which they chose *voice* for the term "style." Before the expressivist and process movements, such a term would have never been equated with the term style. Furthermore, with the rise and establishment of those paradigms, the word *voice* was directly linked to those movements and those movements alone throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s. Now, it appears, *voice* has become so mainstream that the instructors chose it almost as often as they chose *style* for the term "style." In other words, the word *voice* for these instructors is a large part of their definition of style, but how that monistic definition manifests itself in classroom is another matter altogether.

In Question 1b, instructors were asked to identify which word, of the terms they circled in Question 1a, they use most frequently in the classroom. In addition, they were

asked for the definition they provide for that term. Figure 3 represents the word instructors used most when discussing style in the classroom.

Table 3: Term Used Most Frequently in the Classroom

Term	Frequency
Tone	5
Style	4
Voice	3
Choice	3
Rhetoric	2
Craft, Grammar, Flow, Imitation, Play, and Other	0
Total	17

Most noticeable in Figure 3 is that instructors use the word *tone* often when they discuss style in their classrooms, even more than the use the word *style*. Not surprisingly, instructors use the word *style* frequently in the classroom. About 16% use either *voice* or *choice* most frequently in the classroom. These results indicate that the word *tone*, at least for these instructors, best conveys their definition and understanding of style to their students. One could also presume that the word *style* is another word that encapsulates these instructors view of style, based on the number of instructors who chose this word. However, such a presumption would be hasty or at least uninformed in light of the definitions provided by these instructors for the word *style*.

The second portion of question (1b) asked instructors to define the word they use most frequently in the classroom, and this portion of the question was designed to encourage instructors to be specific about their perception of the word they use the most often. Because many of the words for style, the word *style* included, are somewhat vague or as Robert Connors would say, are "static abstractions," this portion of the question was

meant to elicit more concrete renderings of "style," at least in terms of conception and classroom practice. When defining the words *rhetoric*, *choice*, and *voice* in this survey, most instructors have similar definitions for these words. However, the instructors who use the words *tone* and *style*, indicated in Figure 3 above as the most frequently occurring terms, also have the most varying definitions of those words. For example, Instructor A chose the word *tone* and defined it as "the choices made by an author to give a particular impression," whereas Instructor G who also chose tone defined it as "choosing words in such a way that, used appropriately, will best convince your audience of your argument." Still further, Instructor E defines *tone* as "the overall persona of your paper; its directedness at a specific audience" while Instructor S defines *tone* as "formal vs. informal." It would appear, then, that the word *tone* by itself does not mean the same thing for everyone and instead, the definition has become married to other ideas—that is choice and impression for Instructor A, rhetoric for Instructor G, persona and rhetoric for Instructor E, and academic conventions for Instructor S. Indeed, these instructors' definition for *tone* includes notions of rhetoric and audience, instead of simply the persona or representation of self in the style one uses.

More than the word *tone,* instructors seem to have a variety of ways that they define the word *style*. The word alone is not a sufficient enough definition; in other words, by itself it does not carry the full meaning of these instructors understanding of style. In fact, while one instructor did not provide a definition of the word *tone*, likely assuming that the word itself carried a sufficient, not one instructor used the word *style* without providing an extensive definition. What is more interesting is that these same instructors often define *style* using other words that were provided in the table, including the words *rhetoric*, *voice*, *imitation*, as well as the combined phrase *rhetorical choice*. However, instead of using these words, they use the word *style* and then define it as rhetoric, voice, imitation, rhetorical choice, or for

Instructor N, as "writing with an eye for what the reader will find most compelling." Instructor F, who states "I use style, voice, tone, and word choice most often," also explains that "when teaching rhetorical analysis, I do tend to highlight the rhetoric of stylistic choices." Again, for this instructor and several others who use the word *style* most frequently in their classrooms, *style* is often linked to *rhetoric*, and if it is not, then it is linked to other terms like *voice* and *imitation*.

Overwhelmingly, their responses indicate their definition of style is a dualistic one. For instance, Instructor B uses the term *style* the most of often, and "usually framed in terms of rhetorical choice" and similarly, Instructor F remarks "I do tend to highlight the rhetoric of stylistic choices." Instructor J correlates style with imitation, and remarks "I do not expect them to imitate another's style; I expect them to use the rhetorical devices of that style in their own writing." For most of these instructors, students make stylistic choices depending on their given rhetorical situation, be it attention to the genre in which they write or the audience to whom they write. More importantly, these instructors consider style a choice that students make, which implies that style is identifiable, teachable, and applicable, all of which illustrate that most of these instructors define style dualistically.

Superficially, there are several instructors who claim a monistic definition of style in their emphasis on voice, but in practice they are either dualistic in their approach or they combine a monistic approach with a dualistic one. In their statement, "I use 'voice' often, probably. I describe style or voice as a combination of other terms you indicate: "style" is the writer's choice of language, grammatical structure, tone, and rhetorical approach to the subject," Instructor L interchanges the words style and voice, and thus defines voice as *choice, grammar, tone,* and *rhetoric*. Philosophically, their position is dualistic, not monistic. Instructor K makes a similar claim in their statement, "a writer's voice can be defined by word choice,

grammar and structure, tone, and the general flow of words." Thus, although these instructors claim a monistic theory of style by emphasizing voice, in practice their approach is actually dualistic.

Question 2a asked instructors to indicate the key components of good writing style. Because the term "good" is rather vague, instructors were asked to highlight terms from a table to determine more specifically what they mean by "good." The terms included in the

Table 4: Key Components of Good Writing Style

Term	Frequency
Clarity	15
Coherence	14
Voice	13
Cohesion	11
Variety	11
Flow	10
Transitions	10
Active Verb Choice	9
Concision	8
Correctness	6
Persuasiveness	5
Grace	5
Other	2
Metaphors	1
Total	120

table are the following: *clarity*, *grace, concision, cohesion, correctness, flow, coherence, voice, active verb choice, variety, metaphors, transitions, persuasiveness,* and *other.* Figure 4 above indicates the terms the instructors chose most frequently. As Figure 4 shows, instructors most often agree that good writing style must be clear, as 15 of the 17 instructors highlighted *clarity* in the table. Coherence for these instructors is also an important element of a good writing style. Again, voice finds itself in the top three as instructors agree that it is key to a "good" writing style. Generally, many instructors also feel that a good writing style will be cohesive, have variety, exhibit flow, and include transitions. Less significant characteristics of good writing style are

its correctness, ability to persuade, grace, and inclusion of figurative language like metaphors. Two instructors suggested that writing consistency and appropriateness are other features of a good writing style not offered in the table for Question 2a.

To further determine the more important components of good writing style for these instructors, Question 2b asked instructors to rank the three most important terms they selected in Question 2a, with (1.) being the most important feature of a good writing style. Figure 5 reiterates what Figure 4 above displays; that is, clarity, for these instructors, is the most important element of a good writing style. More than a third of instructors marked

Table 5: Three Most Important Features of Good Writing Style

Term	1.	2.	3.	Total
Clarity	7	2	1	10
Voice	4	3	1	8
Coherence	3	2	2	7
Cohesion	1	2	2	5
Concision	0	0	4	4
Persuasiveness	1	3	0	4
Variety	0	0	3	3
Other	1	1	1	3
Flow	0	1	2	3
Active Verb Choice	0	2	0	2
Correctness	0	0	1	1
Grace	0	1	0	1
Metaphors, Transitions	0	0	0	0

clarity as the number one most important feature, and a total of ten instructors ranked clarity in their top three, thus signaling that overall writing must display clarity for instructors to judge the style as "good." When ranking these elements in order of importance, it seems that voice is more important than coherence, although in question 2a instructors highlighted coherence more often than they did voice. Eight instructors placed voice in their top three, and half of those instructors considered it the number one most important aspect of a good writing style. A total of seven instructors ranked coherence in their top three as an essential

element of good writing style, with three instructors ranking it as the most important element. Not one instructor ranked concision as the first or second most important feature of a good writing style, but four of them did rank it as the third most important aspect, the most votes any one term received for the third most important aspect. Therefore, even though four instructors did not rank it as first or second, they did agree that concision is an important part of a good writing style package.

Like Question 2a, instructors agree that persuasiveness, correctness, grace, and metaphors are less important features of a good writing style. Interestingly, although several instructors highlighted flow, variety, and transitions in Question 2a, very few of them considered them the three most important features of a good writing style. In fact, as Figure 5 above shows, not one instructor placed transitions in their top three, while ten of them highlighted transitions in Question 2a, as shown in Figure 4. Overall, these instructors concur that a good writing style should be clear and coherent as well as voice heavy. In Question 2a, most instructors highlighted these three features, and they most often ranked them as the three most important features of a good writing style. Perhaps most interesting is that a good writing style for these instructors does not include the adornment or flourish added to one's writing—they do not rank variety, grace, metaphors, and transitions as the three most important. Moreover, persuasiveness, correctness, and active verb choice, which are considered necessary elements of academic writing, are also less important than for a writer to be clear, make sense, and include an element of themselves in their writing.

Question 3a asked instructors what method they use when they teach "style" in their classroom. They were asked to highlight all that apply from the following options: *exercises, grammar lessons, imitation, genre analysis, sentence-combining, readings, examples,* and *other(s).* Figure 6 below illustrates that almost all the instructors except one, use readings to teach style. Many

instructors also use examples to teach style. Close to the same amount of instructors use

genre analysis to teach style. Eight instructors use sentence-combining, while fewer use

exercises and grammar lessons to teach style to their students. Other methods that

instructors use are lectures and discussions of style, as well as analysis of rhetorical strategies

and devices, but they largely use readings and examples to identify and discuss style with

their students. These numbers make more sense in light of Question 3b.

Table 6: Methods Instructors Use to Teach Style

Method	Frequency
Readings	16
Examples	14
Genre Analysis	9
Sentence-Combining	8
Exercises	7
Grammar Lessons	7
Imitation	5
Other	4
Total	70

Instructors were asked to explain their methods in more detail in Question 3b. Overall, the

instructors use a combination of methods to teach style, or as Instructor F remarks, "I do a

little bit of everything." Based on the description of readings and examples these instructors

provide, they consider them to be one in the same, which explains why they are so close in

popularity in Figure 6 above. Instructors who use readings or examples typically discuss an

author's writing style during class—they are often vehicle for genre analysis or imitation.

Although the instructors differ in their definition of style, many use readings for the very

same purpose: as a tool that illustrates style, or a style, that the student can imitate. Instructor

C, for example, presents stylistic analysis as "sentence-level rhetorical analysis" which "leads

to a lot of in-class analysis of exemplary readings and imitation of their stylistic methods."

Like Instructor C, Instructor F also asks students to analyze an author's style in an assigned

reading and then asks them to imitate or practice the style demonstrated in the reading. Instructor J uses readings "to help students learn how writers increase the clarity, coherence, and correctness of their essays"—in this instance, style is associated with correctness and readings become the model students follow to correctly participate in their genre. Too, Instructor S uses readings to discuss an author's choices as attention to the genre in which they write. More succinctly, Instructor P remarks "I assign readings in different styles and then when we discuss the article, part of that discussion is over the author's style." Altogether, these instructors use readings as exemplary tools that students study and/or imitate to ensure they correctly participate in their given genre or rhetorical situation. No question, these instructors rely on a dualistic approach to style in the methodology they use to teach style.

Aside from using readings and examples to teach style through genre analysis and/or imitation, many of the instructors rely on sentence-based pedagogies to teach style. Instructor G makes their students rewrite any ten sentences of their choice, changing the verb, noun (or noun phrase) and/or adjectives (or adjectival phrase) in each. Instructor C specifically presents stylistic analysis as "sentence-level rhetorical analysis" while Instructor A uses grammar lessons to illustrate sentence variety. Instructor J claims sentence-combining as their primary method for teaching style, but like Instructor C, Instructor J uses sentence-level work to teach students sentence variety. In the same vein, Instructor M also argues for a sentence-based pedagogy in their response to Question 3b:

> I hope that by understanding all the elements of building a sentence, students will better command not only simple and compound but also complex-compound structures thus giving them a wider range of expression so that complexity and

subtlety of their words can match and keep pace with the complexity and subtlety of

their thought.

Style, then, is not simply a unique voice rising up from the common diction—it can be an

original voice, but students can achieve that originality by exploring sentence-level writing

techniques and options. Once more, instructors' responses indicate their bias toward

dualism, or a form-based approach to teaching style. Overall, instructors teach style through

form-based pedagogies (genre analysis, sentence-combining, imitation, exercises) in an effort

to show students their available writing options; in other words, these instructors desire that

students' add to their stylistic repertoire so they can produce effective prose in any given

rhetorical situation.

Question (4) inquired whether a particular school of thought or theoretical position

informed the instructor's teaching of "style." If they are influenced by a theory, they were

then asked to explain that theory. Instead of indicating "yes," instructors responded in the

affirmative by describing the theory or position that informs their style pedagogy—as Figure

7 below shows, at least half of the instructors explain that their pedagogy stems from theory,

either scholarly or experiential. A third of the instructors clearly claim that they do not teach

style based on a theory

Table 7: Does Theory Inform Instructor's Style Pedagogy?

Response	Number of Instructors
Yes	9
No	5
Unsure	3
Total	17

or position—at least, to their knowledge. Finally, three instructors report that they are not sure whether theory informs their pedagogy or not.

More interesting than the numbers represented in Figure7 are the explanations the instructors offered in their responses. Those instructors who answered "yes" or offered an explanation of style named influences that range from George Carlin to Richard Lanham to James Berlin to Aristotle. Several instructors did not list specific individuals and instead refer to concepts like *clarity, voice, audience analysis, choice,* and *academic discourse* as influences. Instructor N cites a number of these concepts as influences in their response:

> Writers should focus on their audience when constructing their essays. If they focus on their audience, students can avoid many of the problems that surface in student writing. Above all, I do not want students to bore their audience with flat prose, or to undermine their credibility with basic clarity problems.

This instructor identifies style as attention to audience via lively and clear prose. Instructor D goes as far to say they "believe in clarity first and foremost" because many of their students are expected to produce scientific writing. These instructors may not name a specific theory or style, but they are clearly influenced by academic standards, those that require student writers to attend to their audience and rhetorical situation in as clear a manner as possible. Because these instructors attach style to academic standards, they view style dualistically. Style is not the natural voice of the writer that develops organically through extensive writing; instead, the writer chooses a style befitting a rhetorical context—in a sense, they choose from available voices.

Other instructors claim *voice* as their primary pedagogical influence. Instructor B cites a background in creative writing background as the primary influence on their writing pedagogy, and in particular, their emphasis on style and voice. Indeed, this instructor claims

to use the term *voice* more than anything, with *choice* being a close second. They want their student to know they have choices because then they will "be more cognizant of all the aspects of effective writing and that is there is not only one way to write effectively." While this instructor may purport to emphasize voice and choice, the end goal of that emphasis—to write more effectively—reveals the instructor's approach to style, at least in practice, is dualistic. Indeed, this same instructor explains in Question 3b that their job is to help students "discover their voice and to use it in a variety of rhetorical situations." In this instance, voice is not enough; it must be paired with attention to rhetorical situation.

Instructor B's style pedagogy is a dualism/monism hybrid, but they are not alone in pairing dualistic and monistic approaches to style. Instructor M, who names both George Orwell and George Carlin as pedagogical influences, tells their students "I want to hear a human being speaking to me, not a machine," further explaining that style is not "murky pseudo-scientific language and overly-Latinate constructions and usage largely equals lies or bullshit (beg your pardon)." Like Instructor B, this instructor tries to marry the nebulous concept of sounding like a human being or voice, with the more concrete concept of clarity, which students achieve, states Instructor M, by using "more active voice and simpler, 'stronger' words." More importantly, both Instructor B and M pair a monistic emphasis on voice with a dualistic emphasis on form, at least one that instructors can teach and students can then apply.

Altogether, every instructor, save the four instructors who simply answered "no" without any explanation, conceives of style from a dualistic perspective. More interesting, perhaps, than those who explained a theoretical influence, are those instructors who answered "no" but then offered explanation of their position, which, is dualistic in nature. As an example, consider Instructor A's response: "No, style is something that I tie with

context (as most everything in my class is!). I teach students to recognize the fact that different situations will call for a different style of communication." Although this instructor responds to Question (4) with no, their explanation indicates that they are indeed influenced by dualism, or the notion that words can don a number of outfits befitting the rhetorical occasion. Instructor K remarks that they do not have a particular theory that they could name, but they "believe that students learn by doing rather than just having something explained to them or looking at an example. I always have my students produce the concept we're working on." Like Instructor A, Instructor K views style as a concept that can be taught and as something to be added to a student's writing. This instructor may be unsure about their theoretical position, but they are clearly influenced by Milic's dualistic theory of style. Dualism pervades these instructors' responses, even those who answered this question with "no," their pedagogy is not informed by a theory.

Question 5 asked instructors how they assess student understanding and retention of style and, as Figure 8 below indicates, most instructors use class essays to determine how well students retain and apply style to their writing. The total number of occurrences is 20

Table 8: Instructor's Assessment of Students' Style Progress

Method of Assessment	Number of Occurrences
Essays (Drafts)	10
Exercises	5
No Formal Assessment	3
Class Discussions	1
Total	19

instead of 17 (there were only 17 instructors) because several instructors indicated that they use a combination of both essays and exercises, or exercises and class discussions. Aside from essays, instructors assess students' style progress most often through in-class exercises. Three instructors indicate, "I do not really have a formal way I assess it" (Instructor A).

Somewhat surprisingly, one instructor responded that they use student contribution to class discussions as a way of assessing style.

Generally, many instructors responded to Question (5) like Instructor E who comments "through their finished product—their final drafts" and like Instructor D who remarks "I usually look for proper usage of style (discussed in class) in main essay drafts;" these instructors use the final essay or finished product to assess how well students retain and apply style. They associate style with proper usage and the polished composition, which clearly demonstrates that dualism informs their pedagogy. Moreover, despite the paradigm shifts that have denigrated "product" focused pedagogies, they are obviously still popular with a majority of these instructors. Likewise, many of the exercises that instructors use recall the pedagogies from the late 1960s. Instructor J's response, for instance, echoes Christensen and Corbett in philosophy:

> They must demonstrate an understanding of mimesis or imitation in the texts of other writers. They must be able to analyze and explain the strategies and devices used in the texts of others and in their own texts. Students will also take a rhetorical examination after studying style. On this examination, they do sentence combining or the following patterns: IC. CC IC. DC, IC. DC, IC, CC IC. IC DC, CC, DC, IC. They are also asked to define particular rhetorical devices such as epistrophe, anaphora, chiasmus, etcetera, to label the parts of discourse of a text, and to explain the devices or strategies at work in a particular text.

Again, in their definition, methodology, and here in their assessment of style, instructors approach style from a dualistic perspective, likely because it allows style to remain teachable. Question 6 asked instructors if they provided a progress report that indicates their students' progress in writing "style." Of the 17 instructors who responded, 15 answered no, they do not provide a progress report. In the previous question, over half of the instructors indicate that they use student drafts to assess student style progress, which would explain the high number of instructors who answered "no," they do not provide a style progress report for their students.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In the 1960s through the early 1980s, researchers were interested in demystifying the teaching of style for both students and teachers, and to achieve that end, they relied on rhetorically dualistic approaches to style. Compositionists' interest in style diminished with the inception of the social constructionist movement, and, if the subject has seen any scholarly interest, it is in form-based, dualistic approaches to style.

Limitations

The larger limitations of this study reside in the methodology employed. The sample population consisted of only 17 individuals—to gain a more complete understanding of style in the current classroom, more investigation needs to be done regarding instructors' classroom discussion and implementation of style. In addition, researchers could investigate instructors classroom practices to a more completely than this study did. This study's only connection to the instructors is through the surveys that instructors submitted regarding their stylistic practices. For future research, scholars should observe instructor practices when they teach style and investigate the students' perspective regarding style. Such triangulation would provide a researcher with a more complete understanding of how instructors teach style and how students perceive that instruction. Besides methodological limitations, this study was also limited in the survey that was used. This study acts as a pilot

of sorts in that it illustrates how the survey could have provided instructors with more opportunities to express themselves concerning how they conceive of and teach style. Not to mention, many of the instructors' responses could have been influenced by the survey itself, as they may have drawn from the terms and ideas in the survey more than they did from their personal pedagogical practices. Again, triangulation methods would allow researchers to discern instructors' bias in answering the survey, and they would allow researchers to generalize how instructors approach style in the classroom.

Implications of Study

It appears that instructors also connect style with dualism—they separate form from meaning in the name of providing students with tangible, identifiable style markers and methods. They make this connection apparent in how they define and teach style. Some instructors "discuss style as an element of rhetoric" or define it as the "the overall persona of your paper; its directedness at a specific audience," while others define it as the "choices that writers make" or the "the rhetoric of stylistic choices." They clearly define style dualistically, or as prose adornment warranting the rhetorical situation or intent. They emphasize to their students that stylistic choices are rhetorical choices that create a particular effect for a particular audience. For instance, Instructor G defines style as *tone*, or "choosing words in such a way that, used appropriately, will best convince your audience of your argument." Thus teachers continue to consider style dualistically, regardless of the paradigm shifts the field of composition has experienced in the last fifty years. They rely on dualistic definitions of style because then style is identifiable for both teachers and students. When teachers and students can identify, label, and mimic a particular style, they then have a shared language by which to discuss style. Likewise, in being able to discuss and apply a style to their writing,

51

students can improve on their style and develop different stylistic techniques—they are less able to hone their stylistic abilities if they cannot first identify aspects of style that need improving, or that can be improved for that matter. Thus, teachers define style dualistically because it offers students a place of beginning, as well as a space of developing.

Some instructors' definitions of style seek to combine dualistic and monistic approaches, but such combination pedagogies are monistic in philosophy and name only. An instructor may use *voice* more often than most terms associated with style, and they may emphasize student voice in their methodology, but when they actually describe style, they link any monistic leanings with dualism. They view style as additive and emphasize the form the writing should assume. Instructor L, for instance, claims to use *voice* most often, but they actually describe style as a combination of "writer's choice of language, grammatical structure, tone, and rhetorical approach to language." Too, Instructor K defines style as voice, and they further claim that "a writer's voice can be defined by word choice, grammar and structure, tone, and the general flow of words." These instructors share a common dualistic definition of style, despite the monistic tag often attached to the term *voice*. Voice may be associated with uniqueness and originality, but for these instructors, that originality can be identified and analyzed, and thus imitated.

More than their definitions, instructors indicate their propensity for dualism in their style methodologies. Surprisingly, a number of instructors rely on methods like imitation and sentence-combining, which were popular in the 60s—interesting that a method vilified by the latter process, expressivist and social constructivist movements has maintained staying power in the classroom. Sentence-based pedagogies and imitation pedagogies force students to analyze their prose, as well as envision it in new ways. More importantly, instructors who rely on these form-based methodologies provide students with visible, classifiable stylistic

option. As in their definitions, these instructors' methodologies consider style dualistic; these instructors' responses continue to support Milic's notion that a monistic perspective of style does not allow for a pedagogy of style. As Milic remarks, monism narrows instructors options because,

> style is the expression of the student's mind and personality, there is not much more to do. We can exhort him to eschew mannerism and to write naturally, to express himself fully and to be as grammatical as possible while doing it. But, what if the student's personality, fully expressed, leads to contortion, gibberish, or paranoia? (69)

Instructors do not have to address Milic's last point if they continue view style as dualistic, and, more importantly, they provide students (and themselves) with perceivable concepts that can be taught and implemented right there in the classroom.

Besides imitation and sentence-combining, instructors use genre analysis or in-class exercises to teach style, both of which are dualistic style pedagogies. In relying on genre analysis methods, many instructors support Butler's claim that style does don the guise of genre analysis in modern composition classrooms. Often though, instructors combine genre analysis with imitation, as Instructor K remarks: "I normally bring in examples of different genres, have the students read them…, and we talk about the elements of those genres. Then I have students imitate one or more genres to practice different style and voice." Instructors who teach style using genre analysis, consider style rhetorically and they show their students different genres to highlight a rhetorical basis of stylistic choices. Instructors also indicate they use readings in class to teach style, but they use these readings either in the form of genre analysis, or they ask students to imitate the style in the reading. Either way, in using examples and asking students to either analyze them or imitate them (or both), instructors demonstrate that style can be taught by a number of individuals to a number of individuals when it is approached dualistically. Indeed, in his 1998 book *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy*, Robert Connors remarks that teachers find it difficult to teach style if

they consider style monistic, namely because monists consider style to be intrinsic to the writer, which makes style nigh on un-teachable.

Clearly, style as dualism pervades these instructors' pedagogy, be it in their definition, methodology, or assessment of style. The sample population for this study, however, does not allow for over-arching generalizations regarding composition instructors' perspective of style. To discover those generalizations, researchers need to investigate the actual practice of style in composition classrooms. If style is to remain a viable research area, and if it is to remain important to current composition instructors, it must be connected with actual practice in the classroom. For too long, style has been considered theoretically instead of practically, creating a gap between what scholars say about style and what teachers do about style. This gap is only widened by the fact that graduate students teach composition, and these students are often not steeped in the field of composition, let alone aware of past and present discussions of style. A bridge should exist between these two groups, one that both practitioners and theorists traverse.

Theoretical Impications

For theorists, more current discussions of style should be paired with actual classroom practice. Theorists should work to answer the question: how do their ideas and suggestions compare with current classroom practice? The field of composition is built upon the teaching of writing, but when scholars relegate style to theory, or at least discuss style without considering the current classroom, their ideas become finite. To apply theory is to sustain the livelihood of that idea, and to give it new life as it will organically develop in the hands of different teachers and different students. Scholars have to be willing to co-construct the bridge that would deliver these ideas to instructors. They are partly responsible

for structuring their points regarding style in terms of the current first-year writing classroom, but only partly. Teachers of first-year writing must be willing to bridge the gap as well. More than raising their consciousness regarding style, composition teachers need specific training in the teaching of style. This training would be best suited for a composition pedagogy course; that way, writing teachers at a given university will share the same background and training to teach style. Thus, bridging the gap will create more continuity between scholars and teachers, as well as continuity among teachers of composition.

When instructors train in the subject of style, one point should be made clear to them: style, if it is to remain teachable, must be primarily dualistic. As both the literature and this study indicate, when scholars and instructors consider style dualistic, they have before them concepts and techniques that are discernable and therefore teachable. However, monistic discussions and approaches to style should not be discarded either. Really, the more progressive style pedagogy will be a combination of dualism and monism. Elizabeth Rankin argues that monistic theories, those that regard "both the self (the individual personality) and meaning as relativistic constructs," can be combined with dualistic theories if these relativistic constructs exist within an interpretive community that regards them as tentatively determinant. When teachers combine dualism with monism they provide students with both tangible stylistic techniques as well as the space to employ those techniques originally—a more current style pedagogy will emphasize a student's voice, as well as the rhetoric of stylistic choices. Many of the instructors who responded to this survey indicate that they work from a hybrid pedagogy, namely because they understand the importance of helping a student discover their voice; however, when it comes to teaching style, they must rely on dualistic definitions and methodologies of style to provide students (and themselves) with more tangible concepts and skills.

WORKS CITED

Amare, Nicole. "Style: the New Grammar in Composition Studies?" Johnson and Pace 153-66.

Bartholomae, David. "Inventing the University." *When a Writer Can't Write: Studies in Writer's Block and Other Composing-Process Problems.* Ed. Mike Rose. New York: Guilford, 1985. 134-65.

Berlin, James A., and Robert P. Inkster. "Current-Traditional Rhetoric: Paradigm and Practice." *Freshman English News* 8 (1980): 1-4, 13-14.

Boyatzis, Richard. *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998.

Burnham, Christopher. "Expressive Pedagogy: Practice/Theory, Theory/Practice." Tate, Rupiper, and Schick 19-35.

Butler, Paul. "Toward a Pedagogy of Writing Immersion: Using Imitation in the Composition Classroom." *Journal of College Writing* 4 (2001): 107-13.

---. "Style in the Diaspora of Composition Studies." *Rhetoric Review* 26 (2007): 5-24.

---. *Style in Composition and Rhetoric: a Critical Sourcebook.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2010.

Christensen, Francis. "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence." *College Composition and*

    Communication 14 (1963): 155-61.

Connors, Robert J. "Style Theory and Static Abstractions." *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds,*

    Theory, and Pedagogy. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997. 257-95.

---. "The Erasure of the Sentence." *CCC* 52. 1(2000): 96-128.

Corbett, Edward P.J. "Approaches to the Study of Style." *Teaching Composition: 12*

    Bibliographical Essays. Ed. Gary Tate. 2nd ed. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian UP,

    1987. 83-130.

---. *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student.* 4th ed. New York: Oxford UP, 1990.

---. "Teaching Style." McQuade 23-33.

---. "The Theory and Practice of Imitation in Classical Rhetoric." *College Composition and*

    Communication 22 (1971): 243-50.

---. "Ventures in Style." *Reinventing the Rhetorical Tradition.* Ed. Aviva Freedman and Ian

    Pringle. Conway, AR: L&S Books, 1980. 79-87.

Crowley, Sharon. "The Current-Traditional Theory of Style: an Informal History." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 16 (1986): 233-50.

D'Angelo, Frank. "Imitation and Style." *College Composition and Communication* 24 (1973): 283-90.

DiYanni, Robert. "The Return of Eloquence: Richard Lanham and the Teaching of Writing." McQuade 324-29.

Duncan, Mike. "Whatever Happened to the Paragraph?" *College English* 69 (2007): 470-95.

Farmer, Frank M. and Phillip K. Arrington. "Apologies and Accommodations: Imitation and the Writing Processs." Butler, *Style in Composition and Rhetoric* 59-81.

Faigley, Lester. "Competing Theories of Process: a Critique and a Proposal." Graves, *Rhetoric and Composition* 38-53.

Fortune, Ron. "Style in Composition Research and Teaching." *Style* 23 (1989): 508-29.

Gage, John T. "Philosophies of Style and Their Implications for Composition." *College English* 41 (1980): 615-22.

Gorrell, Robert M. "Usage as Rhetoric." *College Composition and Communication* 28 (1977):***

Graves, Richard L. "A Primer for Teaching Style." *College Composition and Communication* 25

  (1974): 186-90.

---, ed. *Rhetoric and Composition: A Sourcebook for Teachers and Writers.* 3rd ed. Portsmouth, NH:

  Boynton/Cook, 1990.

Hairston, Maxine. "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the

  Teaching of Writing." Graves, *Rhetoric and Composition* 3-15.

Howard, Rebecca Moore, Heidi Beierle, Patricia Tallakson, Amy Rupiper Taggart, Dan

  Frederick, Mark Noe, Artist Thornton, Kurt Schick, and Melanie Peterson. "What

  are Styles and Why are We Saying Such Terrific Things About Them?" *Teaching*

  Writing: Landmarks and Horizons. Ed. Christina R. McDonald and Robert L.

  McDonald. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 2002. 214-27.

Johnson, Sabine Thorne. "Some Tentative Strictures on Generative Rhetoric." *College English*

  31 (1969): 155-65.

Johnson, T.R. *A Rhetoric of Pleasure: Prose Style and Today's Composition Classroom.* Portsmouth,

  NH: Boyton/Cook, 2003.

---. "Ancient and Contemporary Compositions That 'Come Alive': Clarity as Pleasure, Sound

  as Magic." *A Rhetoric of Pleasure: Prose Style and Today's Composition Classroom.* Ed. T.R.

  Johnson. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Boynton/Cook, 2003. 343-368.

Johnson, T.R. and Tom Pace. *Refiguring Prose Style: Possibilities for Writing Pedagogy.* Logan, UT:

    Utah State UP, 2005.

Kent, Thomas. *Post-Process Theory: Beyond the Writing-Process Paradigm.* Carbondale, IL: Southern

    Illinois UP, 1999. 1-6.

Lanham, Richard A. *Style: An Anti-Textbook.* New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1974.

---. *Analyzing Prose.* New York: Scribner's, 1983.

---. "Style/Substance Matrix." *Style in Rhetoric and Composition.* Ed. Paul Butler. Boston:

Bedford/St. Martins, 2010. 428-448.

Lu, Min-Zhan. "Professing Multiculturalism: The Politics of Style in the Contact Zone."

    College Composition and Communication 45 (1994): 442-58.

McQuade, Donald A., ed. *The Territory of Language: Linguistics, Stylistics, and the Teaching of*

    Composition. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1986.

Milic, Louis T. "Theories of Style and Their Implications for the Teaching of Composition."

    College Composition and Communication 16 (1965): 66-9, 126.

Myers, Sharon A. "Remembering the Sentence." *College Composition and Communication* 54

    (2003): 610-28.

Pace, Tom. "Style and the Renaissance of Composition Studies." Johnson and Pace 1-22.

Rankin, Elizabeth. "Revitalizing Style: Toward a New Theory and Pedagogy." *The Writing*

    Teacher's Sourcebook. Ed. Edward P.J. Corbett, Nancy Myers, and Gary Tate. 4th ed.

    New York: Oxford UP, 2000. 374-83.

Schor, Sandra. "Style Through Control: The Pleasures of the Beginning Writer." McQuade

    204-12.

Shopen, Tim. "Some Contributions from Grammar to the Theory of Style." *College English*

    35 (1974): 775-98.

Smagorinsky, Peter. *Research on Composition: Multiple Perspectives on Two Decades of Change.* New

    York: Teachers College Press, 2006. 78-107.

Tate, Gary, Amy Rupiper, and Kurt Schick, eds. *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies.* New York:

    Oxford UP, 2001.

Tinker, John. "Vagrant Sympathies: from Stylistic Analysis to a Pedagogy of Style." *Style* 37

    (2003); 86-100.

Tobin, Lad. "Process Pedagogy." Tate, Rupiper, and Schick 1-18.

Tufte, Virginia. *Grammar as Style*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1971.

Walpole, Jane. "Style as Option." *College Composition and Communication* 31 (1980): 205-12.

Weathers, Winston. "Grammars of Style: New Options in Composition." *Freshman English News* 4 (1976): 1-4, 12-18.

---. "Teaching Style: a Possible Anatomy." *College Composition and Communication* 21 (1970): 144-49.

Weiser, Elizabeth. "Where is Style Going? Where has it Been?" Johnson and Pace 23-41.

Young, Richard. "Paradigms and Problems: Needed Research in Rhetorical Invention." *Research and Composing*. Ed. Charles R. Cooper and Lee Odell. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978. 29-47.

APPPENDIX A

INSTRUCTOR SURVEY

Name: _____

Age: _____

Job Title: _____

Number of Years Teaching First-Year Composition: _____

Disciplinary Area: _____

1a) What word(s) do you use for the term "style?" Highlight all that apply.

VOICE	RHETORIC	STYLE	IMITATION	CRAFT
CHOICE	GRAMMAR	TONE	FLOW	PLAY

OTHER(S):

_____

1b)   Of the terms you circled above, which word do you use most frequently in the classroom? What definition do you provide of that term?

2a)   What are the key components of a good writing "style?" Highlight all that apply.

CLARITY	GRACE	CONCISION	COHESION	CORRECTNESS
FLOW	COHERENCE	VOICE	ACTIVE VERB CHOICE	VARIETY
METAPHORS	TRANSITIONS	PERSUASIVENESS		

OTHER(S): _____

2b)   Of the terms you circled in 2a, please rank the three most important, with your first choice
      (1.) being the most important feature of good writing style.

      1.
      2.
      3.

3a)   What method(s) do you use when teaching "style?" Highlight all that apply.

EXERCISES   GRAMMAR LESSONS   IMITATION   GENRE ANALYSIS

SENTENCE-COMBINING   READINGS   EXAMPLES

OTHER(S): _____

3b)   Can you further explain the method(s) you circled above? (Feel free to provide examples of
      assignment sheets or handouts if they exemplify your methodology—you can attach them to
      the email you send with this survey.)

4)   Do you have a particular school of thought or theoretical position that informs your
      teaching of "style?" If yes, please explain.

5)   How do you assess student understanding and retention of style?

6)   Do you provide a progress report of sorts that indicates a students' progress in writing
"style?"

               YES   NO

7)   Would you be willing to let your students fill out a follow-up questionnaire about "style?"

               YES   NO

VITA

Rachael A. Montin

Candidate for the Degree of English

Master of Arts

Thesis: FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS: STYLE, DUALISM, AND THE
COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts English at Oklahoma State
University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July, 2011.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in your English at
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2006.

Experience:

Position: Teaching Assistant from August 2006-May 2011
Institution: Oklahoma State University
Responsibilities: To prepare, teach, and grade for one or more courses at
Oklahoma State University

Position: Assistant Writing Center Director (Summer 2007)
Institution: Oklahoma State University
Responsibilities: To schedule both tutors and clients for tutorials among other
administrative duties.

Position: Writing Center Tutor from August 2006-May 2007
Institution: Oklahoma State University
Responsibilities: To tutor clients of various ages on writing projects from a
number of subjects.

Name: Rachael A. Montin   Date of Degree: July, 2011

Institution: Oklahoma State University   Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS: STYLE, DUALISM, AND THE
                COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Pages in Study: 71   Candidate for the Degree of Master of Arts

Major Field: English

Style, as a workable pedagogy, remains elusive to scholars, not for its lack of a definition, but because it seems to evoke a myriad of individual definitions. Further investigation into style literature reveals a gap between the theory of style and the practice of style, as no current essays investigate teacher's classroom practice regarding style. To bridge that gap, Oklahoma State University composition instructors were asked to complete a survey that addressed their definition, methodology, and assessment of style. Overwhelmingly, their response in each of these areas illustrates that their pedagogy is dualistic in nature, namely because it allows for style to remain identifiable, teachable, and applicable. Although these instructors approach style dualistically, this study reveals a vast amount of variation exists under the dualism umbrella, variation that should addressed in composition pedagogy courses. Finally, future work will combine dualistic, form-based approaches with monistic, voice based approaches to provide students with a rhetorical aim, as well as an expressive one.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Rebecca Damron