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**Writing as a way of knowing: An interpretive inquiry into voice  
development in the high school composition experience**

**Wright-Kernodle, Lynn, Ed.D.**

**The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1990**

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WRITING AS A WAY OF KNOWING: AN INTERPRETIVE INQUIRY  
INTO VOICE DEVELOPMENT IN THE HIGH SCHOOL  
COMPOSITION EXPERIENCE

by

Lynn Wright-Kernodle

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
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1990

Approved by

  
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APPROVAL PAGE

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The purpose of this research was to explore writing as a way of knowing. This was specifically addressed through an indepth focus on an individual high school student's emerging voice and his perceptions of the ways in which classroom composition experiences nurtured his voice development.

Through interviews, reflective journals, autobiographical writing, the student's compositions, and classroom observations, data were gathered over a two year period from the student and three of his teachers concerning their perceptions of voice development within the composition classroom setting.

The data were interpreted through a thematic and theoretical framework developed from the literature and supported by insights from a professional writer. The first component of this framework outlined classroom interactions conducive to voice development -- student-teacher, student-peer, student-curriculum, teacher-curriculum, student-self, and teacher-self interactions. The second component consisted of classroom conditions conducive to voice development -- apprenticeships, connected classes and midwife teachers, response to "the teachable moment," and encouragement of the emerging student voice.

Interpretive analysis of this data revealed that certain interactions within the composition classroom are critical for student voice development; that midwife teaching can establish within the composition classroom an atmosphere conducive to student voice development; that there are effective ways teachers of writing can enhance and nurture student voice development; that there is little chance for student voice development within the composition classroom without strong teacher commitment to writing as a way of knowing; and that once a student has experienced a discovery of voice, that voice will continue to seek ways of expression.

This study disclosed how one student grew in his understanding of his own voice and the possibilities for its expression through his writing. There are important implications which emerged from this interpretive case study for ways in which teachers of writing can nurture the creative process of voice development.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL PAGE.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
CHAPTER	
I. OVERVIEW.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	5
Questions for the Study.....	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Limitations of the Study.....	7
Dimensions of the Problem.....	8
Perspective of the Researcher.....	10
Chapter Summary.....	14
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	16
Introduction.....	16
Research on Written Composition.....	17
Writing as Creative Discovery.....	18
Writing as Epistemic Process.....	20
Writing as a Subset of Rhetoric.....	21
Research on Classroom Interactions.....	23
Connections Between Interactions and Learning.....	23
Classroom Interactions and Affective Responses.....	25
Research on Qualitative Inquiry and Case Study Methodology.....	28
Interpretive Inquiry.....	28
Transferability.....	30
Descriptive Case Study.....	32
Chapter Summary.....	34

III. BRINGING THE LITERATURE INTO FOCUS: INSIGHTS INTO VOICE DEVELOPMENT.....	35
Introduction.....	35
Voice as an Expression of Knowing.....	37
Voice Defined.....	37
Voice and Languages of Thought.....	39
Voice and Connected Knowing.....	42
Voice and Tacit Knowing.....	45
Voice and Meaning.....	47
Voice and Affect.....	49
Human Development and Language Development.	51
Interrelationship of Human Development and Language Development....	52
Social Context of Language.....	53
Conceptual Function of Language.....	54
Developmental Aspects of Language.....	56
Language and Meaning.....	56
Egocentric Speech and Meaning.....	58
Inner Speech and Meaning.....	60
Adolescent Development and Voice.....	61
Stage Integration.....	62
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Understanding.....	63
Problem Solving.....	65
Voice Development.....	67
Interactions That Foster Voice Development.	69
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	71
Writer to Writer.....	72
Teacher Comments.....	73
Student Ownership.....	77
Connected Teaching.....	83
Student-Peer Interactions.....	85
Collaborative Learning.....	85
Peer Feedback.....	87
Trusting Communities.....	88
Meaning Making.....	88
Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions.....	91
Curriculum as Dynamic Form.....	91
Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate.....	93
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum.....	94

Teacher-Self Interactions and Student-Self Interactions.....	97
Teacher/Self-Reflection.....	98
Teacher as Reflective Practitioner.....	98
Teacher as Artist.....	100
Teacher as Writer.....	101
Student/Self-Reflection.....	102
Reprocessing.....	103
Internal and External Revision....	103
Reflective Planning.....	105
Summary.....	108
 Conditions That Foster Voice Development...	109
Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships.....	111
Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes.....	115
Responding to "The Teachable Moment"....	116
Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice..	119
Oral and Written Speech.....	119
Summary.....	124
 Personal Insights into Voice Development: Perspectives of a Professional Writer.....	126
Interactions That Foster Voice Development.....	127
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	127
Writer to Writer.....	128
Teacher Comments.....	128
Student Ownership.....	129
Connected Teaching.....	129
Student-Peer Interactions.....	130
Trusting Communities.....	131
Meaning Making.....	132
Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions.....	132
Curriculum as Dynamic Form.....	132
Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate.....	133
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum.....	134
Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions.....	135
Teacher/Self-Reflection.....	135
Student/Self-Reflection.....	135

Conditions That Foster Voice Development.....	136
Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships.....	136
Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes.....	137
Recognizing the Emerging Student Voice.....	140
Summary.....	140
Chapter Summary.....	141
IV. METHODOLOGY.....	142
Introduction.....	142
Subjects.....	142
Student Profile.....	145
Teacher A Profile.....	152
Teacher B Profile.....	153
Teacher C Profile.....	154
Demographics.....	154
Procedures.....	157
Interviews.....	159
Student Interviews.....	160
Teacher A Interviews.....	162
Teacher B Interviews.....	162
Teacher C Interviews.....	163
Summary.....	163
Autobiographical Writing.....	164
Student's Autobiographical Writing....	165
Journals.....	165
Teacher A's Journal.....	166
Teacher B's Journal.....	166
Teacher C's Journal.....	167
Student Writing.....	168
Writing Assignment #1.....	169
Writing Assignment #2.....	169
Writing Samples from Journalism.....	169
Classroom Observations.....	170
Design and Analysis.....	170
Chapter Summary.....	175

V. RESULTS: PERCEPTIONS OF VOICE DEVELOPMENT...	178
Introduction.....	178
Student's Perceptions.....	179
Research Question 1.....	179
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	179
Writer to Writer.....	180
Teacher Comments.....	182
Student Ownership.....	186
Connected Teaching.....	191
Student-Peer Interactions.....	194
Collaborative Learning.....	195
Peer Feedback.....	199
Trusting Communities.....	202
Meaning Making.....	205
Student-Curriculum and Teacher-	
Curriculum Interactions.....	207
Curriculum as Dynamic Form.....	207
Curriculum and Students' Need	
to Communicate.....	210
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented	
Curriculum.....	211
Teacher-Self and Student-Self	
Interactions.....	217
Teacher/Self-Reflection.....	217
Student/Self-Reflection.....	217
Reprocessing.....	217
Internal and External Revision.....	219
Reflective Planning.....	222
Conditions Conducive to Voice	
Development.....	228
Midwife Teachers: Facilitating	
the Growth of Connected Classes.....	229
Encouraging the Emerging Voice.....	233
Teachers' Perceptions.....	242
Research Question 2.....	242
(Teacher A)	
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	243
Writer to Writer.....	243
Teacher Comments.....	244
Student Ownership.....	249
Connected Teaching.....	250

Student-Peer Interactions.....	253
Collaborative Learning.....	253
Peer Feedback.....	254
Trusting Communities.....	257
Meaning Making.....	258
Student-Curriculum and Teacher-	
Curriculum Interactions.....	259
Curriculum as Dynamic Form.....	259
Curriculum and Students' Need	
to Communicate.....	260
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-	
Oriented Curriculum.....	261
Teacher-Self and Student-Self	
Interactions.....	262
Teacher as Reflective Practitioner....	262
Teacher as Artist.....	264
Teacher as Writer.....	265
Reprocessing (Student).....	266
Internal and External	
Revision (Student).....	267
Reflective Planning (Student).....	269
Conditions Conducive to Voice	
Development.....	270
Creating Opportunities for	
Apprenticeships.....	270
Midwife Teachers: Facilitating	
the Growth of Connected Classes.....	271
Responding to "The Teachable	
Moment".....	272
Encouraging the Emerging Student	
Voice.....	274
 (Teacher B)	
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	280
Writer to Writer.....	280
Teacher Comments.....	281
Student Ownership.....	283
Connected Teaching.....	285
Student-Peer Interactions.....	286
Collaborative Learning.....	286
Peer Feedback.....	288
Trusting Communities.....	291
Meaning Making.....	291

Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions.....	292
Curriculum as Dynamic Form.....	292
Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate.....	293
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum.....	293
Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions.....	296
Teacher as Reflective Practitioner....	296
Teacher as Artist.....	298
Teacher as Writer.....	298
Reprocessing (Student).....	298
Internal and External Revision (Student).....	299
Reflective Planning (Student).....	300
Conditions Conducive to Voice Development.....	301
Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships.....	301
Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes.....	302
Responding to "The Teachable Moment"..	303
Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice.....	303
 (Teacher C)	
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	305
Writer to Writer.....	305
Teacher Comments.....	306
Student Ownership.....	308
Connected Teaching.....	312
Student-Peer Interactions.....	312
Collaborative Learning.....	312
Peer Feedback.....	314
Trusting Communities.....	314
Meaning Making.....	315
Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions.....	316
Curriculum as Dynamic Form.....	316
Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate.....	318
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum.....	319

Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions.....	320
Teacher as Reflective Practitioner....	320
Teacher as Artist.....	321
Teacher as Writer.....	322
Student-Self Interactions.....	322
Conditions Conducive to Voice Development.....	323
Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships.....	323
Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes.....	323
Responding to "The Teachable Moment"..	325
Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice.....	325
Chapter Summary.....	328
VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	330
Overview of the Study.....	330
Conclusions from the Study.....	332
Factors Conducive to Sean's Voice Development.....	338
Student-Teacher Interactions.....	338
Student-Peer Interactions.....	342
Student-Curriculum Interactions.....	344
Student-Self Interactions.....	346
Apprenticeships.....	348
Connected Classes and Midwife Teachers.....	349
"The Teachable Moment".....	349
The Emerging Student Voice.....	350
Factors That Subdued Sean's Voice.....	351
Ms. Smith: A Profile of the Midwife Teacher.....	361
Reflections of the Researcher.....	369
Implications for Further Study.....	372
Summary.....	375
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	378

APPENDIX A.	INTERVIEW AGENDAS.....	386
APPENDIX B.	REQUESTS FOR STUDENT AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING.....	394
APPENDIX C.	REQUEST FOR TEACHERS' TOPICAL TIME-FRAMED JOURNALS.....	397
APPENDIX D.	TEACHERS' WRITING ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES.....	400
LIST OF TABLES.....		xiii
LIST OF FIGURES.....		xiv

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Interactions within the composition classroom that foster voice development....	70
Table 2. Conditions within the composition classroom that foster voice development....	110
Table 3. Student-Identified Factors Influencing Voice Development.....	334

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. The interactive loop of Vygotsky's theory of thought development and the impact of inner speech on meaning.....	50
Figure 2. Differences between Vygotsky's and Piaget's interpretations of the dynamic interplay between internal and external speech.....	59
Figure 3. Vygotsky's theory of thought and language, from motive to discourse.....	120
Figure 4. Design of the Study.....	174

## CHAPTER I

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

Oh yes, I can write:  
I mean I've a fizz of  
ideas. What I dread is  
bottling them to order.

--Virginia Woolf

Is there a way that the formal composition experience can diminish the dread of bottling the fizz of ideas? Can students begin to discover through their writing an order within the fizz of ideas? And, can teachers of writing help students enter the fizz and find personal meaning? In other words, can writing become a significant way of knowing for students as they begin to discover their own voices? This particular study reflects one student's discovery of his voice, a discovery facilitated by a teacher who approached writing as a way of knowing.

Teachers of composition have long despaired of effectively teaching students to write. Teaching grammar has had insignificant impact on actual writing. Merely asking for revision and elaboration seems to produce more work that again needs revision and elaboration.

However, it is likely that every composition teacher has received, at least once, a bit of compelling student writing. What has made the difference? What has happened to give that student's fizz of ideas power? This writing speaks because the student has somehow been able to attend to his or her inner voice and, in the process of communicating the emerging knowledge, find meaning in the fizz and a way to order the experience so that his or her voice can be heard.

Voice, the outward expression of one's inner thought and speech, is a way of making connections between one's thoughts and one's experiences in the world. It is through these connections that meaning is found.

How exciting it would be if teachers of writing and designers of writing programs could create a scope and sequence curriculum for the discovery and development of voice--if they could identify a sure way to help students bottle the fizz. The development of voice within the composition experience does not, however, lend itself to such an approach. It is a subtle, complex, and intensely individual process. Therefore, writing teachers face the challenge and opportunity of finding ways to help students engage in this process of voice development.

Too often in the search for educational excellence the most important factor--the student--is ignored. When the composition experience is explored with the composer,

the individual student, as the focal point, the importance of voice development becomes apparent. If the composition experience forces the student to bottle the fizz to someone else's order, the student's voice is denied, not nurtured. Author Eudora Welty suggested that writing must "start from an internal feeling of your own and an experience of your own, and...each reality like that has to find and build its own form" (Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 48). When the composition experience allows the fizz of ideas to germinate and nourishes the forms and expressions of those thoughts, then the explosive power of student voice can be realized.

An awareness of what voice is and how voice develops through writing is necessary if a teacher of composition is to encourage a student to bring the passionate vitality of his or her ideas and commitments to public expression. It is necessary if a designer of composition programs is to design a program which will nurture the effective expression of students' knowledge. This awareness is critical if student writers are to discover personal meaning within their fizz of ideas and attempt to communicate that meaning through their own writing.

Dixie Gibbs Dellinger (1982), a high school composition teacher and author of a text on designing writing curriculum, described the excitement a teacher feels when "good" writing is discovered. But she cautioned that this

happens only when a student "writes in his own way about things he cares about and knows through some kind of experience: that is, when he is writing from his heart" (p. 1). The classroom composition experience should be, she maintained, a process of helping students "write from the heart and the head at the same time" (p. 2). What Dellinger urged is that the composition experience help students find ways of bottling the fizz of ideas and of overcoming their sense of dread.

Eleanor Kutz (1986) called this process of learning to write from both the heart and the head the development of "interlanguage," a middle ground between students' language and academic discourse. For Kutz, learning occurs when language is pushed by meaning. Meaning begins to emerge from the fizz as students give voice to it. For students' meaning to achieve powerful voice, a voice that can be heard, it must go through a process of development.

The process is dynamic and creative, one which Vera John-Steiner (1985) described as incomplete until an individual's thoughts are translated, publically expressed, in ways that others can comprehend. This public expression of inner thoughts is the creative product. The dialectic of creative process-creative product is thus established. The movement through the process to the product and back again is a movement toward knowing.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore, through one student's emerging voice and its subsequent nurturance within the composition classroom, writing as a way of knowing.

This study is based on the premise that knowledge is constructed and emerges through serious human relationships and experiences, and that it is understood through both a solitary reflection on and a social sharing of those experiences (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Grumet, 1988; John-Steiner, 1985).

The elements of knowledge are (1) the ground, which is the world of experience, and (2) the symbol system, with which we name and know experience. Writing, one manifestation of the symbol system we call language, is an attempt to give order and shape to the experience.

Because writing as a way of knowing is such an intensely individual process, I chose to explore its dimensions in an intensely individual manner. This interpretive inquiry focused on an individual high school student's emerging voice and his perceptions of how various classroom composition experiences nurture his voice development. It also included examining the perceptions of three of the student's writing teachers about their teaching of writing and their interactions with the student in the classroom. Analysis of these perceptions addressed two concerns: Do these specific

perceptions contribute to our understanding of writing as a way of knowing; and, if so, of what significance is this understanding to teachers of writing?

#### Questions for the Study

An indepth interpretive study of one student's perceptions of his formal composition experiences and their impact on his own voice development was the approach used to address the following questions:

- (1) What are the student's perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that have contributed to his voice development?
- (2) What are his writing teachers' perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that contribute to students' writing and voice development?

Chapter V presents a review of the perceptions of the student and three of his writing teachers concerning the experience of voice development through written composition. The framework for this review came from a synthesis of the literature (Chapter III) that (1) defines and explores voice as a way of knowing, (2) connects language development with human development--especially that of adolescents, and (3) outlines the specific interactions and conditions within an educational setting that are likely to enhance a student's voice development.

### Significance of the Study

When teachers recognize the importance of voice development through students' writing, they validate students as people of worth, as capable users of the language, and as the agents of their own learning--as constructors of their own knowledge. This study's significance is in its close observation and analysis of the dynamic interplay between creative process and creative product in one student's discovery of voice. The study presents the ways in which one of the student's teachers helped him to recognize his own evolving knowledge and begin to articulate it, the ways in which her approach to writing as a way of knowing fostered this individual student's voice development.

### Limitations of the Study

In the format of an indepth analysis through a case study, I deliberately chose intensity over generalizability. By building a data base thorough enough for possible use by another researcher, I laid the groundwork for transferability. This transferability offered a way of celebrating the specificity--not the generalizability--of the research. Within a context of like studies, this research could have broader educational implications.

### Dimensions of the Problem

Although voice development does not yield to a "how to" analysis, it is possible to gain a greater understanding of possibilities within the classroom composition experience for the nurturing of student voice. One way is to determine what "voice" is and to study the effects of classroom interactions on cognitive and affective development in order to ascertain which of these interactions specifically encourage voice development through written composition.

Another way to understand these nurturant possibilities for voice development is to give attention to the kinds of conditions that are conducive to the building of connections. One of the most important functions of voice is that of building connections--links between inner speech and self, between self and others, and between self and one's own work. Belenky et al. (1986) urged the use of "connected classes" by "midwife teachers" who help students give birth/voice to their thoughts and who enable those connections to occur. For the young person who is in a time of uncertainty between childhood and adulthood, classroom conditions conducive to building and maintaining these connections are of special importance.

A third way to understand the potential for voice development within the formal composition experience is to

explore with individual students their insights into the ways in which writing has furthered the creative processes of finding and voicing their emerging knowledge of the world about them. It is exploration for the purpose of "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of one "slice of reality" (Rist, 1982) in the students' life experience. It is interpretation in the sense of Ricouer's "shared experience":

[One person's experience cannot directly become another's experience.] An event belonging to one stream of consciousness cannot be transferred as such into another stream of consciousness. Yet, nevertheless, something passes from me to you.... This something is not the experience as experienced, but its meaning....The experience as experienced, as lived, remains private, but its sense, its meaning, becomes public. (Ricouer, 1976, p. 15)

A fourth way to gain perspective into the development of voice through writing is to examine the ways in which professional writers have analyzed their own voice development as it was nurtured through formal composition experiences. Persons who have chosen a career which involves an intense experience with language are in a unique position to comment on the process of voice development. One example of this is Eudora Welty's comments on her own voice development which introduce sections of this study. A second is North Carolina author Marianne Ginger's reflections on her voice development. Her insights are included in the synthesis of thought on voice development in Chapter III.

Using these four approaches, I have attempted to clarify possibilities within the classroom composition experience for the nurturing of student voice. This study contains overlapping and repeating strands of experience in making connections which, when woven together, create the fabric of one student's voice development.

#### Perspective of the Researcher

Madeline Grumet (1988) proposed that as researchers we ask ourselves: What is the question that comes out of my life that I want to explore? Her approach contains the assumption that research is personal.

It is often asserted that research, to be valid, must be objective. While there is significant value in striving for objectivity, no research is entirely detached from biases of the researcher. It is the responsibility of the researcher to be alert to the limitations imposed on a study by personal biases. It is also, however, the responsibility of the researcher to be alert to the strengths inherent in a study that takes advantage of that researcher's perspectives.

This study is an interpretive inquiry into one student's experiences with writing as a method of voice development. I bring to the study my own experience both as a student and as a teacher of writing. It is, therefore, especially important that I outline the

personal perspectives that serve as a backdrop to this research.

Personal reasons as well as professional ones spurred my interest in the issue of voice development through written composition. Having taught English for twelve years, and having noted that from time to time I came across student writing that spoke with a special power, that pulled me into it in a very real way, I questioned what had happened. What particular elements had combined to produce this kind of writing? Were there ways to recreate this combination for other students? Can my own voice development offer any insights into this creative process? These are the questions that come out of my own life that I want to explore.

My experience as a student of composition offered little in the way of voice development as I have come to understand it. I was a "good" English student. I generally made A's in my high school composition classes; I loved literature; and I decided to become an English teacher. Moving through college and graduate school, I did become an English teacher, and I taught composition. It was not, however, until an early course in my doctoral studies that I became aware of my own voice as it was expressed through my writing and of its importance to me as a way of knowing. The discovery, in my adulthood, that I had ideas, beliefs, and theories that were of value and

the simultaneous discovery that I could generate my own knowledge, articulate those ideas, and communicate that meaning to others were exciting, fulfilling, and empowering discoveries.

An equally significant aspect of the discovery of my voice was that one teacher was instrumental in providing the initial opportunities for my voice to emerge through my writing. In this sense, the professor served as a midwife teacher, helping in the birth of my voice and continuing to provide the nurturant conditions for its development. The experience validated my worth as a person, as a capable user of the language, and as the agent of my own learning and knowing.

The tragedy of my earlier composition experiences was that I never knew the fizz was there. I did not dread bottling it to order because the words and ideas I was bottling belonged to someone else. I was bottling what Belenky et al. (1986) called "received" knowledge as opposed to "constructed" knowledge. My mastery of academic discourse in communicating others' ideas was well developed.

These understandings have implications for this study. If I, a "good" student who knew just where to put my commas and semicolons and who became adept at proving already established points, did not discover my own voice until eighteen years of schooling had passed,

what happened to the "bad" student? What does the composition experience offer that student who is a "loser" in the school environment? And what about that gifted soul out there like Virginia Woolf who knows the fizz is present but who rebels against a forced and artificial process of expressing it?

As a teacher of writing my experience was somewhat different. Having responded instinctively to the impact of powerful words, I was able to recognize what Dellinger (1982) called writing that has come "from the heart." My intuitive response to this kind of writing was to encourage the student's voice development. But the encouragement was not well planned nor was it based on any clear theories of voice development and of writing as a way of expressing voice. Although I began to study the theory of writing as a process and subsequently made attempts to address it in my teaching approach, the specific concepts of constructed knowledge and of writing as a way of knowing were not a part of my teaching philosophy.

A desire to answer the questions that came out of my experiences as a writer and as a teacher of writing was stimulated by both personal and professional concerns. My selection of the literature to review, my interpretation of voice development and of writing as a way of knowing, my belief that writing is an intensely

individual process, and my conviction as a researcher that an understanding of voice should begin with an analysis of an individual's perspectives of his or her own experiences are factors that have most definitely influenced this study.

I have, therefore, chosen to use the first person "I" because of my personal involvement with the topic. As an English teacher I am writing to and for English teachers, myself included. This research is personal as Grumet's suggested question implies. I have sought through my methodology to establish credibility and dependability for the research that gives it the trustworthiness that is often meant by "objectivity." A major component of the trustworthiness of this study is the acknowledgement that my own perspectives as a student, as a teacher, as a writer, and as a researcher have contributed to the design and nature of the research.

#### Chapter Summary

Chapter I has provided an overview of the area to be studied--the development of student voice. The next two chapters provide the theoretical bases for the study. Chapter II is a review of three areas of research related to the study: (1) written composition; (2) classroom interactions and learning; and (3) case study methodology. The first two areas provide a general

overview of the literature on written composition and the classroom interactions that facilitate learning and affective growth. The third area conveys the basis for choosing a case study approach. Chapter III is a comprehensive synthesis of the literature concerning voice as a way of knowing, language development and its relationship to voice development, and the specific classroom interactions and conditions conducive to student voice development. Chapter IV sets forth the design of the study. Chapter V presents the results of the data on the student and his writing teachers. Chapter VI includes the summary, conclusions, and implications and recommendations derived from the study.

## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

## Introduction

...I felt the need to hold transcendent life in words--there's so much more of life that only words can convey....

--Welty, 1984, pp. 84-85

This Review of the Literature covers research in three major areas: (1) written composition and its influence on the teaching of writing as a process of creative discovery; (2) classroom interactions and the affective connections between interactions and learning; and (3) interpretive inquiry and case study methodology as it applies to this study. These are the three pillars upon which the theoretical basis of the study has been built.

Recurring themes throughout this Review of the Literature and subsequent chapters of the study rely on the following interpretations of certain terms. Inner speech is an internal articulation of one's thoughts; voice is an outward expression of one's inner speech as it is shared with and heard by others in human encounters. Interaction is the process of communication in which occurs a reciprocity in responses during human encounters.

As individuals and groups interact with each other, relationships are formed and reformed, and connections are made. Knowledge itself is constructed and emerges through serious human relationships and interactions. Voice is the passionate expression of such knowledge; and voice development, reflected in both cognitive and affective domains, can occur through nurturant writing experiences. Writing is a creative process of thinking and of discovery. It is one manifestation of the symbol system of language that offers opportunity for a powerful way of knowing, a powerful way to devise the constructs, or interpretive frameworks, through which we come to understand our life experiences.

#### Research on Written Composition

...every writer takes a chance with everything he writes that it will be understood. Also, a writer is learning all the time he's writing, and things are being suggested to him in the work....All kinds of things open up. Something I write today, I didn't even know about yesterday....

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 272

Writing is a creative way of knowing, a vehicle for the emerging student voice. The research defines and identifies a type of writing that is creative discovery of self as well as of form. The process of discovery is also viewed as epistemic in that writers discover meaning and begin to make sense of their world and of themselves in

that world through their writing. In such writing, Master (1983) asserted, students can

...discover where they stand and what they believe and how they propose to act....They look at themselves there perhaps crossing themselves out, revising and rewriting themselves.... (p. 162)

What Knoblauch (1985) referred to as "modern rhetoric" is a response to the creative and epistemic nature of writing.

Reuther (1985) proposed that writing should allow students to reach beyond what they already know in order to begin to understand what they can eventually know. Along with Moffett (1968, 1981), Reuther described writing as a form of discovering meaning, and with Graves (1983) as the discovery of voice.

#### Writing as Creative Discovery

Murray (1973) believed that all writing is creative and is a process of discovery--discovery both of self and of form. Stinson's description of the creative nature of dance can be applied as well to the creative nature of written composition:

...we must teach...in a way that recognizes and affirms the capacity of individuals to speak their own language....This is not to say that students should avoid study of the forms and styles...which others have created. But if students learn to negate their own natural voice and their own capacity to create..., they will also be negating their human capacity to interpret their own experience and make sense of their own lives. (Stinson, 1984, p. 145)

A basic human need, asserted Valett (1974), is that of

creative expression through which persons joyfully "bring into existence something unique" (p. 8). The development of voice requires communication. Writing, a way to use language to satisfy the human need for expression and creation, is the exploration and development of thought that is both internally and externally focused.

In Perl's analysis, written composition involves construction and discovery:

Writers construct their discourse inasmuch as they begin with a sense of what they want to write. This sense, as it remains implicit, is not equivalent to the explicit form it gives rise to. Thus, a process of constructing meaning is required....Constructing simultaneously affords discovery. Writers know more fully what they mean only after having written it. (Perl, 1979, p. 331)

In his review of writing research, Hillocks found that "generating data and making inferences about them appear to be necessary antecedents...of making decisions about form" (Hillocks, 1986, p. 228). And Healey (1985), who was a codirector of the Bay Area Writing Project of the University of California, Berkeley, underscored the concept of constructed meaning in her emphasis on first draft writing as discovery writing. First draft writing is exploratory, speculative, and messy. It is writing intended primarily for the writer; it is not writing that is to be evaluated in the traditional sense of classroom grading. The function of first draft writing is discovery: students write to recall, to ask questions, to

discover what they already know and what they need to learn. It is through this "generative power" of writing that students begin to discover, or to construct, meaning.

### Writing as Epistemic Process

Elbow (1973) saw the writing process as a search for meaning: "Meaning is not what you start with but what you end up with" (p. 15). According to Elbow, one discovers meaning through writing. One does not first determine meaning, then put it into words, then inscribe those words. Meaning, rather, emerges through the dynamic interplay between internal and external speech. Language is a vehicle for the understanding and expression of one's self, one's voice.

Healey (1985) spoke of the importance of respecting the individual writer's own language. She concluded that in order to learn something, a student had to make it a part of his or her personal language system. Writing students are exposed to the words of others. They must also have opportunities and ways of working through those words of others in order to undertake what Healey called "reformulation" and what Belenky et al. (1986) called "constructed knowledge." Students become actively involved in making meaning through their own language.

This epistemic concept of writing as a way to make meaning links knowledge to the knower. This is knowledge that evolves through human relationships and interactions.

Grumet referred to the Greek word episteme, meaning understanding, from which epistemology originates. Epistemology, then, "refers to knowledge that is inter-subjective, developed through social relations and negotiations" (Grumet, 1988, p. 9).

### Writing as a Subset of Rhetoric

Identifying similar themes from a different analytical perspective, Knoblauch (1985) described language as a human enterprise involving psychological, ethical, political, and aesthetic dimensions. Classical rhetoric, that discipline concerned with the study of verbal expression, is redefined by Knoblauch as "the process of using language to organize experience and communicate it to others" (p. 29) as well as the study of that process. This redefinition of rhetoric recognizes an interdependence between language and thought; it is "epistemic" rather than "formalistic."

Knoblauch's view can apply to writing and the development of voice. When writing, a subset of rhetoric, is taught from a formalistic perspective, technical control is emphasized. Teaching writing as technological form is, according to Knoblauch,

...to undervalue the power young writers bring to the classrooms while overemphasizing the formal control they lack--thereby offering little motivation to learn that control since it remains so unrelated to everything valuable about composing in the first place, namely, the personal experience of making meaning. (Knoblauch, 1985, p. 38)

Britton (1982) described writing which brings intrinsic satisfaction to the writer as "writing that assumes an interest in the writer as well as what he has to say about the world" (p. 156). When students are taught in ways that are respectful to that which they value, "the personal experience of making meaning," then it is possible for the power which Knoblauch identified to become integral to students' written voice.

This view of a more modern rhetoric is one which alters the traditional "correct form" approach to the teaching of writing. It encourages what Beale (1986) has called "real writing": writing which is a process of "finding as well as communicating insights" (Beale, 1986, p. viii). If external control (rules for correctness) is applied first, the internal control (a search for meaning) which is a part of each individual's natural need to communicate his or her incipient understandings is not likely to emerge. Form imposed inhibits or even stifles content.

Hillocks's distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge offers a means to understand the difference between external and internal control as it applies to form and content. The "writer's repertoire" includes a knowledge of what (declarative) and a knowledge of how (procedural). According to Hillocks's analysis of two decades of research on writing,

Traditional approaches to teaching composition have concentrated on declarative knowledge of grammar..., various forms of discourse, and certain principles of rhetoric. Research...indicates clearly that approaches which focus on procedural knowledge...are more successful than those which focus on declarative knowledge. (Hillocks, 1986, p. 232)

A more modern rhetoric, or "real writing," therefore, ties classical rhetoric's emphasis on form to the realities of one's own experiences in and with the world.

### Research on Classroom Interactions

#### Connections Between Interactions and Learning

...I'm interested in individuals...and in personal relationships...personal relationships matter more than any kind of generalization about the world at large.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 57

According to Lunsford (1985), developmental theory defines knowing as "an interaction between self and its environment" (p. 147). Knowledge development, therefore, occurs as mental structures are altered "in order to make sense out of the world" (p. 174). Individuals construct their own realities through continuous interactions with their environments.

Interactions between self and environment are important to the development of knowledge and to personal meaning making. Within a classroom the student interacts with various elements of the environment. These interactions inform the student's perceptions of self in

relation to others. If the conditions in the environment are conducive to voice development, the expressions of student voice are encouraged.

How various classroom interactions impact upon learning has been the focus of much research. Interactions between teacher and student are often portrayed as the most important classroom interactions influencing both cognitive and affective development of students. While there is in the literature evidence indicating the importance of other classroom interactions in addition to those between teacher and student, researchers, such as Brophy and Good (1986), have emphasized the importance of student-teacher interactions over student-peer interactions or student-curriculum interactions.

Simpson and Galbo (1986) also found the student-teacher relationship to be the major influence on learning, while also recognizing the importance of other relationships within a classroom setting for the construction of knowledge. They defined interaction as communication, as a process of forming connections between all the elements of learning. They concluded that this connective interaction was central to learning.

They further addressed learning as a process of meaning making. As students give meaning to their experiences and as they learn to communicate their perceptions of their experiences, knowledge is

constructed. Simpson and Galbo stressed the importance of interaction and its influence on an individual's development: "As human knowledge is created in human encounter, it is also sustained and reinterpreted in the ongoing interactions of people" (p. 38).

#### Classroom Interactions and Affective Responses

There is in the literature, compelling evidence supporting the strong connections between learning and classroom interactions. However, the affective nature of "coming to know" often appears secondary to the cognitive aspects of learning.

Brophy and Good (1986) acknowledged that more research is needed specifically on student perceptions of classroom interactions. Their research linked positive student attitudes with teachers' student-oriented approaches in which a respect for students and their ideas was apparent. They suggested that students' affective responses toward teacher, subject matter, and peers informed their cognitive achievement.

Their acknowledgement of the importance of affect highlights a point that merits further attention. Simon (1986) defined affect as "an integration of person, situation, cognition, and emotion" (p. 127). It is this integration on which individuals rely "to understand and interact with their world and those in it" (p. 126).

Simon's definition of affect grew from his understanding of Erich Fromm's "uniquely human needs" which Simon identified as follows: (1) the need for relatedness; (2) the need for transcendence, or the desire for meaning and creativity; (3) the need for a cultural and historical rootedness; (4) the need for identity (a search for self); and (5) the need for a frame of orientation through which to understand and evaluate one's experiences in the world (Simon, 1986, p. 81).

All of these needs suggest a high level of connected interaction with self, with others, and with one's experiences.

As teachers of writing, when we speak of student voice development, we are acknowledging the vital importance of affect as a necessary part of one's passionate response to knowing. Greene (1986) has called such teaching a way of "empowering persons...to think critically and creatively, to pursue meanings, to make increasing sense of their actually lived worlds" (p. 72).

Valett (1974) described affective awareness as an awareness which acknowledges the feelings and emotions that influence our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (p. 15). Clark and Peterson (1986), in like manner, identified connections between teachers' thought processes and their actions. They demonstrated that how the teacher

planned and made decisions and what the teacher believed influenced the teacher's interactions with students. How the teacher behaved in the classroom affected the student's behavior; likewise, the student's behavior and achievement influenced teacher planning, decision making, and restructuring of beliefs.

Therefore, a teacher who planned classroom activities with the affective domain receiving as much emphasis as the cognitive domain was acting on the belief that there is a fundamental linkage between feeling and thinking, that the two must work together for knowledge to be constructed. Krathwohl et al. (1964) emphasized the connection between affect and understanding:

...a large part of what we call "good teaching" is the teacher's ability to attain affective objectives through challenging the students' fixed beliefs and getting them to discuss issues. (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964, p. 55)

There are numerous life experiences outside the classroom that influence students' language and voice development, their perceptions of various environmental and relational impacts on their lives, their understandings of self and others. These, in turn inform their responses to much of what occurs in the classroom. It is not within the scope of this research to consider all of the life experiences and interactions which affect the language use and voice development of students. However, teachers--especially "connected teachers" (Belenky et al.,

1986)--must remain aware of and alert to the fact that students' classroom composition experiences take place in the context of their total life experience.

Research on Qualitative Inquiry  
and Case Study Methodology  
Interpretive Inquiry

The danger of making a generalized answer to particular and individual questions lies exactly in the generalization....Human beings aren't in packages to be tossed into this pile or that.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 42

The approach of qualitative methodology was used for this study. This methodological approach produces descriptive data which, through interpretation and analysis, can provide insight into the meanings persons assign to their experiences (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Rist (1982) maintained that qualitative research--research that observes, talks to, listens to, and participates with people in natural settings--is "the most powerful...way to understand human beings" (p. 440). According to Rist

The strategy is...to spend sufficient time with the person/settings to allow the defining characteristics to emerge from the events themselves...as those who participate perceive them. (p. 441)

An interpretation of these perceptions comes from a process that Ricouer (1976) described as having "qualitative probability":

To show that an interpretation is more probable in the light of what we know is something other than showing that a conclusion is true. So in the relevant sense, validation is not verification. It is...a logic of uncertainty and of qualitative probability. (p. 78)

This kind of research has a growing impact on educational issues as we attempt to interpret the educational process through the perceptions of those who experience it directly. It is research which asks "how?" rather than "how much?" and "why?" rather than "what?" (Rogers, 1984; Rantor, Kirby, & Geertz, 1981).

The approach is a search for "meaning in context" (Mishler, 1979). Geertz (1973) described the human being as "suspended in webs of significance" spun by that human being. The webs comprise a world, the analysis of which is "not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (p. 5).

An adequate analysis of these "webs of significance" requires a "thick description" of the "multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another" (p. 10). To undertake such "thick description," Geertz urged the researcher to engage in "almost obsessively fine-comb field study in confined contexts" (p. 23).

Qualitative research is, then, interpretive. And "a good interpretation of anything--a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society--takes us

into the heart of that of which it is the interpretation" (Geertz, 1973, p. 18). This formal research approach, the writing down of events or perceptions of events, offers us a way to hold on to perceptions, to reconsult them in conjunction with like or different interpretations. It is the specificity of the interpretations, not their generalizability, that offers us a new way of viewing our world.

### Transferability

How then can findings through qualitative research inform others seeking to be effective teachers of composition? Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that in naturalistic/qualitative inquiry it is necessary to develop "working hypotheses" (p. 124) rather than consider generalizations. Through our inquiry we can develop a body of knowledge based on a particular individual ("idiographic" knowledge) from which our working hypotheses emerge (pp. 38, 116). The question that then arises is one of "transferability" rather than "generalizability." Is the working hypothesis formulated in Context A transferable, or applicable, to Context B? Is the similarity such that there is a "fit"? If there is sufficient congruence between the two contexts, then the working hypothesis from Context A may be applicable to Context B. It is the responsibility of the researcher in Context A to provide enough information and sufficient

description about that context "so that anyone else interested in [making judgments of] transferability has a base of information appropriate to the judgment" (pp. 124-125).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) contrasted the idiographic position (the development of a body of knowledge about a particular individual) with the nomothetic position (the development of a generalization based on various numbers of people). They maintained that if the purpose of the inquiry is a search for "verstehen (understanding, or meaning experienced in situations), then the idiographic position becomes not only tenable but mandatory" (p. 216). Concurring, Geertz (1973) concluded that "what generality [such idiographic research] contrives to achieve grows out of the delicacy of its distinctions, not the sweep of its abstractions" (p. 25).

Calkins (1985) endorsed this kind of research for composition studies, noting that researchers too often tell composition teachers to focus on process while the researchers themselves tend to focus only on the product of their own research. Kantor (1984) also recommended this research approach as a way to focus on the process and implications of meaning making in context. He urged composition researchers to pay special attention to how students "develop concepts of what writing is about and what value it holds for them, and how they strengthen

their knowledge and intuitions so as to write more effectively" (p. 75).

### Descriptive Case Study

The case study method of description and analysis is well suited to the qualitative research approach. Case studies, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), "enable detailed probing of an instance in question rather than mere surface description of a multitude of cases" (p.358). According to Gay (1981), "the primary purpose of a case study is to determine the factors, and relationship among the factors, that have resulted in the current behavior or status of the subject of the study" (p. 170).

Irwin and Bushnell (1980) suggested that the primary benefit of a case study approach "is that it makes the subject... 'come alive'" (p. 126). The bits and pieces of the shaping experiences in a subject's life can be gathered together in ways that minimize the fragmentation possible in other approaches. With the case study the subject can be seen and presented as "an intact individual emitting a thousand examples of language, perceptual..., emotional, and cognitive development" (p. 126).

This particular study falls into the category of "descriptive case study"--a form of interpretive inquiry--as defined by Calkins (1985). Such a study may be both contextually based (grounded theory) and grounded in theory.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the ground of context (grounded theory):

...the case study provides a grounded assessment of context....The case study represents an unparalleled means for communicating contextual information that is grounded in the particular setting that was studied. (p. 360)

Being grounded in theory, on the other hand, requires a strong review of the literature which Calkins (1985) deemed crucial for good descriptive case studies. According to Geertz (1973), "theory is used to ferret out the unapparent import of things" (p. 26). He further described the use of a theoretical framework:

Although we formulate our interpretation...after its occurrence...the theoretical framework in terms of which such an interpretation is made must be capable of continuing to yield defensible interpretations as new social phenomena swim into view....Theoretical ideas are not created wholly anew in each study... they are adopted from other, related studies, and refined in the process, applied to new interpretive problems. (Geertz, 1973, pp. 26-27)

A study such as this one which is grounded in theory does not discount the possibilities for deriving new or modified theory from patterns within the data itself (Calkins, 1985; Burgess, 1984). Calkins (1985) insisted that "a researcher can discover patterns in the data, drawing organizing concepts from the participant's own perceptions, while still seeing his or her work within a larger theoretical context" (p. 134). The strength of this study, however, lies in its interpretation of the specific case within the larger theoretical context.

### Chapter Summary

According to the literature, writing is a creative way of knowing which provides a vehicle for the emerging student voice. This epistemic process of discovery can be enhanced through interactions within the classroom, especially those between student and teacher, which acknowledge the importance of an affective awareness of how perceptions influence one's beliefs and actions. The process of qualitative inquiry and case study methodology offers an effective, and, according to the literature, a necessary, method of exploring the perceptions, beliefs, and actions within the context of the composition classroom. It offers a way for us to look at how those perceptions of specific interactions influence voice development through writing.

Chapter III is an analysis of the literature dealing with the specific interactions within the composition classroom most likely to enhance and nurture students' voice development. These interactions are explored within the context of voice development and its relationship with language development as detailed in the literature and as experienced by a professional writer.

## CHAPTER III

BRINGING THE LITERATURE INTO FOCUS:  
INSIGHTS INTO VOICE DEVELOPMENT

## Introduction

Something shapes people, and it's the world in which they act that makes their experiences--what they act for and react against. ...place produces the whole world in which a person lives his life. ...I think, of course, we learn to grow further than that; but if we don't have that base I don't know what we can test further knowledge by.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, pp. 176-177

The Review of the Literature in Chapter II provided the general theoretical basis for this study. In order to understand more fully the implications of the research reviewed in Chapter II and to focus the literature on the major concerns of this study, three further areas of inquiry were pursued: (1) voice as an expression of knowing; (2) ways in which language development, especially as it is revealed in the voice development of adolescents, is interrelated with other aspects of human development; and (3) specific interactions and conditions within the composition classroom setting that foster such voice development.

Implicit in the earlier review of research concerning written expression was the concept of voice. This concept, however, was not explicitly defined in the literature nor was it explicitly linked with ways of knowing. The first part of this chapter focuses on voice and how it is an expression of knowing. Vygotsky's (1962) theory of thought development as well as John-Steiner's (1985) description of the creative nature of thought offered insights into the origins of voice. Constructed knowing as explained by Belenky et al. (1986) provided insight into voice as an expression of knowing. The perceptions of other theorists such as Ricoeur and Polanyi extended our understanding of what voice is and how it is an expression of knowing.

Part two of this chapter presents additional, yet necessary, concepts not addressed specifically in the Review of the Literature. Alluded to in the earlier research was the young writer, who, through writing, began to discover self and meaning. Because this study was centered on the perceptions of a high school student, it was necessary to place his voice development within the larger context of language development, especially that of adolescents. Again, the research of Vygotsky and John-Steiner offered insight into the nature of language development. Erikson's descriptions of the psychosocial stages of human development helped focus these insights on voice development of adolescents.

The Review of the Literature established a strong connection between classroom interactions and learning. The final sections of this chapter examine the specific interactions and conditions within the composition classroom setting that foster voice development. From the field of writing instruction research such authorities as Moffett, Healey, and Hillocks provided insight into these nurturant interactions and conditions. Further perspective was added through the reflections of a contemporary North Carolina author on the experiences within the formal composition classroom which nurtured her own voice.

Taken together these insights focused and enlarged the theoretical perspectives which served as the lens through which I interpreted the perceptions of the student and his teachers concerning voice development within the formal composition experience.

#### Voice as an Expression of Knowing

...be attentive to life, not closed to it  
but open to it...genuinely try to see  
it for what it is to you, without gross  
distortion (there has to be the distortion  
of passing through any personality).  
...care for the world...connect with it.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 261

#### Voice Defined

While writing theory as reviewed in the literature often dealt with student voice in the composition

experience, it did not define voice. Therefore, I found it necessary to establish what voice is and how writing--one manifestation of voice--is a way of knowing.

Descriptions of inner speech from Vygotsky (1934) to Moffett (1968, 1981) offered a starting place. Inner speech (or speech for self), according to Vygotsky, becomes most fully realized as it is expressed in external speech (or speech for others). Likewise, Moffett's interior dialogue serves as beginning point for ever increasing levels of abstractions from inner thought to outer audience.

Conscious attention to one's inner resources is necessary for a development of voice. As an individual becomes more focused on inner understandings, that basic human need for creative expression (Vallett, 1974) begins to command more attention. Voice emerges as the public expression of one's inner speech, developing as a connection is sought between self and others.

As Buber believed, "The ideal essence of each person is rooted in the act of turning...towards another creature" (Feinberg, 1985, p. 128). Feinberg (1985) maintained that this act of turning is "a means of freeing the cognitive and affective faculties," a process through which two people "learn to mutually enlarge and refine the scope of their inquiry into new sources of knowledge" (p. 7). Vygotsky (1986) suggested that "the word is a

thing in our consciousness...that is absolutely impossible for one person, but that becomes a reality for two" (p. 256).

Ricouer (1976) also explored the connecting function of language:

...language is itself the process by which private experience is made public. Language is the exteriorization thanks to which an impression is transcended and becomes ex-expression, or, in other words, the transformation of the psychic into the noetic. Exteriorization and communicability are one and the same thing for they are nothing other than this elevation of a part of our life into the logos of discourse. There the solitude of life is for a moment anyway, illuminated by the common light of discourse. (p. 19)

Voice, then, can be defined as the outward expression of one's inner speech as it is shared with and heard by others in human encounters. For this study it was helpful to undertake an analysis of voice in five contexts: (1) voice and languages of thought; (2) voice and connected knowing; (3) voice and tacit knowing; (4) voice and meaning; and (5) voice and affect.

#### Voice and Languages of Thought

The definition of voice which emerged in this study was based on Vygotsky's description of inner speech (or speech for self) and its translation into external speech (or speech for others). External speech "is the turning of thought into words" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 131). John-Steiner (1985) described this aspect of communication as "the task of translating inner speech into effective

language" (p. 114)--a task which she acknowledged was an "intense and difficult" struggle (p. 81).

Elaborating on the process of externalizing speech, John-Steiner (1985) emphasized to the interplay of creative process-creative product. Thinking is creating; creativity itself is a process of self-reflection.

In her description of the verbal language of thought, John-Steiner elaborated on the notion of translating/transforming the inner voice. The process of "placing a thought into its verbal and social context," is a process of "making explicit what is new in one's mind" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 139). Thinking is, she maintained, "a search for meaning," a transformation of the known "into new discoveries and into the ever-changing forms of thought and language" (p. 210).

While a person may use various languages of thought--visual, musical, scientific, verbal--the creative process is not completed until those thoughts are translated, publically expressed, in ways that others can comprehend. For John-Steiner, this public expression of inner thoughts becomes the creative product. It is what Vygotsky identified as the movement from inner speech to external speech. It is voice. When one's thoughts become words that are articulated in oral or written speech, in ways that others can "hear," the voice of the individual emerges.

Although John-Steiner concluded that voice may be expressed visually, musically, scientifically, or verbally, this present study focused on verbal communication, oral and written. Vygotsky held that human beings are inherently social beings driven by their need to communicate with each other. Without the mediating function of speech, an individual's experience in the world remains locked in his or her own consciousness. Communication becomes possible only when this experience, this perception of the world, is simplified, generalized, and translated symbolically (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 6).

John-Steiner (1985) defined "languages of thought" as "inner symbol system[s]...embodied in the history of an individual...with efforts at reflection...first developed in childhood" (p. 8). The form of the translation of these reflections, or interior dialogues, on various experiences depends on how an individual processes them to find meaning--visually, verbally, or kinesthetically. It is thus a process of meaning making, of knowing. Within the mind's structure thought forms various "networks of interlocking concepts [which are] highly condensed and organized clusters of representations" (p. 9). When persons can transform their inner thoughts into overt manifestations, such as oral speech or a piece of writing, then communication can occur. This translation of inner

speech, or speech for self, into external speech, or speech for others, is consistent with Vygotsky's description of voice.

It is possible for the inner symbol system of language to be transformed so that the meanings of an individual's experiences can be both stored (inner speech) and expressed (external speech). John-Steiner called this transformation "the task of communication" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 114). She agreed with Vygotsky that there is continuous, life-long movement between overt and covert forms of language as the individual strives for a verbal representation of his or her own reality (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 3).

#### Voice and Connected Knowing

From John-Steiner's (1985) description of language as a bridge between people, between past and present, between "inner thought and shared understanding" (p. 111), we are drawn toward the concept of "connected knowing" as described by Belenky et al. (1986), in which knowledge comes from and through experience.

Although Belenky et al. (1986) focused their study on women, the various ways of knowing described in that study are not necessarily gender specific. Their concept of nurturing one's own and others' voices and of coming to know through interactive human relationships, is present in various other nongender specific works including those

of Buber, Ricouer, Polanyi, and Greene. The interpretive framework for ways of knowing provided by Belenky et al. (1986), is inclusive enough to provide this study with an understanding of ways of knowing that lead to individual voice development:

#### Ways of Knowing

Received Knowledge	(listening to the voices of others)
Subjective Knowledge	(listening to one's inner voice)
Procedural Knowledge	(listening to the voice of reason)
Separate Knowing	(an understanding based on hard data or abstract principles)
Connected Knowing	(an understanding that there is a connection between the knower and what is known)
Constructed Knowledge	(integrating the voices)

A "connected knower," according to Belenky and her colleagues, attempts to understand another person's experience through his or her own experience, thus becoming able to integrate these experiences and construct knowledge. Writing, a "reaching out to others through words" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 117), is one example of the bridge over which such communicative connection may occur.

Ricouer, who referred to communication as "an enigma" in which the meaning of one's experience can be shared with another person (Ricouer, 1976, p. 15), commented on language as the vehicle, or bridge, that makes connections between persons: "Languages do not speak, people do. [Therefore], meaning can be found nowhere else than in

discourse itself" (Ricouer, 1976, p. 12). Language, then, serves as a bridge between people--between the inner voice and the outward communication of that voice, between past and present, and between the outer world of the individual and the inner thinking self.

The description of constructivist thought offered by Belenky et al., (1986) helps to elucidate the connection between voice and knowing. The essence of constructivist thought is that "all knowledge is constructed, and the knower is an intimate part of the known" (p. 137).

Knowing is contextual, and abstract theories are understood as models for interpreting experience.

Constructivists "make connections that help tie together pockets of knowledge" (p. 140). If the knower

participates in constructing his or her own knowledge, then "a passion for learning is unleashed" (p. 140).

Such a passion for knowing is a weaving together of intellect and affect, of making a significant connection between mind and heart. It is an active reasserting of the self back into the process of learning and knowing.

Belenky et al. (1986) described the constructivist as one who establishes "a communion with what they are trying to understand" (p. 143).

John-Steiner hypothesized that creative thought is a synthesis of fragmented experiences into an integrated whole. The function of creativity, then, is to give

meaning to the experience. Creatively, fragments of knowledge are gathered "into a new unity of understanding...[a] process [that] calls upon all the inner resources of the individual--active memory, openness to experience, creative intensity, and emotional courage" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 73).

John-Steiner's description of this synthesis is reflective of connected knowing and constructed knowledge in which connected knowers are those persons who are actively engaged in putting the "self back into the process of knowing," in confronting the "pieces of self that may be experienced as fragmented" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 136). The knower thus becomes "an intimate part of the known" (p. 137).

#### Voice and Tacit Knowing

According to Polanyi (1969), "all tacit knowing requires the continued participation of the knower, and a measure of personal participation is intrinsic...to all knowledge" (p. 152). Feinberg (1985) asserted that Polanyi's theory of meaning reaffirms "the personal and immediate involvement of the individual" in the act of knowing (p. 34). Polanyi, himself, described this kind of passionate knowing as "the passionate participation of the knower in the act of knowing" (Polanyi, 1958, p. viii).

As we extend our understanding of voice, we come to see it as an outward expression of passionate knowing. This process of knowing is highly tacit and personal. Polanyi (1969) used such words as "indwelling" and "interiorization" to describe the act of knowing. As we interiorize the impacts of our experiences in the world, "the continued participation of the knower [in what is known] becomes altogether predominant in a knowledge acquired and upheld by such deep indwelling" (p. 152). This indwelling "causes us to participate feelingly in that which we understand" (p. 148). Tacit knowing, then, is "an act of indwelling by which we gain access to new meaning" (p. 160).

According to Polanyi, the active shaping and integrating of experience is the "tacit power by which all knowledge is discovered" (Polanyi, 1966, p. 6). But that knowing "is exercised within an accidentally given framework that is largely unspecifiable" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 133). In other words, although tacit knowing can be discovered, we often "know more than we can tell" (Polanyi, 1966, p. 4).

Even so, explicit knowledge does not exist apart from this tacit understanding. Tacit, or unspoken, knowledge, generates voice: "We must know something yet unspoken before we can express it in words" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 187). The "inarticulate meaning of experience...is the

foundation of all explicit meaning" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 187).

Connectedness with both the experience and the act of interpreting the experience is necessary to overcome what would otherwise be a lack of passion, or according to Greene, an "impassivity" (Greene, 1986, p. 74). She referred to Robert Solomon's description (The Passions, 1976, p. 25) of "'the power of the passions'" as "'the power of possibilities'" (Greene, 1986, p. 74). "Possibilities" implies action; and voice--the articulation of passionate knowing--is a reaching toward that which is tacitly understood and that which exists in the realm of possibilities.

#### Voice and Meaning

In his attempt to establish a method of analysis of thought and word that would not separate the two, Vygotsky looked for "a product of analysis which...retains all the basic properties of the whole...which cannot be further divided without losing them" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 4). His explanatory analogy for this "product" was the chemical analysis of the elementary makeup of water. Neither of the parts alone (hydrogen, oxygen) can reveal the particular qualities of the whole (water).

Vygotsky's dilemma was solved by what he termed the "unit." The unit of verbal thought which reconnected

thought and language, as opposed to other theorists' arbitrary separation of the two, was that of word meaning:

It is in word meaning that thought and speech unite into verbal thought. In meaning...the answers to our questions about the relationship between thought and speech can be found. (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 5)

Meaning, then, becomes the unit of both thought and communication (Vygotsky in DeCecco, 1967, p. 59).

Vygotsky found meaning in the "unit." Ricouer (1976) called it "logos." But both of these theorists conceived of a synthesis of thought and word that goes beyond the individual natures of either thought or word. Ricouer asserted that "discourse requires two basic signs--a noun and a verb--which are connected in a synthesis which goes beyond words...a predicative link which can be called logos, discourse" (Ricouer, 1976, pp. 1-2).

Word meanings, then, are dynamic formations, changing as the individual grows and develops. Donaldson's study (1978) underscores this concept of word meanings as dynamic, not static, structures. And Vygotsky described this relationship of thought and word as

...a process, a continual movement back and forth from thought to word and from word to thought... Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them. Every thought tends to connect something with something else, to establish a relationship between things. (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 125)

The value of the word, according to Vygotsky, cannot be underestimated. As words come to reflect an individual's

reality they become, in fact, "a microcosm of human consciousness" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 153), the perfect unit for analysis.

Vygotsky's use of word meaning as the unit for analysis gave him the structure he needed to explain internal and external speech. The developing child internalizes dialogue, and the impact of this dialogue is on thought and inner speech. In his introduction to the 1962 translation of Vygotsky's Thought and Language, Bruner explained that it is this "internalization of... external dialogue that brings the powerful tool of language to bear on the stream of thought" (Bruner in Vygotsky, 1962, p. vii).

#### Voice and Affect

Since Vygotsky was establishing a theory of intellectual development, he carried the concept of unit analysis even further. He found that traditional psychological theories not only separated thought and word, they also separated cognition from affect for the purpose of analysis. Vygotsky believed strongly that this method of study "segregated [the thought processes] from the fullness of life, from the personal needs...interests...inclinations...impulses of the thinker" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 8). It was in unit analysis that the idea and its affect could be dynamically reunited. It is through

the affective motivation of desires, needs, interests, and emotions that thought is generated. Thought moves through meanings to words (i.e., motive → thought → inner speech → meaning → words.) The process is, however, much more interactive than this simple linear explanation might suggest, with meaning impacting on inner speech and words influencing developing meaning. (See Figure 1.) Vygotsky maintained that in order "to understand another's speech, it is not sufficient to understand his thought ...we must also know its motivation" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 151).

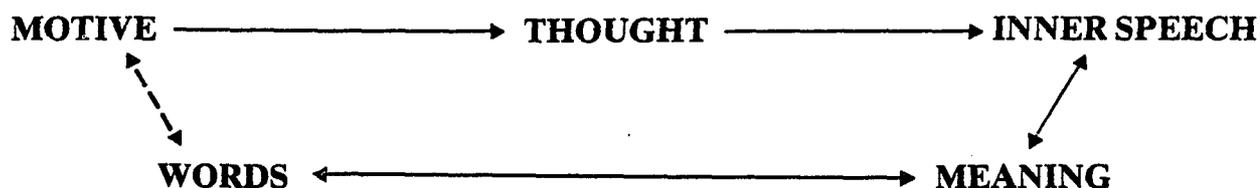


Figure 1. The interactive loop of Vygotsky's theory of thought development and the impact of inner speech on meaning.

Simon (1986), who regarded affect as the total emotional and intellectual motivating aspects of self,

emphasized the connections between thinking and feeling. His description of the interdependence of thought and feeling extended to a connection with an individual's experience. This can serve as a further description of voice as the expressed and articulated "integration of person, situation, cognition, and emotion" (Simon, 1986, p. 127).

Simon's descriptions of the interrelatedness of self and thought concur with Vygotsky's assertions that "behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 252). Before words there is thought; before thought there is motivation. According to Simon, it is one's affective experiences which help to structure thought and give impetus to the development of constructs through which to view one's world. Simon suggested that

...no thought is free of some affective experience and that affect organizes and motivates all thoughts. Neither the affect nor the thought to which it is inextricably bound is fully independent of the situations arousing it. (Simon, 1986, p. 160)

#### Human Development and Language Development

[From a train I saw the] ...world passing my window. It was when I came to see it was I who was passing that my self-centered childhood was over....But it was not until I began to write...that I found the world out there revealing, because...memory had become attached to seeing, love had added itself to discovery, and because

I recognized my own continuing longing to keep going, the need I carried inside myself to know--the apprehension, first, and then the passion, to connect myself to it.

--Welty, 1984, p. 76

The literature indicates a connection between human development and language development. This connection is especially apparent in the social context of language development as individuals come to understand their experience in the world and form concepts that frame that experience. The literature emphasized the importance of meaning to language development. And the literature highlighted language and voice in the adolescent's discovery of self.

#### Interrelationship of Human Development and Language

Joseph Church emphasized the interrelationship of human development and language:

...developmental change can best be accounted for in ...the way the individual perceives, conceptualizes, and thinks about reality. And central to the individual's grasp of reality is the use of language and symbols. (Church, 1961, p. 3)

Church maintained that language is inside the child from the beginning and that words are not merely outside abstractions. Rather, word meanings "reverberate" within children as they begin, quite early, their conceptualizations of their own reality.

Lewis (1963) also noted this aspect of language in human development:

A child is born a speaker and born into a world of speakers....The linguistic growth of a child in his social environment moves forward at the continued convergence and interaction of two groups of factors --those that spring from within the child himself and those that impinge upon him from the community around him. (p. 13)

The development of language is, then a continuous transformation of external speech to inner speech and from inner speech to external speech. Children's motivation for acquiring language is both social, as they share experiences with others, and solitary, as they explore sounds and words, playing with the language. The underlying nature of language acquisition as a social process, however, must not be undervalued.

#### Social Context of Language

Vygotsky contended that an analysis of thought and language must begin with social speech, what Wertsch (1983) termed an "interpsychological" form of verbal control; that the functions of egocentric and inner speech ("intrapsychological") are to govern human activity; that egocentric and inner speech reflect the structure and function of social speech; that egocentric speech is a transitional stage between social speech and inner speech. This transitional movement can go either way, from social speech to inner speech and from inner speech to social speech.

That human beings develop primarily within a social context is a belief Gardner (1985) shared with Vygotsky.

Gardner acknowledged Vygotsky's influence as he described the growing sense of self in an individual--the belief that one comes to know one's self only through knowing others. He stated that there is "no knowledge and no sense of person that can be separated from one's ability to know others--what they are like, and how they view you" (Gardner, 1983, p. 247). In other words, from an infant's first cry, he or she is inherently a social creature intent upon communicating with those outside the self. Gardner (1983) referred to the "interpersonal" orientation of this developing sense of self in which a knowledge of other individuals is "the only available means for eventually discovering the nature of one's own person" (p. 248). It is the community which provides the cues by which individuals discover their personhood.

A part of human development is the process of coming to know one's self in one's world. According to Grumet (1988), "that is not to say that our minds create the world but that the world we know is the one we share with others" (p. 95).

#### Conceptual Function of Language

Vygotsky, Gardner, and John-Steiner emphasized the power of words in one's growing concepts and understandings of reality. Vygotsky said that concept formation involves a complex interaction of mental functions that cannot operate "without the use of

the...word," as the means by which these intellectual functions are controlled and channeled (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 58). Church noted that "language transforms experience [thus concepts]...by creating new channels through which the human environment can act" on the developing individual (Church, 1961, p. 94).

Gardner suggested that individuals grow up within a social context that is defined for them and by them with words. Similarly, John-Steiner spoke of thoughts as "embedded in ...networks of interlocking concepts" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 9) which are transformed through language as one's experiences are shaped and understood. The process of constructing these conceptual networks involves "streamlining, accentualizing, and categorizing impressions that are then crystallized into larger entities of understanding" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 108). Vygotsky would say that these socially influenced processes "provide the key to understanding the emergence of internal functioning" (Wertsch, 1983, p. 61). John-Steiner called such concept construction "acts of knowing" which are both individually and culturally/socially oriented.

Communication can occur because "thought reflects conceptualized actuality" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 7). The construction of concepts, a process involving the

streamlined categorization of impressions and the consolidation of these into a new whole, is both a public and a private process, taking into account self knowledge as well as the larger social/cultural framework of experience. John-Steiner (1985) maintained that

...to live inside an active mental world is to be both solitary and intensely social: to be engaged in shaping new knowledge is to be a part of the human enterprise while at times standing outside of its more mundane aspects. (p. 202)

The internalization of concepts requires a linking of the new with the existing inner structures. When a thought is placed in its verbal and social context, that thought can turn outward. What is new is made explicit against the implicit--or tacit--background of experience. This is essential to the act of knowing; it is the essence of creativity. How this creative process occurs is addressed by John-Steiner as the transformation from external to inner speech and back again to external speech.

### Developmental Aspects of Language

#### Language and Meaning

The translation of inner speech to external speech is not as simple as translating English to French. Neither is inner speech simply an interior mirror of external speech. Social speech changes as it moves inward. Inner speech, condensed and abbreviated thought, reflects an

individual's concept building. Thus a function of external speech is putting these thoughts into words.

Vygotsky poetically compared a thought "to a cloud shedding a shower of words" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 150). It may take many words to express an inner thought. The transition from thought to words is a movement through meaning. The thought passes through meanings and then through words. This brings us back full circle to Vygotsky's original unit of analysis--word meaning--in which thought and language dynamically interact.

Piaget maintained that language is structured by logic. This analysis differs from that of John-Steiner and Gardner, along with Vygotsky, who asserted that language itself constitutes the source of logic and meaning. Through language we acquire meaning and an understanding of ourselves as individuals in community with others. Ricouer (1976) asserted that while one's "lived experience" cannot be transferred whole to another person, through the use of language--discourse--the "wonder" of communication can occur (p. 15).

According to John-Steiner, Piaget limited the importance of language as the bridge for this movement of thought. Language, however, is central to the development of thought, thus, of person. As a child develops, he or she is motivated first by a "need to know and to imagine"--a need that is later transformed into a drive for

coherence, a making sense of what is known and imagined (John-Steiner, 1985, pp. 8-9). Huebner's belief that "imaginative expression of meaning is most significant when shared with another person in the act of conversation," (Feinberg, 1985, p. 64) adds to this concept of imagining and knowing. The drive for coherence is evidenced both inwardly and outwardly. Indeed, Vygotsky held that the development of coherency--making sense of one's world--is the primary and on-going function of egocentric speech.

#### Egocentric Speech and Meaning

This analysis differs from Piaget's theory that a child grows into egocentric speech, uses it for a while to refine categories and to pretend--"to know and to imagine," and then lets it go at the onset of concrete operational thought when speech begins to turn inward. John-Steiner maintained that as children acquire language, they move "in a zig-zag fashion, between public and private uses of words" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 119) searching for clarity and coherence.

Piaget, on the other hand, defined a developmental stage theory which begins with a sensory-motor stage (birth to 42 months) and a pre-operational stage (42 months to 72 months). During the latter stage, egocentric speech reaches its peak. By the time the child is seven

years old, this speech is replaced by socialized speech (Caplan & Caplan, 1983, pp. 20-21).

Piaget saw egocentric thought as the link between subconscious thought and logic, a link that once used to make the transition has no further function. Vygotsky, on the other hand, believed that "egocentric speech does not ...remain a mere accompaniment to the child's activity." Rather, it becomes "an instrument of thought in the proper sense--in seeking and planning the solution of a problem" (Vygotsky, 1962, p.16). Egocentric speech is more, according to Vygotsky, than a simple bridge between nonverbal thought and socialized speech. It is in itself a recurring stage that indicates the dynamic interplay between external and internal speech. (See Figure 2.)

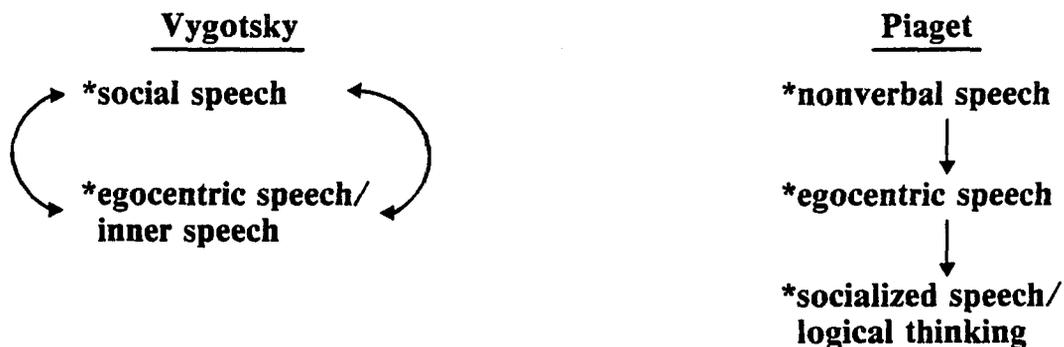


Figure 2. Differences between Vygotsky's and Piaget's interpretations of the dynamic interplay between external and internal speech.

Piaget's stages appear as a fixed progression beginning with nonverbal, or inner, speech and moving

over the bridge of egocentric speech to social speech, or speech for others. Vygotsky conceived of the development of thought as a more fluid movement from socialized speech (speech for others) to inner speech back to socialized speech:

The inner speech of the adult represents his thinking for himself...it has the same function that egocentric speech has in the child. It also has the same structural characteristics: Out of context, it would be incomprehensible because it omits to "mention" what is obvious to the "speaker." These similarities lead us to assume that when egocentric speech disappears from view it does not simply atrophy but "goes underground," i.e., turns into inner speech. (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 18)

#### Inner Speech and Meaning

Why does speech turn inward? Vygotsky maintained that language development is an outward to inward process. The development of inner speech is dependent on outside factors. Once "inside," one's perceptions of reality are simplified, generalized, and translated symbolically so that experience with the world can be communicated to others. Thus begins a recurring cycle of outer and inner interactions.

It is through language, especially through inner speech, that "experiences are made one's own and shaped and represented to one's self" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 30). However, as she noted,

...the inner comment upon life is not easily distinguished by children at an early age from the pride of communicating with others, though subse-

quently they learn to differentiate between external speech (or speech for others) and inner speech (speech for oneself). (p. 30)

Church concluded that this differentiation did not occur automatically nor at a point in one's life that could be specified:

It is impossible to say when the stream of symbolic consciousness takes firm hold, but in many adults--especially those who are described as "verbal"--we find an almost uninterrupted flow of internal verbalization by which the individual orders, integrates, and embroiders his experience as it is happening...." (Church, 1961, p. 99)

This is consistent with John-Steiner's description of children as "driven by their need to know and to imagine" who, as adults, are driven by "a power and intensity in their thrust toward coherence" (John-Steiner, 1985, pp. 8-9). A major vehicle for this thrust toward coherence is the symbol system of language in which each word is in itself a generalization of a concept.

#### Adolescent Development and Voice

What happens with this public and private search for meaning as the child moves into adolescence and the search for self intensifies?

Erikson's psychosocial developmental stages offer a framework for an initial understanding of adolescence and its place in human development:

- \*Trust vs Mistrust (birth - 12/18 months)  
"I am what I am given."
- \*Autonomy vs Shame, Self-Doubt (18 - 36 months)  
"I am what I will."
- \*Initiative/Imagination vs Guilt (36 - 60 months)  
"I am what I imagine I can be."
- \*Industry vs Inferiority (60 months - 9 years)  
"I am what I learn."
- \*Identity vs Role Diffusion (10 years - 15+ years)  
"I know who I am."

(Caplan & Caplan, 1983, pp. 20-21)

### Stage Integration

In a close look at adolescence, Erikson (1968) noted that adolescence should be a time for the integration of all the initial identity building elements from earlier stages of development. For example, in the earliest stage children learn to trust or to distrust) self and others. In adolescence children need people and ideas in which to trust and believe.

Whereas the child recognized that he or she could "will freely" in the second stage of psychosocial development, in adolescence the child eagerly seeks opportunities for exercising this autonomy--but is "mortally afraid" of exposure to "ridicule or self-doubt."

During the third stage of development children exhibit an unlimited imagination as to who they are and what they might become. In adolescence children draw on

these possibilities for becoming, putting their trust in those persons who give credence to their imagination and rejecting any "imposed limitations."

During the fourth stage a child has begun to receive recognition from his or her "products" (Erikson, 1968, p. 129). In the adolescent's search for identity, a need for achievement emerges in which "self-image evolves from successes and failures" (Van Hoose & Strahan, 1988, p. 19). Entering adolescence determined to "know who I am," the child resists those aspects of the environment which are perceived as depriving him or her "too radically of all the forms of expression which permit" the development and integration of this growing sense of identity (Erikson, 1968, p. 130).

#### Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Understanding

Gardner suggested that in adolescence, personal knowledge, intra- and inter-, makes an important shift in function. During the "turbulent" adolescent years the individual is experiencing a maturing of self-knowledge concurrently with a more discriminating knowledge of others. According to Gardner (1983),

Adolescence turns out to be that period of life in which individuals must bring together these two forms of personal knowledge [intra- and inter-] into a larger and more organized sense, a sense of identity or...a sense of self.... (p. 251)

Gaining "access to one's own feeling of life" while at the

same time exercising "the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals" (Gardner, 1983, p. 239) is the task begun in adolescence. Eventually, through the exercise of intrapersonal intelligence, "the individual can offer an account of himself--one couched in language...that puts forth...all of his own experiences that seem worthy of note" (Gardner, 1983, p. 295).

Where Gardner's theory differs here with Piaget's stage theory is primarily in the concept that in late adolescence and even in adulthood, the individual moves back and forth between the stages of thought/language development. This compares with Vygotsky's belief that some of the functions of children's egocentric speech are paralleled in some of the functions of adult inner speech and vice versa.

Feinberg added a dimension to this back and forth movement with an analysis of Macdonald's theory that a response to the world is a "dual dialectic" being both outward and inward. Outwardly we consider the outcomes of our actions and experiences, and inwardly we attempt to make sense of these actions and experiences. Feinberg (1985) postulated that "Macdonald is quite ready to call 'self' that which is the mediating agency" in this dual dialectic (p. 54).

As the individual understands his or her experiences through interpersonal intelligence, he or she is better

able to "edit" self-concept as it is altered by new experiences and interactions and continues to evolve (Gardner, 1983, p. 315). Polanyi called this language growth a process of "sense-giving" and "sense-reading." As children imitate the words they hear from adults, their vocabulary grows. As vocabulary growth continues, the clarity and precision of the language improves, and with it the range and complexity of the child's language and understanding. According to Polanyi, this process of language development is not only a form of tacit knowing, it is also a "quest" toward ever improved communication:

The growth of vocabulary and the acquisition of ever more subtle grammatical rules are both actuated by the imaginative search for further enrichment and greater precision of communication. Semantic sense-giving and sense-reading are striven for ever further, as the twin powers of intuition and imaginagion work towards this from start to finish. (Polanyi, 1969, p. 204)

### Problem Solving

John-Steiner recognized the complex and lengthy process of voice development, calling such development "a distinctive approach to puzzling problems" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 37). Here again Vygotsky's influence is seen as John-Steiner looked to languages of thought, or Gardner to multiple intelligences, with the same emphasis on problem solving as the key to fully expressed thought.

When Vygotsky described the function of egocentric speech, he indicated that thought "in the proper sense"

reflects the seeking of and the planning of solutions to problems" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 16). Gardner echoed this theme in his theory of multiple intelligences: "An intelligence is the ability to solve problems, or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings" (Gardner, 1983, p. x). He further believes that a blending of the "intelligences" (linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spacial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal) is what "makes possible the solving of problems and the creation of products of significance" (p. viii).

Yet it is, perhaps, Polanyi who best defined problem: "A problem is something that is puzzling and promising...." (Polanyi, 1969, p. 119). The excitement of discovery in solving the problem, gives a person "triumphant satisfaction." As we come to know, relief follows perplexity. It is in the act of knowing that we claim the promise "which enhances our existence" (p. 148).

Researchers have just begun to scratch the surface of a fuller understanding of intelligence. Indeed, Polanyi believed that "the vagueness of...the human mind is due to the vastness of its resources" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 151). While such constructs as Gardner's are helpful to us as we broaden the scope of our understanding, defining an intelligence as the ability to solve problems or to create products remains a limited way of understanding the complex process of knowing.

John-Steiner's approach to creative knowing helped to expand these possible limits. The problems to be solved might well be seen as the creative gathering of fragments of knowledge "into a new unity of understanding," that process which "calls upon all the inner resources of the individual--active memory, openness to experience, creative intensity, and emotional courage" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 73). The creating of products as a way to define an intelligence can be seen in what John-Steiner referred to as the "dialectics of creativity" (p. 8), that tension between the idea/intention and the expression or realization of the idea.

In his discussion of human intelligences, or frames of mind, Gardner emphasized an individual's potential to develop to some degree of competence all of the identified intelligences. He recognized, however, linguistic competence as the intelligence shared most widely among humans--an intelligence that most easily facilitates communication.

#### Voice Development

Perhaps the multitude of changes--physical, intellectual, emotional--that characterizes this "inbetween" time exacerbates the fragility of the early adolescent's self-concept. Yet these changes can also mark a time of heightened energy and spontaneity as the adolescent begins that "thrust toward coherence" of which

John-Steiner spoke. The adolescent's need to make sense of experience and to communicate that understanding with precision and clarity becomes a driving force in the development of voice.

In response to one's successes and failures (as determined by one's interactions with others and by one's perceptions of those interactions), the early adolescent sees self as "able or unable, responsible or irresponsible, valuable or worthless" (Van Hoose & Strahan, 1988, pp. 20-21). In later adolescence, however, the view of self, of personal successes and failures, begins "to differentiate to include situations and specific dimensions of strength or weakness" (p. 21).

What happens to spur this differentiation in later adolescence? Much has to do with the development of voice and the growing ability of the individual to find meaning through inner thought and its outward expression.

As the individual approaches adolescence, concept development is heightened, and words become more directly a psychological means of concept formation. According to Vygotsky (1962), no new functions appear at this age; however,

...all the existing functions are incorporated into a new structure, form a new synthesis, become parts of a new complex whole; the laws governing this whole also determine the destiny of each individual part. Learning to direct one's own mental processes with the aid of words or signs is an integral part of the process of concept formation. The ability to

regulate one's actions by using auxiliary means reaches its full development only in adolescence. (p. 58)

The "synthesis" is, in part, that same integration of the early stages of development which Erikson described as characteristic of adolescence. It is the beginning of what Belenky et al. (1986) described as an integrating of the voices of others, of self, and of reason as the individual constructs knowledge.

#### Interactions That Foster Voice Development

I had encouragement important to me.  
That's what mattered....

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 45

Having examined the concept of voice and its development and identified significant factors present in adolescence, we can now focus on what the literature reveals to us about interactions within the composition experience which are most likely to contribute to the development of student voice.

Student-teacher interactions have a major impact, but other interactive elements are also present. Collaborative learning (student-peer interactions) and self-reflection (student-self interactions; teacher-self interactions) contribute to voice development through the composition experience. Student and teacher involvement with the composition curriculum also plays a part in voice development (student-curriculum interactions; teacher-

curriculum interactions). Table 1 offers a summary of these interactions and how they can be expressed. These theoretical categories, or themes from the literature, provided the first component of the framework developed for the analysis of the data presented in Chapter V.

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Table 1

Interactions within the composition classroom that foster voice development

**Student-Teacher Interactions**

Writer to Writer  
Teacher Comments  
Student Ownership  
Connected Teaching

**Student-Peer Interactions**

Collaborative Learning  
Peer Feedback  
Trusting Communities  
Meaning-Making

**Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions**

Curriculum as Dynamic Form  
Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate  
Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum

**Teacher-Self Interactions**

Teacher as Reflective Practitioner  
Teacher as Artist  
Teacher as Writer

**Student-Self Interactions**

Reprocessing  
Internal and External Revision  
Reflective Planning

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### Student-Teacher Interactions

Mostly I think teachers are in a position to help young writers more than just another writer....

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 44

Although there seems to be no debate on the importance to learning of student-teacher interactions, Simpson and Galbo (1986) underscored the immediacy that characterizes such interactions:

The quality of a particular interaction is not predictable, for the ultimate form is determined by the participants at the time of the encounter. Thus, teachers cannot determine with a certainty how students will respond to the various parts of a lesson plan. They must rely upon information gained through interacting with students during the lesson to determine some of the ultimate specifics of instruction. (p. 49)

The immediacy of the interaction is important. The teacher, taking cues from the student, interprets, plans, and restructures during the interaction. Moffett (1968) alluded to this immediacy within the composition experience, recommending feedback during the writing process, not just after the student has completed a writing assignment.

Healey (1985) noted that the writing process is different for different individuals. Therefore, teachers who wish to help students use writing as a way of knowing cannot simply make a general writing assignment and leave the students alone to work it through. Individuals have

different ways into the writing process and need help at different points along the way.

Writing teachers, according to Healey, should involve themselves at different stages of the process. Immediate feedback between the teacher and student during the various stages of writing allows the student the opportunity to incorporate the impact of the interactions into any final product. The nature of the feedback can nurture the development of student voice or it can negate such development.

The literature describes four types of interactions between student and teacher which can enhance the development of student voice: (1) the teacher interacts with the student as writer to writer; (2) the teacher interacts with the student through specific kinds of written and oral responses to the student's composition efforts, and the student's perceptions of these responses are considered in the interaction; (3) the teacher engages the student in a transfer of authority from teacher to student writer as it concerns ownership of a piece of writing; and (4) "connected teaching" occurs in which the student-teacher interactions are intended to nurture the development of student voice.

#### Writer to Writer

By putting something on paper, and  
doing it well, making a meaning and

an order out of some of the world....  
It's the human spirit answering in its  
own terms.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 65

Dellinger (1982), Carroll (1984), and Macrorie (1980) emphasized the importance of the teacher writing while the students write. Not only does the teacher model the processes of writing and revision, the very act of the teacher's writing indicates a respect for the difficult and complex act of composing. Students can see the "imperfect processes" of teacher thinking, can compare these with their own, and are not likely to be overwhelmed by the teacher's "polished product" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 215). When a student sees the voice of the teacher begin to emerge through the process of teacher writing, that student is likely to be encouraged to continue the search for his or her own voice. Carroll (1984) concluded that "students profit most when teachers engage in this complex process with them" (p. 331).

#### Teacher Comments

...I do think...that it may be  
helpful to write stories and read  
them aloud in class and then talk  
about them.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 47

Hillocks (1986) found "teaching by written comment  
...generally ineffective" (p. 167) when the feedback was

in the traditional mode of marking and commenting and grading the student's final written product:

Traditions in the teaching of English hold that compositions must be marked and commented upon--the more thoroughly, the better. But research...suggests that such feedback has very little effect on enhancing the quality of student writing--regardless of frequency or thoroughness. (Hillocks, 1986, p. 239)

However, in his examination of other types of teacher comment, Hillocks found evidence of the importance of teacher feedback. For example, abstract and general comments such as "vague" and "be specific," are not as helpful as focused, specific comments: " Your first paragraph talks about the 'war effort.' Include a sentence or two that gives some examples on the specific efforts that make up the 'war effort.'" (Hillocks, 1986, p. 240).

Moffett (1968) and Sullivan (1986) advocated responses that are real, personal, and specific. Traditional teacher comments such as "redundant" and "revision needed" mean little to the student receiving such response. The implied message, however, is a negative, non-supportive one that is not likely to motivate students nor nurture their voice development.

Hillocks also noted the difference between substantive facilitation and procedural facilitation. When teacher comments offer substantive changes, assuming students will internalize the changes and the underlying

reasons for them, they could well be depriving the student of the opportunity to "think through the necessary changes" or "to work through the problem" (Hillocks, 1986, p. 240). Procedural facilitation involves the teacher asking the student to consider pertinent questions or suggestions--questions which are more likely to trigger the students' thinking on their own.

Ziv's (1984) research expands on this concept. Explicit cues or responses "when students were still in the process of discovering what they were trying to say," (Ziv, 1984, p. 372) proved to be the most helpful kind of responses. Part of voice development is the discovery of what it is one has to say, what personal meaning one attributes to an experience. For more rhetorically mature writers, for those whose voice development has moved beyond initial discovery, Ziv suggested the use of implicit cues or responses to help students "clarify their ideas or...think about ways they could further develop their topics" (p. 373).

Ziv offered evidence that written and oral comments, when designed to create true dialogue, true reciprocal interaction, between the student and the teacher, increase the possibility that students will engage in a discovery process. This dialogue can help students discover what they want to say, why they want to say it, and how their

discoveries can best be stated. This is voice development.

Ziv further suggested that the teacher step out of the role of "fixer" and into the role of interested adult who makes comments and asks questions in a supportive manner. Ziv, as did Moffett, encouraged student-teacher interactions during the writing process and suggested that the teacher move away from an evaluation of the finished products as the sole evaluation. This immediate feedback during the process begins, then, "to establish an ongoing dialogue in which both they [the teachers] and their students are active participants" (Ziv, 1984, p. 379).

While there is not much empirical evidence to support the concept of writing conferences, Ziv suggested that interactive dialogue between student and teacher can help the teacher to become more sensitive to the intentions of the students. It is important to take into consideration both the student's and the teacher's intentions and perceptions concerning the student's writing.

Moffett, too, spoke to the importance of students' perceptions and their influence on student writing:

Probably the majority of communication problems are caused by egocentricity, the writer's assumption that the reader thinks and feels as he does, has had the same experience, and hears in his head, when he is reading, the same voice the writer does when he is writing. (Moffett, 1968, p. 195)

He suggested that appropriate student-teacher interactions

will help students begin to focus more on audience awareness and less on egocentricity.

Kantor (1984) urged that the teacher be alert to signs of movement toward audience awareness--a movement characterized by an infusion of personal voice into the written expressions. Without ongoing dialogue, the student is not likely to move to a more mature level of voice development. Healey (1985) called this maturing process a way to achieve a "distancing" without the writing becoming "disembodied" from the writer. Writing that is distanced but not disembodied has voice.

#### Student Ownership

It has to start from an internal feeling of your own and an experience of your own, and I think each reality like that has to find and build its own form. Another person's form doesn't really help. It shows what they've found, but that ... may not, even apply.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 48 .

The issue of ownership in voice development is an important one in the literature. Zemelman and Daniels (1986) insisted that students must assume more authority over what they write. Student-teacher interactions, then, must move away from a traditional "top down" approach. Schon noted that such an approach presupposes the concept of "privileged knowledge":

"...which...is the business of the teacher to teach and the students to learn....Teachers are seen as technical experts who impart privileged knowledge to students." (Schon in Greene, 1986, p. 79)

The concept of privileged knowledge is "difficult to justify," according to Greene, "now that so many recognize the importance of...perspectival and interpretative knowing" (Greene, 1986, p. 80).

Graves (1983) believed that student ownership is denied when teachers assume the responsibility by making the important decisions of topic for the students. This usurping of the students' decision making responsibility falls into what Hillocks (1986) termed the "presentational mode" which involves teacher lecture, teacher writing assignment, student writing of one draft, and teacher evaluation. The teacher, in such an instructional process, is likely to explain the characteristics of a particular type of writing, present models of it, ask students to do it, then collect, correct, and grade the writing. This approach allows little or no room for the "generative power" of writing for discovery (Healey, 1985).

For example, a teacher may explain thesis statements thoroughly and offer students models of "good" thesis statements. In this approach students may well learn to identify thesis statements in models or exercises. However, the students are not taught procedures for

generating these statements of their own (Hillocks, 1986, p. 224).

Based on his review of writing research, Hillocks determined that the "environmental mode" of instruction allows for more student autonomy in the writing process. This mode uses the "natural process" method of writing instruction in which, through intensive sharing and feedback, the teacher "facilitates the development of ideas and forms which the students have within themselves" (Hillocks, 1986, p. 129).

The environmental mode of instruction adds to the natural process mode a somewhat more structured approach in which the teacher designs specific activities to help students generate ideas. Hillocks described environmental instruction as "procedural facilitation" which uses criteria, models, and the like to facilitate the students' use and adaptation of information about writing.

Applebee described this kind of instruction as exemplary:

In the better lessons...the students were faced with problems that had to be solved out of their own intellectual and experiential resources. Often they would work together to solve problems posed by the teacher; this forced the students both to articulate their solutions more clearly and to defend them in the face of opposing opinions. The subject of the discussion seemed less important than the openness of the approach; what mattered was the sense that the students could offer legitimate solutions of their own rather than discover a solution the teacher had already devised. (Applebee, Auten, & Lehr, 1981, p. 105)

Encouraging students' ownership of their own writing, Zemelman and Daniels (1986) suggested that writing which frees writers, personal autobiographical writing for example, should be encouraged. This kind of writing can be owned by the writer helping to develop depth, growth, and self-discovery.

Healey (1985) advocated the use of first draft writing for such discovery. By writing of a past personal memory, the student must search for concrete details to express the richness of the experience. "Firmly wedded to the...experience of the person" is the way Feinberg described such autobiographical writing (Feinberg, 1985, p. 91).

Grumet (1988) believed that the use of autobiographical accounts of one's experience helps one to study the forms of that experience: "We work to remember, imagine, and realize ways of knowing and being that can span the chasm separating our public...and private worlds" (p. xv).

An interesting experiment conducted by Freedman (1984) addresses this issue of ownership and authority. College students and professional writers wrote anonymously several of the same assignments which were then evaluated holistically by four college teachers. The professional writers did not receive higher ratings, and in some instances received lower ratings, than did the students.

Freedman proposed an explanation that emphasized a need for a transfer of authority and ownership from teacher to student: when the four teachers evaluated the compositions of the professional writers, they may have been affronted by the informality and might have felt threatened by the role reversal evident within the tone of the writing. The professional writers generally write from commitment to beliefs and ideas for an audience they seek to inform. As informers, the writers feel superior to their audience. Therefore, the professional feels free to experiment with the language, to be informal or casual, to choose the best way to express his or her personal meaning. The student writers, on the other hand, are in a subordinate role to the teacher-reader, the teacher-evaluator, "who possessed all the power...and most of the knowledge" (Freedman, 1984, p. 341). Being subordinate, the student is not free to experiment with language or meaning but "must use linguistic forms that show respect, deference, and the proper degree of formality" (Freedman, 1984, p. 341).

Healey (1985) emphasized that students do not often feel the freedom "not to know." Her suggestion again focuses on first draft writing (1) to allow the student to acknowledge without risk what he or she does not understand, and (2) to help the teacher facilitate the student's moving beyond not knowing to discovery. She

encouraged teachers to use learning logs for this type of first draft writing. Students are stopped at various points in the process of a lesson to write in the logs what they understand at that particular point.

Healey maintained that continued use of such "in the middle" writing will evolve from "I just don't get it" responses to "If this..., then this..." thinking. It is the latter kind of response that indicates that students are actively trying to make meaning through writing. Now the teacher has a way into that process to help the students reformulate information and to make sense of their experience with that information. Using their own language to express their own knowledge, students begin to claim ownership of their own knowing and of their own writing.

Many students write with a lack of voice, what Freedman (1984) termed "a lack of force, a lack of commitment to their topics" (p. 345). The traditional interactions of teacher as authority and student as subordinate set up patterns that do not allow students to write with authority or ownership. Development and use of personal voice is thus denied. Perhaps a kind of dialogue/response as advocated by Ziv, Moffett, and others becomes a way to approach the transfer of authority from teacher to student as suggested by Zemelman and Daniels, by Graves, and by Freedman.

Freire, too, advocated a change in the authority system which denies student agency:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teaches. (Freire, 1985, p. 67)

The transfer of authority and ownership of student writing to the student is important in the development of voice. When a student is allowed to own his or her writing, the teacher is then freed to become a collaborator with the writer who is attempting to make sense of and establish connections with his or her world. What is written has the potential to be a unique and compelling piece of communication--the potential for a distinctive voice.

### Connected Teaching

In writing, as in life, the connections of all sorts of relationships...lie in wait of discovery, and give out their signals to the Geiger counter of the charged imagination.

--Welty, 1984, p. 99

Connected teaching, as defined by Belenky et al. (1986), leads students toward power and integrity in their voice development. Connected teachers trust in their students' thinking and encourage them to give voice to their thoughts.

Freire developed the concept of the "partner-teacher,"--one who does not deposit knowledge within the student's head but who helps the student articulate his or her own knowledge. By asking the student questions, and by allowing the student to ask questions, the partner-teacher can help the student transcend the mere transmission of information as that student moves to the empowering position of deriving meaning from experience with that information and in the world.

Feinberg (1985), in his analysis of Greene's curriculum theory, stated that the "wide-awake" student is one who has learned to make connections. These connections help to "link...personal experiences...to the content being studied" (p. 118). The partner-teacher, the connected teacher, can open the possibilities for such linking for his or her students.

In summary, the teacher's willingness to write with the students, to risk exposure of his or her own voice, has proven integral to the development of student voice within the classroom composition experience. Also, interactive dialogue between student and teacher, both written and oral, can play an important role in this voice development. A transfer of ownership of the writing from the teacher to the student writer is another type of interaction that can encourage a student's commitment to the writing, which in turn can lead to authority, force, and power within the writing.

When student writing occurs in this manner, voice development, not correct form, becomes the focus of the composition experience. And, as the teacher moves from a traditional authoritarian stance toward that of a partner-teacher, the chance that the student's voice will be nurtured becomes a much more likely possibility.

### Student-Peer Interaction

For beyond their being written...there  
is what happens to the writer's stories  
when they are submitted to the world....

--Welty, 1980, p. ix

At issue here is whether collaborative learning within writing programs is likely to enhance student voice development. According to the literature, such student-peer interactions increase the likelihood of positive and vigorous voice development. Further, when teacher and peer feedback is combined, results are "consistently... stronger than [with] only teacher feedback" (Hillocks, 1986, p. 240). Student-peer interactions can be viewed in four ways: (1) collaborative learning; (2) peer feedback; (3) trusting communities; and (4) meaning making.

### Collaborative Learning

Moffett (1968) maintained that it is the teacher's role to teach students to teach each other. He was an early advocate of David and Roger Johnson's (1975) colla-

borative learning emphasis. In their study of cooperative learning, the Johnsons refuted the view that ours is a competitive society. A society is, by definition, cooperative; however, within the framework of cooperation, there can be too much inappropriate competition. They considered the American schools to be reflective of this inappropriate societal competition, with students learning to function in an educational environment sorely lacking in cooperative possibilities. They asserted that the under-used structures for cooperative learning are prerequisites for effective problem solving, a process that demands both cognitive and affective responses as well as solitary and cooperative efforts.

Lunsford (1985), too, recognized that collaboration plays a significant role in all kinds of development. He maintained that "learning occurs most often in conjunction with interactions" (p. 160). Trimbur (1985) believed that collaborative learning challenges the traditional beliefs about authority, knowledge, and hierarchies of learning. Johnson and Johnson (1975) underscored the belief that competitive, bureaucratic structures were dehumanizing elements in education. Elbow (1973) held that the teacher is not the final authority. Instead, he saw the teacher as one who encourages students to collaborate, to look at all points of view. Greene (1986) believed that having "multiple perspectives...reduces the likelihood of objectivist one-dimensionality" (p. 71).

### Peer Feedback

Trimbur (1985) argued that peer feedback, the most common form of collaborative learning in the composition experience, keeps students' writing from falling into the trap of premature closure. One-draft writing or a write-revise-submit for evaluation format encourages premature closure. Healey (1985) suggested that first draft writing combined with intentional peer interaction can help to offset this tendency toward stopping the process too soon.

For example, after students have written a quick, ten-minute draft on a general memory topic, they can meet in small groups of three or four to read these drafts aloud to each other. During the reading, no evaluative comments are to be made; but, when something is heard in the reading that triggers something in another student's memory, that student is to note it on his or her own paper. In other words, the writers, who have first generated their own ideas, use other people's ideas to help them generate even more ideas of their own.

The drafting and the interacting continues as students begin to find meaning in their own experiences. Through further collaborative work and face-to-face interactions, student writers are more apt to discover meanings in their writing than if they wrote totally in isolation.

### Trusting Communities

Belenky et al. (1985) encouraged the teacher "to create groups in which members can nurture each other's thoughts to maturity" (p. 221). This is community in which, unlike that in a hierarchical setting, participants can come to know themselves and each other. Such a nurturant coming together of caring, committed persons is reflective of Buber's stance which Feinberg (1985) described as one which "seeks to make connections...between two persons...the process leading to I-Thou" relationships (p. 11). Such connective relationships are dependent on dialogue and interaction with another person, requiring a "being present" with or a "turning towards" another person (Feinberg, 1985, pp. 93, 95).

Zemelman and Daniels (1986) advocated the use of writing to create communities of trust that will inspire growth. In the same way, Beale (1986) asserts that

...communities...like individuals, need good writing  
 ....for communicating information, for solving  
 problems, for sharing insights and experiences, for  
 building consensus about what they love and value,  
 and for increasing and refining their understanding  
 of themselves. (Beale, 1986, p. viii)

### Meaning Making

Kantor (1984) also spoke of the importance of meaning making and its achievement through peer interactions. Talk among peers in the writing classroom is partly concerned with process and craft development. But more than

that, collaborative talk among peers leads to the expressions of meaning and the development of voice.

Knowledge, according to Feinberg (1985), is found in the "being together" of persons (p. 95). In adolescence especially, persons come to understand themselves particularly in relationship with others. As students, through peer talk, get in touch with the quality of an experience, as the essence of the experience manifests itself in communication with others, writing achieves a vitality of its own.

Kantor (1984) emphasized the importance of connection within the writing experience: "isolating writers from others who are undergoing similar developmental processes cannot be beneficial to them" (p. 91). Kantor maintained that students can experience both cognitive and affective growth "from participating with others in a common social and intellectual enterprise" such as writing (p. 91).

Yet, writing is also an intensely individual process. This paradoxical combination of individuality and commonality is explained more clearly by Greene (1986):

Democratic education, certainly, involves provoking persons to get up from their seats...to say something in their own voices, against their own biographies and in terms of what they cherish in their shared lives, what they authentically hold dear. It involves getting them to leave their assigned places in the crowds...and to come together freely in their plurality. It means creating an "in-between" among them, a space where they can continue appearing as authentic individuals, each with a distinctive perspective on what they have come to hold in common,

a space where something new can find expression and be explored and elaborated on, where it can grow. (pp. 72-73)

Peer interaction, therefore, goes beyond simple group work, beyond peer editing, even beyond peer reviewing of others' writing. It is a crucial element in the understanding one achieves of self as it is reflected in the selves of others. It is a crucial element in the emerging student voice.

The teacher's role is to help students "find those relevant themes that will draw the separated individuals together as dialoguing persons" (Feinberg, 1985, p. 77). Feinberg (1985) maintained that it is, indeed, the teacher who can be "the awakener of possibilities for authentic relationships" (p. 128). He cautioned, however, that "the teacher provides opportunities but cannot guarantee outcomes" (p. 110). Nevertheless, when the teacher serves as a model for collaborative learning, when he or she can actually be present with the students in ways that model how students can be present with each other in their search for meaning and voice, then the likelihood that those students will develop authentic, dynamic voice is increased.

Student-Curriculum Interactions  
and  
Teacher-Curriculum Interactions

Yes, and there mostly isn't any grammar.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 151

Two other interactive elements important in a consideration of voice development within the composition experience are those involving the student and the writing curriculum and the teacher and the writing curriculum. Curriculum interactions can be viewed as dynamic processes which address the individual's need to communicate and to make meaning.

Curriculum as a Dynamic Form

Clark and Peterson (1986) maintained that the published curriculum "is transformed in the planning process by additions, deletions, changes in sequence and emphasis, teachers' interpretations, and misunderstandings" (p. 267). In light of their evidence, the curriculum can be viewed as a dynamic entity, not a static one, that is shaped through teachers' and students' interactions with it as well as with each other.

Grumet (1988) acknowledged that the term curriculum was difficult to define:

Curriculum is a moving form. That is why we have trouble capturing it, fixing it in language, lodging

it in our matrix. Whether we talk about it as history, as syllabi, as classroom discourse, as intended learning outcomes, or as experience, we are trying to grasp a moving form.... (Grumet, 1988, p. 172)

She warned that "curriculum, considered apart from its appropriation and transformation by students...is merely a static form" (p. 172).

Feinberg (1985) emphasized the dynamic form curriculum assumes when observed as interactive occurrences:

Curriculum...is seen less as an imposed plan and more as the occurrence of certain interactions. The key factors in this interaction process are the material content of a lesson; the identities of those studying and teaching; the bureaucratic, technical, and pedagogic decisions that affect knowledge inquiry and sharing; and the personal exchanges of all those situated within the physical milieu. (p. 40)

How teachers teach writing, and how students perceive that teaching, is described by Giroux as the "hidden curriculum...those unstated norms, values, and beliefs embedded in and transmitted to students through the underlying rules that structure the routines" (Giroux, 1983, p. 47).

If, for example, a teacher believes in a formal, authoritarian approach to the composition curriculum, this belief is most likely transmitted to the student in ways that impede student ownership of the writing. However, "a curriculum...that leaves space for [a student's] responses, that is transformed by her questions" (Grumet,

1988, p. 173), is a curriculum that encourages student empowerment and agency.

Bruffee (1972) noted that

...while students often forget much of the subject matter shortly after the class is over, they do not easily forget the experience of learning it and the values implicit in the conventions by which it was taught. (p. 468)

Therefore, if students experience a curriculum that encourages them to be agents of knowledge and not passive receivers of knowledge, the empowering element of the experience will most likely carry over into an increased and enthusiastic search for voice and the creation of personal meaning.

#### Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate

Pianko (1979), Freeman, Samuelson, and Sanders (1986), Shah (1986), and Beale (1986) pointed the way toward an interaction with curriculum that can encourage communication. Pianko urged teachers to include within the curriculum "writing experiences which evolve from within students, from their needs to communicate through writing to themselves and others" (Pianko, 1979, p. 18).

Freeman et al. (1986) encouraged teachers to provide within the curriculum authentic writing experiences through an exploration of possible uses of student writing beyond the narrow confines of classroom assignments. Indeed, Beale placed an

...emphasis on writing as a public act...on motives and purposes rather than forms of discourse, or practical argumentation rather than formal logic, and on positive direction in the process of writing rather than prescriptions and lists of things to avoid. (Beale, 1986, p. v.)

And Shah (1986) insisted that traditional writing programs that emphasize such features as detailed outlines before writing will not work because this kind of approach is a static one that does not address the issue of writing as a dynamic, creative process. Shah advocated working drafts through which meaning and intent is discovered. Grumet (1988), too, described the purpose of writing as an attempt "to provide a passage between the images, impulses, and glimpses of meaning that constitute being in the world and our encoded representations of that world" (p. 136).

#### Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum

Kroll (1980) described two theories of human development which underlie composition curriculum and instruction. First is the interventionist mode wherein the essential source of development comes from outside the student. This theory leads to a tightly structured curriculum with highly controlled assignments. The second theory is based on a maturationist mode in which the seeds of growth are seen as already present within the individual. The emphasis of such a curriculum is on "writing centered on the experiences and emotions of the

students and aimed at fostering personal growth" (p. 746). This kind of writing program "focuses on the self-confidence of the students, assuming that only when these writers are able to engage freely in the process of composition" (p. 751) will they be able to interact fully with a curriculum that attempts to foster voice development.

What teachers believed about the composition process highly influenced their approaches toward writing instruction. Gere, Schuessler, and Abbott (1984) developed four scales to measure teachers' attitudes toward writing instruction based on responses to a 1971 National Council of Teachers of English "composition Opinionnaire": (1) Standard English Scale; (2) Evaluation Scale; (3) Student Self-Expression Scale; and (4) Linguistic Maturity Scale. Those teachers who scored high on scales one and two chose to emphasize correctness, usage, and form in their teaching of composition. Those teachers who scored high on scales three and four emphasized "the importance of experience, exploration, personal relationships, and individual development in the teaching of writing" (p. 354).

Polanyi (1969) described language as tacit knowing which "accounts for the acquisition and practice of [complex linguistic] rules" (p. 197). He maintained that persons who communicate do not "identify, remember, and apply a set of complex rules known only to linguists...

and do not need to do so" (p. 204). These rules are acquired and applied tacitly.

When language is understood on this basis, Hillocks's studies acquire an increased importance. An overemphasis on complex linguistic rules of grammar and mechanics, which are better understood tacitly than explicitly, has been demonstrated to be detrimental to student writing. Hillocks concluded that

...traditional school grammar (i.e., the definitions of parts of speech, the parsing of sentences, etc.) ...taught in certain ways...has a deleterious effect on student writing. (Hillocks, 1986, p. 248)

He further maintained that a curriculum which imposed

...the systematic study of traditional school grammar on students over lengthy periods of time in the name of teaching writing do them a gross disservice which should not be tolerated by anyone concerned with the effective teaching of good writing. (p. 248)

Healey (1985) also noted that curricular approaches to the teaching of writing which emphasized such instruction--for example, the diagramming of sentences--offered students "a way of constructing the scaffolding and losing the meaning" of the words as written (Healey, 1985).

When students and teachers interact with a curriculum that is dynamic, moving, and responsive, and thus discover their power to have impact on that curriculum, the chance for growth is increased. While the curriculum might suggest broad guidelines, the teacher and the student assume the responsibility for creating their

own curriculum. This is what Huebner referred to as students' "response-ability" as they try to make sense out of their environment (Feinberg, 1985, p. 59).

Therefore, student and teacher interactions with the curriculum that are most likely to foster the development of student voice within the composition experience are those interactions which recognize a curriculum in progress and are based on the students' need to communicate--to discover meaning and to give voice to the discovery.

#### Teacher-Self Interactions

and

#### Student-Self Interactions

...all the time things are inside you which gradually work to a point that you want to write them down. I don't feel that anything flies in the window and comes into your mind and you write it down. I think the final thing may fly in through the window, but only if you've received it by a constant brooding on something.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 9

Two final interactive elements which can have impact on the development of student voice within the formal composition experience are those of teacher and student self-reflection, although the reflective student is not as well-defined in the literature as the reflective teacher.

Teachers who reflect on their interactions with students and their writing, with their own writing, and with the curriculum are more likely to encourage student voice development than teachers who do not. Through self-reflection the teacher can become more aware of his or her own voice development.

The student who engages in acts of reprocessing, revision, and reflective planning, interacts more fully with his or her writing than the student who is not so self-reflective. Such reflection lends itself to that transformation of which Master (1983) spoke in which students become involved in a discovery of who they are and who they are becoming--in a discovery of personal voice.

### Teacher/Self-Reflection

#### Teacher as reflective practitioner.

In their research on teachers' thought processes, Clark and Peterson (1986) emphasized the relationship between teachers' thoughts and subsequent actions. One of the major categories within the domain of teacher thought processes is that of planning and reflection. Through journal writing teachers have indicated much of the thought that influences how their plans are made, why they make the decisions they do, and how reflection on and evaluation of their plans influence further planning.

Review of such journals has helped researchers determine much of the interactive thought processes of teachers.

Schon (1983) presented the theory that "reflective practitioners" not only reflect on actions that occurred in specific teaching situations, but they also reflect on their decision making as it is occurring in those interactive situations.

The influence of teacher planning on what actually occurs in the classroom teaching situation takes on special significance in this context. According to Clark and Peterson,

...planning shapes the broad outline of what is... likely to occur while teaching....But once interactive teaching begins, the teacher's plan moves to the background and interactive decision making becomes important. (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p. 267)

Part of this decision making occurs as the teacher processes the cues from students' behavior and actions. When, on the basis of such cues, teachers choose to depart from a planned sequence of lessons, they later can "reflect on and analyze the apparent effect of their own teaching and apply the results of these reflections" to subsequent planning and instruction (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p. 293).

Greene (1986) emphasized the "situation specific" nature of teaching. She warned that the current dependence on fact assimilation, skill mastery, general formulas for teaching, and quantitative means of measuring

student success and teacher accountability serve "to distance the particularities of classroom life," a life she describes as "an unpredictable human situation identical to no other in the world" (p. 80).

By becoming what Schon called a reflective practitioner and Clark and Peterson a reflective professional, the teacher can analyze his or her own attitudes and behaviors in light of how they influence specific actions. Reflective practice in this sense is an example of Freire's (1985) notion of praxis which consists of action plus reflection.

#### Teacher as artist.

Grumet's description of teaching as an art included self-reflection as a vital component of such teaching:

To teach as an art would require us to study the transferences we bring to the world we know, to build our pedagogies not only around our feeling for what we know but also around our knowledge of why and how we have come to feel the way we do about what we teach. (Grumet, 1988, p. 128)

The teacher-artist, according to Grumet, is a commuter who "regularly passes back and forth between the actual and the possible" (p. 79), continually negotiating "the boundary that separates aesthetic from mundane experiences" (p. 79).

Greene (1986) called such commuting a process of making promises. Teachers, she said, can help students move from the everydayness of the givens in their lives by

the promises of possibilities for new meanings to occur. Concerned teachers will, through their caring, help students to invest in "a web of possibilities," to invest "in what might or might not be" (p. 74).

Through reflective practice, it is possible that teachers can grasp this web of possibilities for themselves, thus enabling the process to expand as they passionately promise such possibilities to their students.

#### Teacher as writer.

Another significant vehicle for teachers' self-reflection is for teachers themselves to write. A number of researchers (Dellinger, 1982; Carroll, 1984; Macrorie, 1980) have called for teachers of writing to write with their students. Such an effort emphasizes the teacher's implied belief that the process of writing is a process to be valued, an effort detailed in this chapter in the section on Student-Teacher Interactions.

Larson (1978), however, suggested that teachers of writing also use the process and a subsequent analysis of that process as a means of self-reflection,

...writing in varied forms...using their own voices and assumed voices...doing, themselves, the activities they expect students to perform...and analyzing at some point the processes they pass through in doing these things. (p. 79)

Grumet (1988) emphasized in her work the important thrust of various efforts such as the Bay Area Writing

Project and the subsequent National Writing Project, which were "aimed at engaging teachers in writing so that together they may participate in the activities that bring thought to expression and name those processes" (p. 144). Through these projects the composition process was determined to be

...very different from the ways that it has been conceived and taught in the school curriculum. Writing does not record preaccomplished thought; the act of writing constitutes thought. (p. 144)

As teachers write, and as they reflect on the nature of the process, they become more able to identify with the students' movement toward meaning making and to facilitate this movement. Feinberg (1985) underscored this role of teacher as facilitator, noting that while the teachers can start the student on the process of finding meaning, it is ultimately the student who is the author of his or her own meaning. Teachers who have actively engaged in this discovery process themselves are more likely to become the kinds of facilitators to which Feinberg referred than those who are not.

#### Student/Self Reflection

There is in the literature strong evidence that the processes of revision and reflection in the composition experience is one way of approaching student-self interactions. Discussed under such terms as reprocessing, internal and external revision, and reflective planning,

self-reflection has been seen as a vital component of the student's voice development within the composition experience.

#### Reprocessing.

Reprocessing (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986) is a way of approaching the idea of students' self-reflection in the writing process. Reprocessing refers to the notion of transformation. As a composition is reprocessed by its composer, a transformation occurs in the text "from editing mistakes to reforming goals" (p. 790). Active, engaged reprocessing has a transforming effect not only on the final product but also, and perhaps even more importantly, on the writer's knowledge. Bereiter (1980) referred to this latter transformation as the epistemic function of writing, that which Knoblauch (1985) called personal meaning making and which Healey (1985) called reformulation.

#### Internal and external revision.

Murray (1978) distinguished between internal and external revision. External revision addresses the shaping of the composition for an audience. During internal revision, however, writers attempt "to discover and develop what they have to say" (p. 91).

Moffett (1968) described discourse as a "set of relations among speaker, listener, and subject" (p. 18).

He approached external revision as a process of increasingly complex abstractions. For Moffett, the "I-it" relationship deals with information through which the "I" abstracts from the data (differentiation). The "I-you" relationship deals with communication through which the "I" abstracts for an audience (integration). Both differentiation and integration are necessary to the process of authentic discourse.

Too often in the composition experience, external revision is narrowly defined as editing for correctness and little if any attention is given to developing audience awareness, much less to internal revision. Thus, students embrace the mistaken assumption that revision and grammatical and mechanical editing are synonymous, and that editing for correctness is all that is needed.

One method that has proved effective in deemphasizing an overreliance of teacher and students on editing for correctness alone is that of multiple drafts. Healey's (1985) advocacy of first draft writing is based on the principle that writing, a process of meaning making, is not linear, is not clean and neat, and is not accomplished according to preset rules and formulas.

Healey noted that a major difference between professional and inexperienced writers was the professional's understanding of revision. The professional writer knows there are many drafts to work through, that he or she will

learn through multiple drafts, and that meaning will be clarified and refined through the many drafts.

Inexperienced writers can become more experienced by the use of multiple drafts.

Although the business of composition teachers is not to transform all writing students into professional writers, we can be about helping inexperienced writers become more experienced writers through the concept of revision as reformulation and reprocessing.

#### Reflective planning.

Another aspect of students' self-reflection is described by Scardamalia and Bereiter (1986) as "reflective planning" or the "progressive shaping of goals and ideas during composition" (p. 795). There is a back-and-forth movement in both the process of thought and language development and in the process of writing itself. Writing is a thinking process, therefore subject to the creation of meaning in all its stages. It is important that teachers of writing help students to understand the non-linear nature of the writing process. An internalization of this concept will strengthen the chance that students can actively engage in reflective planning.

This reflective planning can be understood in part as a process of interaction between content space and rhetorical space. In content space "problems of knowledge

and belief are dealt with" (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986, p. 795), while in rhetorical space problems of composition goal achievement are addressed.

Although Greene (1986) spoke of space in another context, her meaning is appropriate here. She advocated the creation of spaces within the educational situation "where dialogue can take place," noting the difficulty of "students discovering what they think and what they do not yet know if there is not space of engagement" (p. 73).

The peer review group offers such space for reflective dialogue. However, teachers not only need to provide the kinds of challenging guidelines for conversation, reflection, and discovery which will lead students beyond editing concerns; they must also recognize the importance of stepping back from the process and allowing the students agency in authoring their own meaning. Hillocks (1986) discovered that such guidelines involving specific criteria for reflection and reformulation served "not only as guides for revision but as guides for generating new material" (p. 160).

Perl (1983) took the idea of self-reflection a step further suggesting that students keep "process journals" which will help them to reflect on what is happening to them as they write. It is likely, however, that such journaling in composition classrooms will have minimal effect unless teachers have personal and professional commitments to journaling as a method of self-reflection.

Reprocessing, internal revision, and reflective planning speak to the idea of a student's simultaneous interactions with self, with writing, and with others. Such interactions affirm for students that there is a real "I" in the process (Feinberg, 1985, p. 88) and that "there is no we without an I" (p. 124).

John-Steiner's explorations of thinking led her to believe that as writers attempt to clarify their inner thoughts--either through highly condensed inner speech or through multiple written drafts--there begins to occur between the the writer and his or her work another kind of dialogue (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 75). This demanding dialogue between the writer and his or her product helps to clarify inner speech as it becomes articulated speech.

The act of reflection and revision is simultaneously an act of becoming for the adolescent. The transformation of one's inner thought processes to "convincing achievements" (p. 8) requires commitment. It takes skill and effort, John-Steiner asserted, to "give form to one's experience (p. 67), to shape "the inner shorthand of ideas into publically available work" (p. 79).

John-Steiner emphasized the need for discipline and hardwork, "invisible tools" for revision. However, revision without reflection is only a part of the task necessary for students to become transformers of experience. Both student and teacher self-reflection can

lead to a discovery of and development of voice within the composition experience. Greene (1986) urged that teachers along with their students move beyond the mere ordering and articulation of experience. A passion for discovering meaning "can be a transformation of the world," a giving of voice to "the power of possibility" (p. 81). In this way writing can become a vital way of knowing for ourselves and our students.

#### Summary

This analysis of the literature revealed that there are interactions within the composition classroom experience which specifically influence the development of student voice. The two most important are interactions between student with teacher and between student and peer. Also important are the teacher's and the student's interactions with the writing curriculum. Teacher and student self-reflection play a role as well in the development of voice.

It is critical to note, however, that none of these interactions occurs in isolation from other factors in the student's life experiences nor in isolation from each other. How a teacher interacts with the curriculum, for example, might well be a determining factor in how a student approaches the writing task. Likewise, the nature of a student's ability to be a reflective transformer could influence his or her teacher's instructional

emphases. Certainly, if a teacher is committed to student ownership of writing, the student will be more likely to develop a sense of agency than if the reverse is true. Therefore, it is important to view these identified interactions as dynamic interplays between and among themselves and, in a broader sense, with other significant influences in the lives of both students and teachers.

In any case, the literature shows us that classroom composition experiences which emphasize the creative and epistemic power of language and classroom interactions which encourage openness, exploration, and collaboration, are the experiences most strongly aligned with the discovery and development of student voice.

#### Conditions That Foster Voice Development

Writing...is one way of discovering sequence in experience, of stumbling upon cause and effect in the happenings of a writer's own life....Connections slowly emerge....Experiences too indefinite of outline in themselves to be recognized for themselves connect and are identified as a larger shape. And suddenly a light is thrown back, as when your train makes a curve, showing that there has been a mountain of meaning rising behind you on the way you've come, is rising there still, proven now through retrospect.

--Welty, 1984, p. 90

The creation of a classroom environment which is conducive to students' voice development is highly

dependent upon the commitment of the teacher to addressing nurturant conditions. The literature identifies four such conditions: (1) The teacher creates opportunities for apprentice/mentor relationships in the classroom; (2) The midwife teacher facilitates the growth of connected classes; (3) the teacher responds to "the teachable moment" as it occurs within the classroom setting; and (4) the teacher plans writing activities that encourage the student's emerging voice.

Table 2 offers a summary of these conditions. These thematic categories provided the second component of the framework developed for the analysis of the data presented in Chapter V.

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Table 2

Conditions within the composition classroom that foster voice development

**Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships**

**Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes**

**Responding to "The Teachable Moment"**

**Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice**

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### Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships

Adolescence is a period in which many forces are coming together inter- and intrapersonally. It is a particularly dynamic period for voice development. Miller (1974) saw this as a period during identity development when the need for adult models is at its peak (p. 52). It is the time when individuals are trying on identities (Van Hoose & Strahan, 1988, p. 19) much like various clothes in a wardrobe.

John-Steiner suggested that what can happen in that time between childhood and adulthood should offer the adolescent an informal framework for intellectual and creative growth, for the development of a powerful, individual voice, for the development of a way of knowing. She saw apprenticeships as the most natural way of creating this framework.

During apprenticeships young people are afforded the interest of a knowledgeable, caring adult. The adolescent, John-Steiner maintained, yearns to communicate, to "reach somebody by words" (p. 50). The adolescent in search of self and in search of a vehicle for the expression of that self can clearly benefit from a live mentor who can serve to validate the adolescent's discoveries. The adolescent in search of self can clearly benefit from the guidance of an adult who becomes a "cherished audience" (p. 50) for the youth's self-expression.

Yet, all these adult models need not be physically present. Learning from "distant teachers" (Belenky et al., 1986) through their published works enlarges the possibilities for apprenticeships. "Thus," according to John-Steiner, "varied paths through the past as well as through the present are pursued before one achieves a distinctive voice, a creative identity" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 37).

The uncertainty and tentativeness of the adolescent's evolving thought and its subsequent expression is only natural. To tolerate the anxiety this uncertainty generates, the young thinker needs the sustained "support from mentors and peers" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 67). John-Steiner suggested that some of the needed nurture comes as well from the creative expression of the thought itself.

The anxiety and self-doubt that often accompany an adolescent's "becoming" can be somewhat relieved by the strong support of a mentor who "serves to validate a young person's own discoveries" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 61). Nurturant adult support is supplemented by the discoveries themselves, by the creative endeavors shared by apprentice and mentor (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 61). In other words, not only does the process feed the product, the product also feeds the process.

During apprenticeships, adolescents can "immerse themselves in the work of their elders" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 59) as well as explore their own inner resources. When exploration and immersion are characteristic of the early stages of development, a solid foundation for the eventual acquisition of a distinctive voice is laid. During apprenticeships the young person is engaged in the active process of developing this distinctive voice.

How individuals respond to this immersion in their mentors' work and in their own exploration of their inner resources differs. For some their transformation into a more sophisticated thinker is approached externally until they begin to hear their own voice. For others, it comes from the drive of their inner experience toward an exploration, or toward a "making sense," of their outer world (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 59).

In those educational settings which do not encourage "passionate knowing," alienation from self and from others can occur. As Polanyi emphasized, "we endow a thing with meaning by interiorizing it and destroy its meaning by alienating it" (Polanyi, 1969, p. 146). Polanyi described a novice-master relationship that is quite similar to John-Steiner's apprentice-mentor relationship. It is through a process of "indwelling" that a novice/apprentice can become immersed in the work of a master/mentor.

Polanyi stated:

We know another person's mind by the same integrative process by which we know life. A novice trying to understand the skill of a master will seek mentally to combine his movements to the pattern of which the master combines them practically. By such exploratory indwelling the novice gets the feel of the master's skill....We experience a man's mind as the joint meaning of his actions by dwelling in his actions from outside. (Polanyi, 1969, p. 152)

It is during the special period of adolescence that John-Steiner's apprenticeships can provide a context for the individual's first serious explorations of inner voice. A major reason that the adolescent needs concentrated apprenticeships is for the purpose of facilitating these inner explorations. Writing, one method of articulating the inner voice, functions as a bridge between the writer and others. When the adolescent, in cooperation with a mentor, establishes such a bridge, the feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, and alienation are lessened.

Gardner (1983) noted that writers, in recollection of their own "becoming," highlight factors of importance for adolescents. For example, a mentor/apprentice relationship can foster the development of skill with the language, can encourage use of memory and experience in the movement from inner to outer voice, and can give the young writer immediate means of imitating a master (pp. 81-82). When a respected adult notices the talents and efforts of an adolescent, the young person more readily

gives attention to his or her sense of direction and purpose.

Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth  
of Connected Classes

The construction of new knowledge involves risk taking. Without some support network, the adolescent is not likely to take the kinds of risks necessary to integrate the voices--of self, of distant teachers, of present mentors, of peers (Belenky et al., 1986). The adolescent needs "models, teachers, and collaborators" (John-Steiner, 1985, p. 207) to help foster a sense of direction during the years of apprenticeships.

John-Steiner strongly advised that cross-generational dialogues, achieved through various apprenticeships with present and distant teachers and through connected teaching, become a part of the adolescent's schooling.

Some of their collaborators are their peers.

According to John-Steiner (1985),

...when creative young people form a community-- however temporary it may be--they become more aware of themselves, they profit from the criticism of their peers, and they learn new ways to claim their experience. (p. 209)

Belenky et al. (1986) described such a community as a "connected class" which is made up of groups "in which members can nurture each other's thought to maturity" (p. 221).

But there is also a special role for the teacher, one which led them to describe the "connected teacher" as a "midwife teacher." The interaction between the midwife teacher and the student is an attempt by the teacher to "help students deliver their words to the world" (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 219). The midwife teacher helps to draw out the meaning from within the student, the meaning that comes to be expressed through voice.

The midwife teacher can be compared with Vygotsky's (1962) teacher as "mediator" scenario in which the teacher mediates between learners and what they are ready to learn. The midwife teacher can also be compared with Freire's (1985) "partner-teacher," one who does not deposit knowledge in the student's head but who attempts to help the student make his or her own tacit knowledge explicit. Grumet (1988) described such a teacher as an artist and such a classroom as a studio (p. 92) in which a community is created to "encourage and receive expression" (p. 94). The midwife teacher helps to facilitate the growth of connected classes so that students will be able to take the risks necessary for their voices to be heard.

#### Responding to "The Teachable Moment"

Vygotsky's work also helps us focus on another aspect of nurturant conditions in educational settings as part of our concern for adolescents' voice development. He

designated this setting as the "zone of proximal development." The "zone" is actually a time period, though not exclusively biological, during which an individual is most receptive to particular types of teaching and learning. He explained that "during that period an influence that has little effect earlier or later may radically affect the course of development" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 104).

Donaldson interpreted Vygotsky's zone of proximal development:

...the essence of a teacher's art lies in deciding what help is needed in any given instance and how this help may best be offered; and it is clear that for this there can be no general formula.  
(Donaldson, 1978, p. 104)

In other words, the task of the teacher is to identify the individuals' zones of proximal development--that which Dewey and others have called "the teachable moment," and which Maslow identified as moments of "peak experiences" (Feinberg, 1985, p. 36)--as they occur. The teacher is enjoined to be watchful for these "occasions of insight, awe, and mystery...through the full range of cognitively and affectively-based knowing" (Feinberg, 1985, p. 36).

Vygotsky noted further that the complex processes of written speech within a particular zone of proximal development were dependent on adult influence and instruction:

What the child can do in cooperation [with an adult] today he can do alone tomorrow. Therefore the only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it; it must be aimed not so much at the ripe as at the ripening functions.... instruction must be oriented toward the future, not the past. (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 104)

Wertsch described Vygotsky's zone theory as a reflection of the relationship between inter- and intrapsychological functioning. It is that "space" between an individual's independent problem solving skills and that individual's potential for developing these skills through collaboration with capable adults (Wertsch, 1983, p. 68). Greene, too, advocated the opening of "spaces" so that those who are in the process of making sense of their world can discover "what they think and what they do not yet know" (Greene, 1986, p. 73).

"Mediation" plays an important role in furthering the concept of the zone of proximal development. In his analysis of Vygotsky's teacher-mediator, Gravelle (1984) explained that the teacher, or any adult role model, mediates between the learner and "those tasks that are beyond their independent levels of competence" (p. 15). He suggested that the zones of proximal development of an individual be seen as a continuum of interactions between student and teacher. In a classroom that lacks this important recognition of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, it is likely that students will fail to focus on the "important problems" of learning "new ways to claim their experience" (John-Steiner, 1985, pp. 208-209).

### Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice

The literature provides direction for the teacher who wishes to plan writing activities that will encourage the student's emerging voice. Integral to this direction is an understanding of the difference between oral and written speech and how that difference affects voice as it is expressed in writing.

Writing is one manifestation of inner speech, that highly condensed language with which one speaks to one's self. Because of our need to communicate with others, that inner speech is expanded outward to an audience. If one's primary mode of thought is verbal, then it is through words that one attempts to build a bridge of communication. The expansion of inner speech can be a difficult struggle. One "word" of inner speech might be so saturated with meaning that a "shower of words" is necessary for its outward expression (Vygotsky, 1962).

### Oral Speech and Written Speech

Vygotsky's studies convinced him that written speech differed from oral speech and was, in fact, a structurally separate linguistic function requiring high levels of abstract thought:

[Oral speech] precedes inner speech in the course of development, while written speech follows inner speech and presupposes its existence (the act of writing implying a translation from inner speech).  
(Vygotsky, 1962, p. 99)

Vygotsky is describing here a movement from external speech to inner speech to written speech, not a movement directly from oral speech to written speech. It is within the inner interpretations that the public expression of meaning and experience can begin to emerge. This movement is an elaboration of the prior description of motive to thought to inner speech to meaning to words. (See Figure 3.)

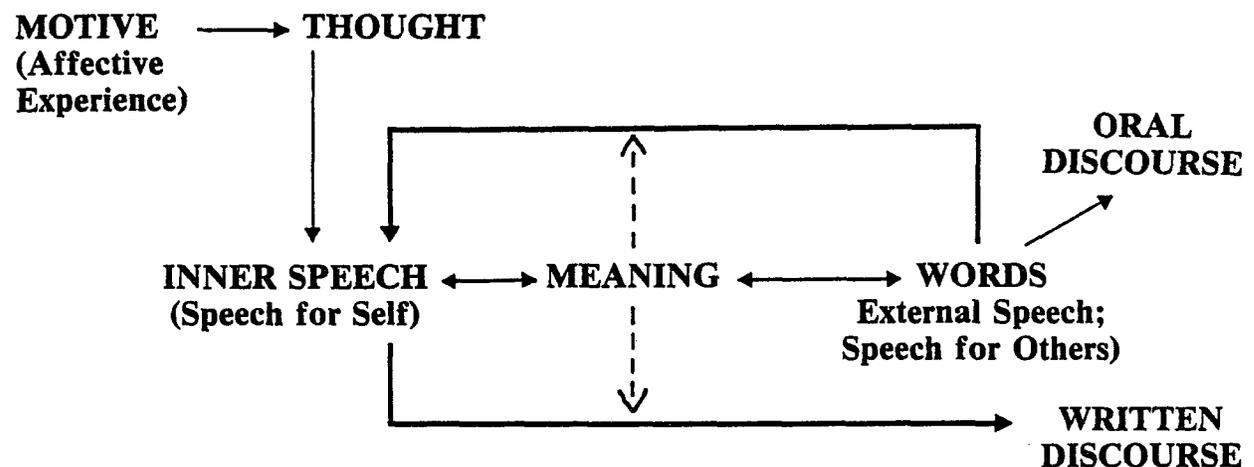


Figure 3. Vygotsky's theory of thought and language, from motive to discourse.

As thought evolves from one's experience in the world, the dynamic movement between internal speech and external speech becomes linked by emerging meaning. External speech is reprocessed through inner speech before it resurfaces in written form, all the while generating meaning from that initial motive.

According to Vygotsky, the translation from inner speech to written speech is a demanding task. It is in the very nature of the abstraction that developing writers meet their "stumbling block" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 98). To be able to replace words (oral language) with images of words (written language) requires the individual to disengage from actual sensory manipulation of spoken language and to become detached from such supports as tone and expression. In writing there is a distant audience, even an imagined audience, for whom the writer must create the communicative situation.

In a sense, writing presupposes an audience--of self and/or of others. Writers order their thoughts in such a way as "'to bring their readers into their texts, to establish a community that includes themselves and their reader'" (Wildeman in Strange, 1988, p. 1). Although Vygotsky characterized oral speech as dialogue and inner and written speech as monologue, John-Steiner's explorations of thought indicated that inner speech is dialogue with self and written speech is dialogue with a distant audience; and Ricouer referred to writing as dialogue by calling it discourse.

Vygotsky differentiated between the abbreviated, condensed syntax of inner speech and the full, elaborative syntax of written speech. In inner speech the subject of thought is known to the thinker; therefore, abbreviation

does not destroy clarity. Written speech, on the other hand, requires full explanation and description in order to be understood by someone other than the thinker. In inner speech the abbreviation is so pronounced that "a single word is so saturated with sense that many words would be required to explain it in [any form of] external speech" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 100).

Ricouer, differentiating between oral speech and written speech, also affirmed that writing is not a simple extension of spoken words:

Writing...is not merely the fixation of a previous oral discourse, the inscription of spoken language, but is human thought directly brought to writing without the intermediary stage of spoken language. Then writing takes the place of speaking. A kind of short-cut occurs between the meaning of discourse and the material medium. (Ricouer, 1976, p. 28)

Ricouer defined discourse as a process that moves backward and forward between a speaker and the world, and he defined writing as one "form of discourse" (pp. 22-23). Indeed, "writing is," for Ricouer, "the full manifestation of discourse" (pp. 25-26).

When writing becomes the medium by which the message of the individual is conveyed to another person, a fundamental change occurs. The listener, in becoming a reader, does not have the advantage of interpretation that face-to-face oral speech offers with such cues as facial expression and voice tone. The writer must try to convey through the conventions of writing the message--or the

intention--through the distance that writing creates between the sender and the receiver. As the writer's voice begins to emerge through the writing, the problems created by the distance begin to be alleviated. The message, or the meaning, is "heard" in a new way.

This change can be represented by the initial metaphor (see Chapter I) of "bottling the fizz." Thought (the fizz) becomes ordered (bottled) in a new way. The ordering, while imposing certain limits, also expands the possibilities for meaning making. Once inscribed, a piece of writing can be returned to at will by the writer-now-reader; the writer now has the option of "hearing" his or her own voice as it is developing. The distance such ordering imposes becomes one of Greene's "spaces" in which there is opportunity for reflection and revision. Such ordering can open possibilities for the emergence of new understandings and interpretations of one's experience in the world. The writer now has the option of "hearing" his or her own voice as it is developing. In addition to this expansion, other readers--close and/or distant--now have the opportunity to sample that which has been "bottled." Dialogue is possible as the writer's understandings connect with the reader's understandings.

### Summary

Beale (1986) described writing as a dual process of communicating as well as a process "of knowing and coming to know" (p. viii). According to Beale,

You begin with an idea, an insight, or a body of information. But in the process of working the idea or information into a coherent and convincing presentation, you produce new orderings and discover new relationships. There is a very real sense in which your understanding is not complete--it remains half-formed and untested--until you have communicated it in writing. (p. viii)

As teachers of writing embrace the concept of voice development through written composition, it is necessary first to recognize the progression from oral language to inner speech to written language, then to recognize the extraordinarily demanding task of translating inner speech to written language. Vygotsky said that written speech activity takes "complicated forms" with "the evolution from draft to...final copy [reflecting] our mental process" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 144).

It is necessary, as well, to acknowledge the meaning making aspect of written language. The act of translating inner speech into written speech is a process through which the thinker/writer becomes more aware of the nature of his or her experiences with the world. In the process of articulation, the meanings of these experiences become more "real" to the writer; and what Vygotsky has called the "web of meaning" continues to grow.

As effective teachers of writing, we can attempt to understand a student's words by looking with the student back to the motivation which preceded those words. We can help the writing student explore the motivations that engendered thought, interpret the thought that becomes highly condensed inner speech, understand this inner speech, and give voice to it. Beyond this, we can provide opportunity for dialogue with appropriate role models, mentors, and even distant teachers.

As adolescents struggle with the demanding task of translating inner speech into written form, effective teachers of writing will treat these youthful reflections, rehearsals, and revisions with nurturant care. Thought will be connected to Vygotsky's "fullness of life," and through written composition thought will be articulated. Under such nurturant conditions, the adolescent's development of identity, those activities of becoming, will result in the continued growth of a "web of meaning" and in the expression of a dynamic individual voice.

Personal Insights into Voice Development:

Perspectives of a Professional Writer

But I am a professional writer. That is my work and my life, and I take it extremely seriously. It isn't just the love of language, or love of the written word, though that is certainly foremost, but the wish to use this language and written word in order to make something, which is what writing is. It's the tool not the end result.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, 331

Professional writers are involved in an intense daily interaction with language, having chosen to make a career of putting words together in public ways that are personally meaningful. Acting on my belief that professional writers can offer valuable insights into the creative process of writing and voice development, I asked North Carolina author Marianne Gingher to talk with me about writing and voice development.

Ms. Gingher's reflections--as a student of writing, as a teacher of writing, and as a writer--offered another layer of perceptions through which to gain increased understanding of those classroom interactions and conditions identified by the literature as conducive to voice development.

Ms. Gingher is the author of Bobby Rex's Greatest Hit (1986) and Teen Angel and Other Stories of Young Love (1988), published by Atheneum. She has had numerous short

stories published in various magazines and in such reviews as South Carolina Review and The North American Review.

A second novel is currently underway.

Ms. Gingher has taught creative writing at a major North Carolina university and at colleges in North Carolina and Virginia. She remains involved in public school systems through classroom talks, readings, and workshops.

Her insights as presented here are based on a tape recorded conversation I had with her on April 8, 1987 (Professional Writer Interview #1) and on an interview published in The Magazine of Elon, Fall, 1987. I have arranged these reflections according to the outline of interactions and conditions conducive to voice development as presented in an earlier section of this chapter.

### Interactions That Foster Voice Development

#### Student-Teacher Interactions

Supportive teacher comments about her work and responses that indicated teachers were looking beyond her words to her underlying motivations to write were the two student-teacher interactions which had the most impact on Ms. Gingher's early voice development. Experiencing the importance to her own voice development of both student ownership and teacher as writer in her later studies, Ms. Gingher expressed regret that these kinds of interactions were not a part of her high school composition experience.

Writer to writer.

Interactions with her teachers as writers during high school composition classes were not a part of Ms. Gingher's remembered experience. However, in her graduate writing classes, this was an important interaction for her, especially with one teacher/writer. It is an interaction which she continues now with her own students because she has experienced its impact on voice development.

Teacher comments.

Ms. Gingher's reflections on the kinds of comments that were most helpful to her as she began to focus more and more on her writing in high school highlighted the importance of those comments that were personal and indicated that the teacher was indeed responding to her own individual writing efforts. She could recall comments --primarily written--that offered constructive criticism in personal and sensitive ways.

One high school English teacher made quite an impression on Ms. Gingher. She remembered fondly the types of comments this teacher wrote on her compositions.

No matter how badly you did...she would always write me notes. And the notes had kind of a witty air about them. So even if you had done poorly, she would do a smiley face with the lips turned down, you know, stuff like that, but she made her criticisms jovial--kind of soft-edged.  
(Professional Writer Interview #1)

### Student Ownership.

Except for her writing in graduate school, Ms. Ginger felt little freedom in her choice of writing topics in any of her composition classes. She described her formal, classroom writing in high school as "prescribed."

I remember doing a lot of writing--it was prescribed writing....It was like assigned topics, not just, "Well, you've read Coriolanus, now pick an interesting topic and write something about Coriolanus. It was always something specific from all of these teachers....And even in the creative writing class she would say, "Write a love poem" or "Write a sonnet to a friend" or "Write a character sketch about somebody interesting you met last summer." You know, there was always a frame, not just a lot of [freedom]. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Much of the classroom writing she did turned into a game for her, a challenge to "make a grade" for a particular teacher. This approach changed when she studied writing in graduate school. Her teacher, a writer himself, allowed for a great deal of student autonomy.

I never felt a danger in trying to gear my stories towards him. And I never saw him try to make a student gear their fiction in any particular direction. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Ms. Ginger expressed regret at the lack of emphasis student ownership received in her high school composition experiences, seeing this agency as a prerequisite to student voice development.

### Connected teaching.

Nevertheless, Ms. Ginger remembers her high school teachers' recognition of her interest in writing. Their

responses indicated to Ms. Grant a personal interest that is one aspect of connected teaching.

I really felt that teachers who cared for me responded to me because they knew I loved what I was doing, and I loved their--I loved literature. I loved their courses.  
(Professional Writer Interview #1)

Her recollections underscored the importance to her of writing teachers looking, at least in part, beyond the words or the quality of the writing itself to the motivations and intentions of the writer.

When I look back on what my teachers were giving me A's for, it's crazy, it's pathetic, it's awful....I think what they were praising was my enthusiasm and my absolute devotion to it. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Ms. Gingher noted the importance to her own voice development of one teacher's response to her love of writing. That the teacher was able to recognize and respond to that love of writing was, for Ms. Gingher, a kind of connecting glue between herself and a respected teacher. This glue served to strengthen her voice.

### Student-Peer Interactions

During the early 1960s, when Ms. Gingher was a high school student, the concepts of "collaborative learning" and "peer writing groups" were not a part of the traditional approach to teaching composition. Her interactions with peers occurred in more informal settings such as school publications. She recalled the growth she experienced from these informal but important peer

interactions in student publications. Such feedback from peers who respected her ideas was important to Ms. Gingher.

Trusting communities.

Ms. Gingher found that trusting communities were built not so much within the formal composition classroom setting but rather through interactions with other students working on high school and college student publications. She discovered that the outlet of student publications offered a natural setting for the growth of trusting communities.

I was the co-editor [of the high school yearbook] with someone else. She did the layout; I did the literary stuff. That was important for me. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Within these trusting communities Ms. Gingher discovered a security that allowed her to begin to refer to herself as a writer.

I was very involved with...a literary magazine....It was a vanity press is what it really was. But it was real important to me. There was a handful of girls who fancied themselves poets. I was among them....So we were kind of this little arty-party team....It was the one thing...I did that I got a lot of pleasure out of....And for that reason, it made me feel that I had a niche. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Often Ms. Gingher is invited to speak or to conduct writing workshops in the schools. She noted what she believed to be a disturbing aspect of the lack of peer interactions, especially as the lack was evidenced in a meager sharing of self.

The difference between say sixth grade and seventh grade-- it just breaks your heart to see the difference in their attitude toward school and sharing. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

#### Meaning making.

The aspect of meaning making through peer interactions was not addressed in Ms. Gingher's reflections of her own high school and college composition experiences. However, her descriptions of the trusting communities within the area of student publications detail a growing confidence with her own voice development. Through her various interactions with peers she was at least beginning to define her self, a step that leads to clearer meaning of one's experiences.

#### Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions

Ms. Gingher's memory of her interactions with the curriculum as a student was one of frustration with a rule-oriented curriculum. Her response to a dynamic as opposed to a static curriculum came as a teacher rather than as a student.

#### Curriculum as dynamic form.

A dynamic writing curriculum offers students the opportunity for risk taking with a built-in safety net.

This [school writing] is the time to make mistakes. To experiment.

(Gingher Interview, Klopman, 1987, p. 11)

She urges her own writing students not to be afraid to "lose control." Ms. Gingher expressed her firm conviction that any writing curriculum should allow for risk-free student experimentation with the language--even if that meant writing out "a lot of dreck."

According to Ms. Gingher, a dynamic writing curriculum also takes into account the importance of passion in one's writing.

Most of all, I want the students to be excited about their subject. To get involved with it. Writing is a discipline, but when ideal, it becomes a joy. It's natural. (Gingher Interview, Klopman, 1987, p. 11)

She seeks to design her writing classes in ways that open up possibilities for her students. Exposing her students to literature (the wisdom of "distant teachers") is one way she has attempted to approach a writing curriculum.

It's not...just one of these roundtable workshops. It's...the study of literature, too, because I really firmly believe that that's the only way to help students get better at their writing. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

#### Curriculum and students' need to communicate.

Ms. Gingher's need to communicate was not met so much by a writing curriculum sensitive to this need as it was met by teachers sensitive to her love of writing and literature and by extracurricular opportunities for sharing her ideas with peers.

Ms. Gingher yearned to write, and some of her writing teachers recognized this yearning. They were sensitive to her need and offered opportunity outside the curriculum for Ms. Gingher to exercise her love for writing using them as her audience. The curriculum itself, albeit indirectly, through student publications, also addressed this need for her.

Rule-oriented vs meaning-oriented curriculum.

Ms. Gingher found a rule-oriented curriculum frustrating and "boring." For her, a curriculum which placed too much emphasis on grammar drill and too little emphasis on writing was an irritant that she remembered vividly.

Grammar, a major aspect of a rule-oriented writing curriculum, was not a part of writing that Ms. Gingher found particularly helpful. She remembered it, rather, as a frustration.

My English teachers in junior high school just never gave enough writing assignments for me...."Grammar today." Let's have a writing assignment! They never would; it was always grammar, grammar, grammar. It was always, to me, the boring stuff. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Ms. Gingher offered an example of a teacher's willingness to move beyond a rather fixed and structured curriculum. Her high school creative writing teacher made assignments based primarily on the designated curriculum. But she also went beyond this.

The creative writing teacher would encourage us to bring in outside writing that wasn't assigned. She would always read it and make a comment. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

## Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions

### Teacher/self-reflection.

As a teacher of composition who has learned the art of self-reflection, primarily through journaling, Ms. Gingher encourages her students to learn to use journaling as a tool for self-reflection and ultimately for their own voice development. Because she respects the privacy of her students' journals, they tend to trust her. She is available when they are ready to share their writing; but there is no forcing of a voice that is not ready to be heard.

### Student/self-reflection.

Although Ms. Gingher did not discuss the impact of reflection on her own writing as a student, she did comment on her use of journaling as a tool she uses to help her students engage in reflective planning.

She does not give her students rules for journaling, seeing it, rather, as a private place for "warming up."

It's like the stretch exercises you do before you go running....A journal's a place to warm up, practice whatever you want. It's a good place to test an idea, to put the first words...that might later grow into something more. (Gingher Interview, Klopman, 1987, p. 11)

She respects the privacy of such practice, requiring only that her students keep a journal not that they share it with her or with their peers.

Maybe, just every so often [I] let them choose a paragraph from their journal to read....I used to do that with my college students. They had to keep journals, and they

didn't have to show them to me; they just had to flip them every now and then so [I] could see the writing.  
(Professional Writer Interview #1)

### Conditions That Foster Voice Development

Although she did not discuss "the teachable moment" as a facet of nurturant conditions in the writing classroom, Ms. Gingher did deal with the concepts of apprenticeships and of connected classes and midwife teachers as important to student's voice development.

### Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships

Ms. Gingher maintained that she "started" her career as a writer when she was very young and that she wrote all the time. Her school writing experiences, especially in junior high, did not give her the kind of intense work with writing that she would have preferred--too much emphasis on grammar and too little emphasis on writing.

When she used the word "apprentice" in reference to her own writing, she was interpreting it broadly. Her early apprenticeships were with "distant teachers," whose works she found in her literature anthologies and other published sources. Using the writing of these mentors as her guides, Ms. Gingher wrote.

It's kind of like you're in a long apprentice stage as a writer whenever you start. Some people achieve their success earlier than others. But some people just have to write out a lot of dreck which is what I had to do. And I had to write and write and write and write and write a lot of stuff. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

She saw, however, the value of teachers providing their writing students with "live" mentors, persons who are writers themselves, as a way to initiate an apprentice/mentor relationship within the composition classroom.

I can remember when Randall Jarrell would be in [my high school]. I never was privileged enough to sit in his class, but he was friends with the Shakespeare teacher, and every year she would have him come over. And all I remember was he would drive up in his MG, and he always had on white tennis shoes and a white suit....And his MG was a convertible. And he'd just sort of be seen in the hall gliding through....Everybody got so excited....That was really meaningful to me. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

According to Ms. Gingher the sharing of the struggle, insight, and creativity of distant teachers and live mentors is an important facet of students' voice development. Because she has experienced the value of apprentice/mentor relationships within the composition classroom environment, Ms. Gingher often serves in a mentor capacity in the public schools.

I think it's wonderful to bring in people from the outside. I think that's a good thing to do, and I never say no to the public schools when they call because, you know, that's really where my education started; and I had enough experiences like that in public schools so that I feel a kind of debt. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

#### Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes

Ms. Gingher sees the teacher's task, in part, as that of providing the students with mentors. It is Ms.

Gingher's conviction that in order to learn to write well students need to be exposed frequently to a range of writing. A classroom composition teacher can, according to Ms. Gingher, help writing students form connections with other writers through their published works.

And I think exposure to the sorts of literature....I think part of a...writing teacher's job really is to make students aware of a great range of literature....you read the masters...you read contemporary work....you read-- well, okay, you read just the range and let them know that this is how you learn...writing. It's all through imitation. It's how you learn anything is by knowing what works. The only way to know what works is to read a story in which everything works and then to discuss the elements and why it works. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

The literature has defined a midwife teacher as one who attempts to help students deliver their words to the world. Ms. Gingher stressed the importance of "getting outside yourself" as another way to approach making this connection with the world through writing. She spoke of the influence her teacher/mentor in graduate school had on her delivery of her words to the world as she learned to "get outside" herself.

I think he really--he sees it...those people who you can tell for one reason or another really want to do better. And they're not doing it for a grade. He sort of down-plays the importance of grades by giving everybody A's. "So, you want an A? Yeah, I'll give you an A." But you always know if he's disappointed in your story, you know. And so that really becomes more important that you respect him so much, if it becomes important to please him. And so, you're really kind of getting outside of yourself to do that, which is what all writers have to do anyway. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Perhaps her most poignant memory of a writing teacher affirming her voice was that of a high school writing

teacher who was a nurturant midwife, recognizing and affirming her student's voice development.

I can remember...that she once wrote at the end of the senior year--she wrote me a long letter about how much she was going to miss me and how flowery my style was, and when I went off to college somebody was going to sit on that. "But," she said, "you'll need to clean it up, and you'll need to work on it, and you'll need to reevaluate it. But don't ever really change." It was the first time she had sort of said...hold on to what you have. People are going to want to shape it and direct it, but essentially, it's okay, and just don't give up on it. That was her message to me. She was a real influence in the way I thought about myself. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

Her message had such an influence that Ms. Ginger remembered that letter when C's and D's started coming back on her college freshman compositions. Ms. Ginger recalled thinking that her writing professor was criticizing her style--which she could work on--but not her voice which was an essential part of who she was.

It was, then, a midwife teacher who first flagged for Ms. Ginger the importance of developing one's unique and individual voice. Ms. Ginger recalled with passion this senior English teacher who not only affirmed her developing voice, but who also cautioned her to guard against those teachers who might wish to squelch it.

That affirmation carried Ms. Ginger through some trying times in later composition classes. Now she is an advocate for the writing teacher helping students understand the paradox of going inside themselves in order to get outside themselves when they write. The midwife

teacher facilitates this distancing process so that the students can make all the connections necessary for the delivery of their words to the world.

### Recognizing the Emerging Student Voice

When Ms. Gingher speaks to school groups about writing she tries to understand how the students feel about their own writing. This is consistent with her recognition of the importance to her own voice development of her writing teachers understanding of her underlying love for words and writing.

After I finish talking...I ask them what they like to write about and when they write....Wherever I go, I try to see how much interest there is...what their motives...are. (Professional Writer Interview #1)

As a teacher of writing, Ms. Gingher's goal is to help her students discover their own motives, their own voices,

...voices that suit their strengths. Then they should see how far they can go with those voices. (Gingher Interview, Klopman, 1987, p. 11)

### Summary

Based on her experiences as a student writer, as a professional author, and as a teacher of writing, Ms. Gingher recognized the individual nature of writing and voice development. She also recognized the individual's need to communicate with others. She noted the importance of teachers of writing understanding students' feelings

and motivations concerning their writing. And she encouraged teachers to facilitate students' discovery of their own motivations so that their voices could emerge clearly and powerfully. Ms. Gingher's personal reflections on writing and voice underscored the importance of a number of the interactions and conditions within the composition classroom identified by the literature as conducive to students' voice development.

#### Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have enlarged the theoretical basis for the study by focusing the literature on insights into voice development. An analysis of the literature provided a definition for voice and a description of writing as a way of expressing that voice. It defined the ways in which language development, especially as revealed in the voice development of adolescents, is interrelated with other aspects of human development. It provided the theoretical insights necessary for the construction of the framework of interactions and conditions within the composition classroom conducive to voice development. This is the framework (outlined in Tables 1 and 2) that I used for the analysis of the data and the presentation in Chapter V of the student's and teachers' perceptions of writing and voice development. Chapter IV, a description of the methodology of this research, includes an explanation of this organizing structure.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

"Thick description" (Geertz, 1973) seeks depth in the research task rather than breadth. The descriptive data gathered for this study provided entrance into the world of formal writing instruction for one student--primarily through that student's perspectives and understandings of his experiences in that world.

Through various explorations of this context--his school, his primary writing teachers, and his writing, as well as through intense discussions with the student--I began to unravel with him his "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973), thereby gaining insights into the meanings he assigned to his experiences.

#### Subjects

One student was the focus for this descriptive case study. There is precedent for this approach in the literature. A review of other case study research in education (eg., Griffin, 1985; Oberg, 1986; Nespor, 1987; and Strahan, 1988) revealed that from one to eight individuals were studied. Oberg, for example, explored through a case study approach the feasibility of using

construct theory as a framework for representing the beliefs which influence the practice of classroom teachers. The resulting categories of constructs, developed from observations of one particular classroom teacher in action and from a mutual interpretation of and reflection on how these actions represented beliefs and principles about teaching, offered a theoretical framework through which Nespur conducted subsequent inquiry with other teachers as they reflected on their professional development.

To understand more fully this particular student's formal composition experience and its impact on his voice development, other sources were also tapped. The perceptions of his eleventh and twelfth grade English teachers as well as those of his twelfth grade journalism teacher on writing and voice development in general and on this student in particular helped to provide the "thick description" so essential to the effective development of a descriptive case study.

All of these people were involved in the direct use of language as it is manifested in writing; and all of them had experience with composition in the school setting. The student writer was immediately involved in the process of writing and could reflect on these immediate experiences as well as on prior school composition experiences. He was in a position to inform

the research of his conceptual knowledge about writing and of the value writing holds for him. His perception of these composition experiences was the main focus of this interpretive inquiry.

His English teachers (eleventh and twelfth grades) and his journalism teacher (twelfth grade) were also immediately involved in the writing experience, and could reflect on the impact of this experience as it affected the student and as their perceptions informed their approaches to teaching writing.

Burgess (1984) noted that selecting individuals for such studies as this requires a much different procedure than that of statistical sampling. According to Burgess,

...informants are selected for their knowledge of a particular setting which may complement the researcher's observations and point towards further investigation that needs to be done in order to understand [the context of the study]. (Burgess, 1984, p. 75)

The sample for this study allowed for indepth inquiry. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that in naturalistic inquiry, which is "tied so intimately to contextual factors" (p. 201), the primary purpose of the sampling is to help the researcher to view as fully as possible the context "in all of its various ramifications and constructions" and "to detail the...specifics that give the context its unique flavor" (p. 201).

The student and three of his writing teachers were in unique, context-specific, position to reflect on the formal composition experience and its influence on student voice development in whatever its "ramifications." Their perceptions, viewed through the lens of theory, offered ways to understand voice. The names used in the study are fictitious, not the actual names of place or participants.

### Student Profile

The following indepth student profile is of great value since the student was the focus of the entire study. When added to his own perceptions of his various school composition experiences, presented in Chapter V, these aspects of his life as a student, based primarily on his cumulative school record, help us to know who Sean is.

Two students in Ms. Smith's (Teacher A) standard, or average, eleventh grade English class were invited to participate in the study. From a pool of 29 writing samples from the class, I chose the two on the basis of a writing assignment then in progress. I targeted their samples because of indications in their writing that they were already aware of a connection between their writing and their individual voice development.

The samples of writing dealt with proposed revisions to an autobiographical "memory piece" by the students. They had completed a first draft, had received feedback

from their teacher and their peer writing group, and had written this particular sample, a proposal for a revision that would convey their memory more powerfully as they attempted to give voice to the experience they were trying to share in writing.

One of the two students chose to participate in the study. Sean was a seventeen-year-old eleventh grader at the time this study began (November, 1987). At the conclusion of the study he was completing his twelfth grade year (1988-1989). He had extended his opportunities for writing by enrolling in Ms. Smith's journalism class at her urging. At this time Ms. Smith had also added to her schedule a twelfth grade standard English class to which Sean was assigned. Therefore, he was with Ms. Smith for English for two semesters of his junior year and for part of his senior year until Ms. Smith retired at the end of the Fall semester. During that first semester of his senior year, he also worked with Ms. Smith in journalism class.

Sean attended four schools in the same public school system from kindergarten (1976) through twelfth grade (1989). He lived with both parents and a sister seven years his junior. His father, who owned and managed his own roofing business, completed one year of college; his mother finished high school and was a full time homemaker. From Sean's description, the relationships in the family

family seemed to be basically positive. He was closer to his mother than to his father, and he considered his little sister "a pest." In various interviews Sean described to me occasions of his mother's interest in his school work and of his father's interest in his grades.

Sean entered kindergarten in 1976 with the notation from his mother in his cumulative school record that Sean had a "slight concentration problem," the same problem his father and uncle had. Yet his individual education plan (IEP) for his participation in a gifted program during the 1982-1983 school year stated that one of Sean's strengths was his ability to become "absorbed and truly involved in certain topics."

An example of both the possible concentration deficit and his parents' interest in his school work came from his sixth grade (1982-1983) report card. When Sean was having trouble with his class work, teacher comments on his report card noted his capability to do the work but emphasized his lack of thoroughness in his daily work (first grading period). The same teacher noted that when Sean's parents became involved with reinforcing Sean's school work at home, his work--and his grades--improved: "Very good progress. Thanks for the help and understanding on the home-front" (third grading period).

Sean's cumulative school record was not indicative of a potential "at risk" student, which is how he was

labeled after failing a ninth grade English class. His class work evaluations from first through fifth grades were marked average or above average. His scores on standardized ability and achievement tests were average or above average. Sean scored the grade equivalent of sixth grade, fifth month (GE 6.5) on the reading section of the California Achievement Test (CAT) in the spring of 1981, his fourth grade year, and the grade equivalent of eleventh grade, eighth month (GE 11.8) on the language section of the CAT, placing him in the 98th percentile.

During his fifth grade year (1981-1982), although his grades were considered only average, he was recommended for Gifted/Talented (G/T) screening and was subsequently placed in a G/T program in sixth grade (1982-1983). Retested during his sixth grade year, an IQ test (Short Form Test of Academic Ability, SFTAA) placed him in the 93rd percentile with a recorded IQ of 124. His CAT scores in the spring of 1983 indicated a total battery in the 95th percentile; and his California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) scores in the spring of 1983 on science and social studies were also in the above average range at the 95th and 93rd percentiles respectively. As a result of these test scores, he was placed in G/T social studies and science classes for his first year in junior high school.

Although he scored in the 95th and 97th percentiles in reading and language respectively on his January, 1984

CAT, his class work grades, which had started to fall to average and below average during sixth grade, continued to remain low. He was recommended for full time regular classes, not G/T classes, for his eighth grade year (1984-1985).

Nevertheless, his eighth grade social studies teacher again recommended him for academically gifted (AG) screening for science and social studies. His May, 1985, CTBS scores had put him in the 99th percentile in science and the 93rd percentile in social studies. However, because of his overall classroom grades of C's and D's, the screening committee recommended that Sean not be placed in the AG program.

Sean entered ninth grade with a history of being tested and retested, and with the notations on his school records that he had the ability to make better grades than C's and D's. His ratings on an adapted Renzulli/Hartman behavior checklist in the spring of 1982 had indicated that while his learning characteristics and creativity characteristics were high, he was not generally self-motivated, self-organized, nor self-confident.

Within this particular school system, English placements are based in part on the grade equivalent scores of the CAT tests. "Basic" English requires a grade equivalent score of below sixth grade, fifth month (GE 6.5); "standard" English encompasses a range between the

grade equivalents of sixth grade, fifth month (GE 6.5) and ninth grade, fifth month (GE 9.5); and "high" English begins with a grade equivalent score of ninth grade, fifth month (GE 9.5). Because of his high scores on the eighth grade CAT, (reading vocabulary, GE 12.9; reading comprehension, GE 12.4; language mechanics, GE 12.9; and language expression, GE 12.9) he was placed in a "high" ninth grade English class.

This was the year Sean failed English. It was also the year his writing interest score in the Interest Determination, Exploration, and Assessment System (IDEAS), an interest inventory administered in November, 1985, was a 39 on a scale with 50 as the center average.

Sean repeated ninth grade English (this time in a "standard" level class instead of a "high" level class) in summer school between his ninth and tenth grade years. His grade was an A. But in tenth grade standard English that grade dropped to a D.

Having failed and repeated ninth grade English, Sean was considered by the end of his sophomore year in high school to be an "at risk" student. He was listed among other students as "available for adoption" by teachers in his high school. Teachers were encouraged to take a special and active interest in the students on the list as a preventive measure for the students' dropping out of school. That Sean was urged by his English teacher to

enroll in the journalism class during his senior year is evidence of the kind of active interest this "at risk" program encouraged.

During Sean's eleventh grade year, his English grade climbed to a C. According to Sean, his teacher, Ms. Smith, urged him to move to eleventh grade high English during the second semester. His response to this, however, was negative for two reasons: (1) he was afraid of a repeat of his experience in ninth grade high English; and (2) he did not wish to leave Ms. Smith. He remained in standard eleventh grade English for the year.

Sean moved into another standard English class his senior year because Ms. Smith had been assigned the twelfth grade standard English class, and he could remain with her. His C in English climbed to a B during his first semester senior year. When Ms. Smith retired at the end of first semester, Sean's grade fell almost immediately to a D for his new English teacher. By the end of second semester, he had salvaged his grade, receiving C for the year.

Grades and test scores do not begin to tell the whole story of a student. Sean was no exception. For example, his low rating on self-motivation (Behavior Checklist, 1982), was not borne out in his determination to work at a particular after-school job. He was so motivated to get a job that would allow him to exercise his mechanical "fix

it" interests that he waited and persisted for a year before the job became available.

It is also important to note how often Sean was considered for gifted programs, how often his classroom performance did not match the predictions of standardized test scores, and how his high school English grades indicated a roller coaster pattern as he plummeted from A's to D's, climbed slowly from D's to C's and B's, then dropped again to D's, and so forth. This part of the picture takes on greater significance when it is viewed in conjunction with Sean's own responses, recorded in Chapter V, to his experiences in the English classroom, particularly with his formal writing experiences.

#### Teacher A Profile

The principal teacher in this study, Ms. Smith, is a 33-year veteran teacher. At the time this study began (November, 1987), she was teaching journalism and eleventh grade English in one of the four high schools in an urban school district. She was chosen randomly from a list of teachers considered by an expert in the field of English education to be committed to the teaching of writing as a process of voice development and as a way of learning. I explained the nature of the study to her and invited her to participate. She agreed enthusiastically.

As well as being committed to the teaching of writing as a process of meaning making, she kept a daily

reflective journal of significant classroom occurrences, questioning their meaning and using those reflections in her subsequent planning.

This teacher added a twelfth grade English class to her teaching schedule at the beginning of the 1988-1989 school year. The student subject, eventually chosen from one of Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English classes, was also assigned to one of her twelfth grade English classes in 1988 and enrolled in her journalism class as well.

Although she retired from classroom teaching in December, 1988, she continued to teach occasional classes and to work with a system-wide writing project for which she prepared the original grant proposal.

#### Teacher B Profile

When Ms. Smith retired, Ms. Lucas was hired for the remainder of the 1988-1989 school year. Ms. Lucas came to the position with three years of teaching experience, two of those years out of state and one in a North Carolina public school system comparable to the one in this study. Her experience included work with several writing programs for high school students with a wide range of abilities. Since she assumed Ms. Smith's English classes, and not the journalism class which had an assigned classroom, Ms. Lucas did not have a classroom of her own. Rather, she "floated" throughout the school day with each of her classes meeting in a different room.

She agreed to work with me as I continued my explorations with Sean during the second semester of his twelfth grade year. The student subject, therefore, completed his twelfth grade English class with Ms. Lucas, but had a different journalism teacher.

#### Teacher C Profile

Sean's journalism teacher was already on the faculty at the high school when Ms. Smith retired. When asked to assume responsibility for the journalism class and school newspaper, Ms. Frye agreed for two reasons: (1) she was ready to try something new, to accept a challenge; and (2) the position offered her the stability of a permanent classroom--she would not have to "float" anymore.

Ms. Frye's teaching experience included six years of private school teaching, second through twelfth grade English, and work as a reader for both student and teacher competency exams in North Carolina and elsewhere.

She has attempted some writing herself and has, for example, had several book reviews published in the local city newspaper.

Ms. Frye also agreed to make herself available to me as I continued my work with Sean.

#### Demographics

The high school in which the student, Sean, was enrolled was one of four major schools in a mid-sized city

school system in central North Carolina. Approximately 1500 students attended this school. The student body represented a cross section of the community: it had a larger international population than any of the other high schools (70+ international students) due primarily to the city's English as a Second Language Program being located at this high school; the black-white ratio was approximately fifty-fifty; approximately 54% of the students went on to some form of higher education; the curriculum offered programs for a range of exceptional children--from those with mental and physical handicaps to the academically gifted. Of the 104 teachers who made up the faculty, 82% have a degree beyond the bachelors degree.

The Assistant Principal for Instruction, Dr. Maynor, emphasized the flexibility of the curriculum: "...our philosophy is to emphasize what's appropriate to the students." (Interview #1, Dr. Maynor)

Although students were tracked in certain courses (eg., high, standard, and basic English) based on standardized achievement scores, student grades, teacher observation and recommendation, these were not considered dead-end tracks. Dr. Maynor stated: "...if there is an obvious problem with the placement, we go back and look at it again." (Interview #1, Dr. Maynor)

She believed that while North Carolina's Basic Education Plan has perhaps added more paper work for the faculty, it had had no real influence on the curriculum within this system. She noted that this system had "traditionally...been above minimum state standards in all areas of education" and that at this particular high school "our standards tend to be a little higher."

(Interview #1, Dr. Maynor)

Dr. Maynor expressed a view about the widespread testing in North Carolina (achievement testing, competency testing, end-of-course testing, etc.) that she felt was representative of faculty philosophy: "We teach concepts and patterns and process more than teaching just what goes on with the tests." (Interview #1, Dr. Maynor)

She described the English department as "the most progressive, up-to-date English department in the city," citing the various programs city-wide which had been initiated by teachers from this high school's English department. (Interview #1, Dr. Maynor) She encouraged her teachers to attend conferences and workshops and was willing to let them act on and experiment with the new ideas they bring back from those events.

Dr. Maynor attributed much of Sean's growth over his junior and senior years to the influence of a program for at risk students, and to the flexibility of a curriculum that allowed him to pursue his writing activities. She

described his response to journalism as an "opening up":  
"He's a different child....He has opened up...he's really  
kind of a budding...professional with his newspaper  
writing." (Interview #1, Dr. Maynor)

#### Procedures

Because descriptive, interpretive research is often branded as too subjective or impressionistic, multiple procedures of data collection and multiple data sources are used to offset the problems with potential researcher biases (Burgess, 1984).

The data sources for this study included the four different subjects (the student writer and three of his writing teachers) who reflected on the composition experience. When common themes, or patterns, emerged from the reflections and writing of these multiple sources they carry greater internal validity than would the reflections of only one source.

However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the terms we use in quantitative research, such as "internal validity," are not adequate nor are they appropriate in terms of qualitative research. They offer a set of alternative terms for use in discussing the trustworthiness of interpretive inquiry: (a) internal validity--credibility; (b) external validity--transferability; (c) reliability--dependability; and (d) objectivity--confirmability (p. 219).

The credibility of this research is evidenced in the cross matching of common themes, both those that are congruent with theory as expressed in the review of the literature and those that indicate common patterns of interpretation among the subjects.

Transferability in this kind of research is not the task of the researcher. Rather, it is the responsibility of the researcher "to provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). The thick description established by use of multiple data sources helped provide such a data base in this study.

The dependability of this research was established through its focus on writing as a way of knowing. All the questions, reflections, and interpretations were directed toward this approach to voice development.

Although objectivity in interpretive research may sometimes seem elusive, confirmability is not only possible, it is an integral part of the methodology. A major way the researcher's interpretations are confirmed is through the corroboration of the sources themselves. My interpretations of data gathered from interview transcripts, direct observations, and individual pieces of writing (journal writing, autobiographical writing, classroom compositions) were discussed with the source to clarify and strengthen my interpretations.

Five primary methods were used to gather data: (1) open and semi-structured interviews; (2) topical autobiographical writing; (3) time-framed journal writing; (4) classroom observations; and (5) representative selections of Sean's classroom writing assignments.

Access to the school, to the teachers, and to the student was granted by Dr. Maynor, the Assistant Principal; access to Sean's cumulative school record was granted by Sean himself in accordance with school policy. The participants were assured in writing of protection of their anonymity. The study was approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee of the School of Education, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

### Interviews

Open interviews, or unstructured interviews, are similar to conversations. Because they are free flowing, they offer the possibility of a richness of detail and explanation and elaboration not available in a more rigid question-answer format. The interviewer has, of course, an agenda that consists of a set of topics or themes to be discussed. However, the nature of a conversational interview allows for many variations on the agenda as the conversation develops. The questions evolve during the course of conversation, becoming more tailored to the subject as the conversation unfolds.

Semi-structured interviews, in which the object is to clarify or to confirm early points of discussion, observation, or interpretation, are of necessity more controlled than open interviews. Points of discussion are determined by the interviewer beforehand since the purpose of the semi-structured interview is primarily that of clarification or elaboration (Burgess, 1984; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Worthen & Sanders, 1987). However, this type of interview does not preclude following a pertinent line of discussion that may arise.

An indepth interview, or as Lincoln and Guba (1985) described it, "a conversation with a purpose," (p. 268), is an excellent method for obtaining an understanding of "the way in which participants interpret their experience and construct reality" (Burgess, 1984, p. 3). It allows us to see the various experiences through the subjects' point of view. The emphasis, according to Burgess, is

...on understanding the actions of participants on the basis of their active experience of the world and the ways in which their actions arise from and reflect back on experience...[and the] meanings that individuals construct and modify during the process of interactions. (p. 3)

### Student Interviews

Two open interviews conducted with the student, lasting approximately one hour each, reflected Sean's feelings and interpretations about his formal composition experience. The first (Interview #1, Sean; November 30,

1987) reflected an overview of his experience with writing in the course of his schooling. He also discussed the particular piece of writing (memory piece) that contributed to my choosing him to participate in the study. A second open interview (Interview #2, Sean; April 4, 1989) allowed Sean opportunity to reflect on his current status as a student writer and the course his voice development had taken since his junior year.

Three semi-structured interviews, approximately one hour each, allowed for clarification of the earlier interviews, for elaboration on specific points in the student's autobiographical and classroom writings, and for confirmation of my observations of him in the classroom setting. The first of these interviews (Interview #3, Sean; April 18, 1989) clarified points from the April 4, 1989 interview, garnered personal information from Sean, and gave him opportunity to discuss how specific peer interactions influence his writing. The second semi-structured interview (Interview #4, Sean; May 9, 1989) allowed for time for Sean's reflection on some of his autobiographical comments and for his clarification of and elaboration on specific points from his interviews of April 4, 1989 and November 30, 1987. The final interview with Sean (Interview #5, Sean; May 12, 1989) concluded his clarification of points from the April 4, 1989 interview; permitted elaboration on various points from the April

18, 1989 interview; allowed him to answer questions about my classroom observations in his English class (April 20, 1989) and in his journalism class (March 30, 1989); and offered Sean opportunity to reflect on some of his classroom writing assignments for both English and journalism.

#### Teacher A Interviews

One semi-structured interview lasting approximately an hour and a half, was conducted with the student's primary composition teacher, Ms. Smith (Interview #1, Ms. Smith; November 30, 1987). This interview served to clarify my interpretations of the teacher's time-framed journal entries and a class session observation.

I subsequently conducted an open interview in order to receive evaluative feedback from Ms. Smith on my written interpretations and presentation of the data gathered from both the the student the the teacher in November, 1987 (Interview #2, Ms. Smith; February 10, 1989).

#### Teacher B Interviews

An open interview with Sean's second semester twelfth grade English teacher, focused on the teacher's approach to teaching writing and on her work with Sean (Interview #1, Ms. Lucas; April 20, 1989). The interview lasted approximately one hour.

A second interview clarified and elaborated on data from the earlier interview, from the time-framed journal entries Ms. Lucas kept at my request, and from my classroom observation of April 20, 1989. This one-and-a-half-hour interview was semi-structured (Interview #2, Ms. Lucas; May 2, 1989).

### Teacher C Interviews

Sean's second semester journalism teacher focused on her approach to teaching writing that is targeted for publication in the student newspaper and on her specific work with Sean in an initial open interview (Interview #1, Ms. Frye; March 5, 1989).

A follow up interview, semi-structured, allowed Ms. Frye to clarify earlier remarks and to comment in more depth on particular journal entries (Interview #2, Ms. Frye; April 24, 1989). Each interview with the journalism teacher lasted approximately fifty minutes.

### Summary

A total of five interviews with the student were conducted, two open and three semi-structured. I interviewed each of the three teachers involved twice, once with an open interview format and once with a semi-structured format. (The open interview with Ms. Smith recorded poorly and could not be transcribed. Therefore, I restructured it from my notes taken during

the interview and the notes Ms. Smith had made in her review of my initial interpretations of the data.)

Each of the eleven interviews lasted from fifty to ninety minutes. Ten of the eleven interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for interpretive analysis; one of the eleven was restructured from notes. (See Appendix A for Interview Agendas.)

### Autobiographical Writing

Burgess (1984) suggested the use of a topical autobiography, a story--written or oral--constructed by an individual around a specified theme for the purpose of giving "an insider's point of view" (p. 126) about the particular focus.

Grumet (1988), too, suggested the use of autobiography as inquiry. Autobiography is not just the telling of one's story. It must be linked to theory or to a critique that helps us recognize ways in which the narratives say more--or less--than the writer means. There occurs then, a dialectical tension between self-report and subsequent analysis. It is a tension and an interaction between one person's story/experience and the themes of human experience.

The autobiographical method is designed to open up the writer's experience so that the writer can question that experience. The autobiography itself thus becomes the text offered for the hermeneutic activity. Such

activity was described by Ricouer (1976) as "text-oriented interpretation" (p. 25). Through autobiography as inquiry, self becomes text, and "the gaps, contradictions, the leaks and explosions in the text are invitations to... self-interpreting and self-determining reading" (Grumet, 1988, p. 67).

### Student's Autobiographical Writing

Sean's autobiographical accounts of his school composition experiences informed the research in various stages. From his original autobiographical account written in November, 1987, and from his reflections on his more recent composition experiences indicated in the April, 1989 interviews, I chose three specific instances for Sean to reflect upon in more depth. He responded in writing to two of the three requests.

These reflective writings--short, topical autobiographical accounts--along with questions I raised about them, provided Sean with more material for his further reflection and interpretation. These responses were tape-recorded in the various interviews, the recorded interviews transcribed and further interpreted. (See Appendix B for Requests for Student Autobiographical Writing.)

### Journals

Burgess (1984) noted that the journal, what he called "diary," is "the best form of personal document as it is

here that the individual provides an account of thoughts, events and feelings which are considered important" (p. 128). He suggested that a teacher's topical, time-framed journal would give the researcher access to classroom events that might not otherwise be possible. He summarized:

The diary provides a first-hand account of a situation to which a researcher may not have direct access. Secondly, it provides an "insider's" account of a situation and, finally, complements the materials that are gathered through observations and interview by the researcher....the diary can be used as a resource to raise questions and queries that may generate further data. (p. 135)

#### Teacher A's Journal

Sean's primary teacher, Ms. Smith, kept a daily journal record of her teaching experiences and reflections on those experiences. She preferred to continue journaling in her normal fashion rather than use the journaling suggestions I planned to provide. She shared with me the journal entries of five consecutive English class sessions, classes in which Sean was a participant (November 18, 1987 through November 24, 1987). She elaborated on certain instances recorded within these entries during my first interview with her (Interview #1, Ms. Smith; November 30, 1987).

#### Teacher B's Journal

I asked Sean's second semester twelfth grade English teacher, Ms. Lucas, to keep a journal over a five-day

period in April (April 17-21, 1989) in which the focus was to be on Sean and his interactions with the teacher, with his peers on writing tasks, and with his individual writing. Ms. Lucas, however, was able to keep this journal for only three days due to an illness that kept her out of school during the last two days of the time allotted.

During this time frame, I observed in Sean's English class. I used these three journal entries to develop questions for Ms. Lucas's semi-structured interview (Interview #2, Ms. Lucas; May 2, 1989). Her answers helped me to understand more fully the interactions that occurred as the teacher perceived them.

#### Teacher C's Journal

Sean's second semester twelfth grade journalism teacher also kept a journal over a five-day period in March (March 27-31, 1989). Again, the focus was on Sean and his interactions with the teacher, with his peers, and with his individual writing.

Ms. Frye kept the journal during a period in which I observed in Sean's journalism class. I used Ms. Frye's five journal entries to develop questions for further probing (Interview #2, Ms. Frye; April 24, 1989) in my attempt to understand both Ms. Frye's interpretations of classroom interactions involving Sean and my own

interpretations of my observations in that journalism class.

(See Appendix C for Requests for Teachers' Topical, Time-Framed Journals.)

### Student Writing

I reviewed in depth two of Sean's major writing assignments. Sean and I also reviewed these same assignments as a method of gaining perspective on his voice development. The two samples, one from first semester junior year and one from second semester senior year, were representative of the kinds of writing assignments he had throughout both years.

If this study had been about Sean's "writing improvement" over the course of two years, these samples of his writing would have been inadequate determiners. The study, however, is not about writing improvement in the traditional sense. What I was looking for was two-fold: (1) Did Sean's writing indicate evidence of voice development over the course of two years?; and (2) Was Sean able to use these two writing assignments to reflect on his own voice development? The writing samples served these purposes.

I also reviewed with Sean several articles he wrote during the 1988-1989 school year for the school newspaper, letting him reflect on those aspects of each article that indicated voice development as he understood it. Two of

the articles were totally Sean's choice for discussion; the other three were my selections.

#### Writing Assignment #1

From Sean's work in November, 1987 there was a draft of a memory piece (a piece of writing about one of his childhood memories), his written plans for revision of the piece, and one of his revisions.

#### Writing Assignment #2

From his work in March-April, 1989 there was a draft of a five-paragraph theme dealing with the destruction of civilization in Golding's Lord of the Flies with Ms. Lucas's comments and suggestions for revision, and his revision.

(Appendix D contains Teacher A's guidelines for the initial memory piece and for the revision planning for Writing Assignment #1. It also contains Teacher B's guidelines for the Lord of the Flies essay, Writing Assignment #2.)

#### Writing Samples from Journalism

Five articles written by Sean for the school newspaper provided material for our reflections. Two of those articles were selected by Sean, three by me. Sean and I reviewed these articles in the four semi-structured interviews in the spring of 1989.

### Classroom Observations

I observed Sean in three separate classes: (1) eleventh grade standard English with Ms. Smith, November 18, 1987; (2) twelfth grade standard English with Ms. Lucas, April 20, 1989; and (3) twelfth grade journalism with Ms. Frye, March 30, 1989. Each of these observations took place during the time frame in which the teachers were recording journal entries in these classes. I kept running narrative field notes during the observations.

The primary focus of my three observations was on Sean's interactions with the various components of the composition classroom environment (student-teacher interactions, student-peer interactions, student-curriculum interactions, and student-self interactions).

In at least one interview each with Sean and with the three teachers, I reflected with them on various aspects of my observations, and they helped me to clarify my understandings of the interactions I observed.

### Design and Analysis

All of the interview transcripts, autobiographical and journal writings, samples of student writing, and notes on classroom observations were subject to analysis and interpretation. I approached such an analysis through the stated research questions:

**Research Question 1:** What are the student's perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom

writing experience that have contributed to his voice development?

**Research Question 2:** What are his writing teachers' perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that contribute to students' voice development?

An initial review of the literature (Chapter II) concerning written composition and the effects of classroom interactions on learning provided the theoretical bases for the study and pointed me toward a case study approach for dealing with writing as a way of knowing. I focused indepth on an individual high school student's perceptions of his experiences within the composition classroom as well as on his junior and senior year writing teachers' perceptions of student voice and its development through writing.

Analysis of the literature on voice, on thought and language development, and on specific interactions and conditions within the composition classroom which nurture voice (Chapter III) enlarged the theoretical perspectives concerning voice and writing in the composition classroom.

From this enlarged theoretical perspective, I developed an organizing structure of those interactions and conditions conducive to student voice development in the composition classroom for my analysis of the data.

Table 1 (p. 70) and Table 2 (p. 110) in Chapter III

outline those interactions and conditions that provided the framework for analysis. The results of this analysis (Chapter V) were also presented according to this framework.

After developing the guiding framework, I followed a pattern for analysis adapted from Bogdan and Taylor (1975):

- (1) I grouped the collected data according to the two Research Questions;
- (2) I immersed myself in the data, reading and re-reading field notes, interview transcripts, writing samples, and personal documents;
- (3) I noted initially recurring topics within the data that suggested specific patterns or themes;
- (4) I grouped these recurring topics according to the framework of interactions and conditions within the composition classroom conducive to student voice development;
- (5) I listed explicit statements within theme categories and analyzed them according to tacit, or implied, meanings;
- (6) I reviewed my interpretations with the subjects for clarification and confirmation;
- (7) I grouped recurring themes within the data that were not part of the initial theoretical framework provided by the literature.

Chapter V presented the results of this analysis (steps 1 - 6). Recurring themes which emerged from the data but which were not a part of the analysis structure provided by the literature were addressed in Chapter VI under implications for further research.

Figure 4 depicts the design of this study. Beginning with theory (Theoretical Perspectives), I approached my inquiry through interpretive case study. Through interviews, observations, reflective journals, autobiographical writing, and classroom writing assignments I gathered data from the student and his teachers (Data Sources) concerning their perceptions of voice development in the composition classroom. The broken arrows in the Data Sources box represent the interactions within the composition experience between the student and each of his writing teachers.

The double arrows between Data Sources and Interpretations indicate the crucial interplay between data and theory. I viewed the perceptions of the student and his teachers through the lens of theory. I re-viewed theory through the perceptions of the student and his teachers. As my interpretations of the student's and teachers' perceptions interacted with theoretical perspectives, a new and deeper understanding of voice and of writing as a way of knowing emerged.

(See Figure 4.)

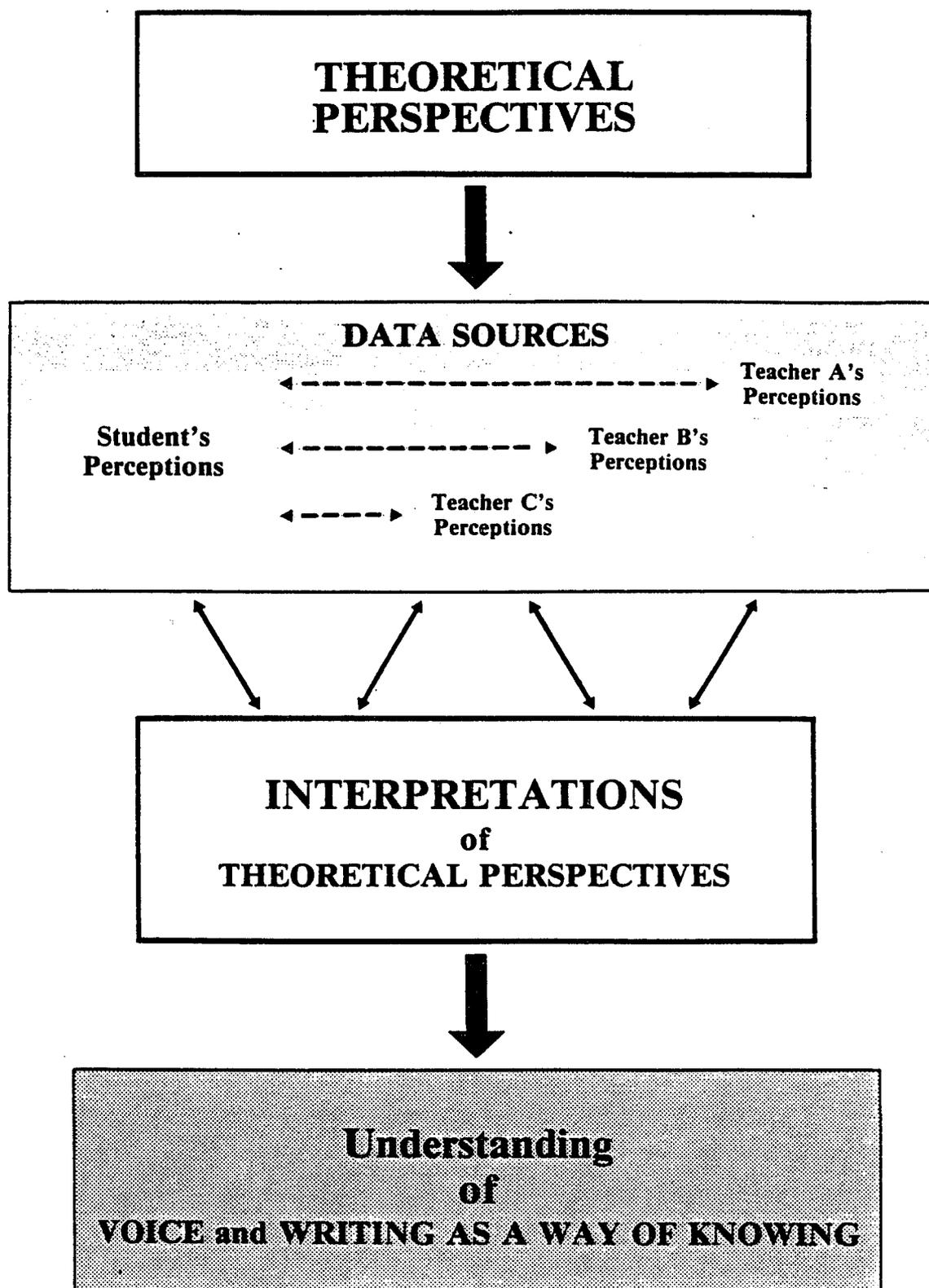


Figure 4. Design of the Study

## Chapter Summary

As detailed in Chapter I, my own experiences and perceptions and the theoretical background I chose to review influenced the direction of the research. While it is not possible to eliminate bias entirely from qualitative, descriptive research, it is, nevertheless, possible to limit that bias.

In this study I used multiple data sources and multiple data collection procedures as a cross-referencing procedure for thematic analysis. The primary teacher, Ms. Smith (Teacher A), was chosen randomly from a list of potential candidates prepared by an expert in the field of English education and was not known to me prior to the initial data gathering. The student, also unknown to me, was selected initially based on a sample of his writing rather than by teacher recommendation or of my personal knowledge of him. The final two teachers became a part of the total sample simply because they were the student's current writing teachers.

The interview is an excellent tool, perhaps the best, for gaining rich perspectives on a specific focus. Yet, no matter how carefully the questions are worded in order to avoid bias, in a conversational interview the perspectives of the interviewer become a part of the interview as well as the perspectives of the person being interviewed. It was important, therefore, that my interpretations of

the interview data were reviewed with the subjects who were interviewed in order to clarify points that had been made in the interview. This procedure was especially important to ensure that I had really heard what the person who was interviewed was saying.

This same qualification and the importance of review with the subject applied as well to the autobiographical writing of the student. The review ensured both that the student understood what I was asking and that I understood the answers he was giving.

Another kind of cross checking helped with the journal analyses. Since I observed in the classrooms during the times the teachers kept a journal recording particular events within the classroom, there was opened the possibility of my spotting and discussing with the teachers any differences in our perceptions of the same events.

The small sample size, approached through qualitative and interpretive analysis, did not allow for generalization. The rich, indepth data base, however, provided a firm foundation for transferability to other educational contexts.

The working hypotheses which emerged from this particular case study may prove valuable to teachers who seek to understand the various classroom experiences which nurture their own students' voice development when writing

is approached as a way of knowing. It is important to note, however, that the primary subject of this particular case study was a student who was able at the outset to exhibit rather sophisticated insights about his own voice development. If a teacher attempts to transfer the working hypotheses of this study to a similar context, the students with whom the "fit" might be attempted must be able to articulate emerging insights about their writing and their voice development.

Interpretive inquirers accept the restrictions inherent in qualitative research because there is no better way to arrive at that point of "thick description" which reveals the ways people construct their various realities. Grumet (1988) eloquently summarized the paradox as she applied it to the use of autobiography in educational research:

As I continue to work with...autobiographical texts, I continue to worry about the narrative forms that contain and shape them and the interpretive methods I use to understand them, and I tinker with them like a technician. I look through the lens of...theory to find shadows sliding across the face of texts that, given our current ideologies, seem clear and...persuasive....clear seeing is burdened with all the limitations of human consciousness....Furthermore, our work...is not the seeing itself but a picture of the seeing....So it is the shadow of the experience...that we pursue...hoping that...we shall address the relation between what appears and what is hidden in [the] accounts.... (pp. 60-61)

## CHAPTER V

## RESULTS: PERCEPTIONS OF VOICE DEVELOPMENT

## Introduction

Who knows about the born writer? I couldn't answer that. It would be terrible if you were either a born writer or not, and that it all depended on that. It would be kind of like, "Are you saved?"

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 363

In this chapter Research Questions 1 and 2 are addressed. This is a presentation of the perceptions of the student and his teachers concerning the identified interactions and classroom conditions conducive to student voice development. From interviews, reflective journals, writing, and classroom observations a picture emerged of Sean and his voice development over the course of a two-year period.

While the perceptions of the student and his teachers are presented in their own words, I have eliminated and/or condensed some repetitious words and expressions for ease of reading. Although this presentation is interpretive I have attempted to remain as true as possible to the subjects' telling of their own stories.

## Student's Perceptions

Writing...is one way of discovering sequence in experience, of stumbling upon cause and effect in the happening of a writer's own life....Connections slowly emerge....Experiences too indefinite of outline in themselves to be recognized for themselves connect and are identified as a larger shape. And suddenly a light is thrown back, as when your train makes a curve, showing that there has been a mountain of meaning rising behind you on the way you've come, is rising there still, proven now through retrospect.

--Welty, 1984, p. 90

Research Question 1. What are the student's perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that have contributed to his voice development?

From Sean's own words (interviews, autobiographical writings, and school writing assignments) emerged a picture of the particular interactions and conditions within the boundaries of classroom writing that have helped to nurture Sean's voice development. By listening to Sean and by observing him in the classroom, we can see how he perceived and interpreted these various interactions and conditions.

### Student-Teacher Interactions

Of the six identified interactions, that of student-teacher has been by far the most influential in Sean's voice development.

### Writer to Writer

Sean's time with Ms. Smith, beginning in his first semester of eleventh grade English and continuing through a first semester of twelfth grade English, was a turning point in his understanding of and approach to writing. That Ms. Smith frequently wrote with her students was one of the factors Sean noted as important to his changing understanding of writing.

She really has a way of showing how easy it can be to write. I think it's made writing a whole lot easier since before this year. (Student Interview #1)

His use of the word "show" is significant. It made a difference to Sean that Ms. Smith was willing to write with her students.

Sometimes it does [make a difference]. I think Ms. Smith is a write-a-holic or something. She really likes to write! (Student Interview #1)

Sean assured me that his calling Ms. Smith a "write-a-holic" was a positive statement.

I think it's a positive thing. She obviously loves to write, and she wants to pass on some of that wisdom to her students, I guess. (Student Interview #4)

In his third autobiographical writing, Sean stated that "having Ms. Smith for a teacher, it pays to write."

(Student Autobiography #3) I asked him to elaborate on this statement.

Well, having Ms. Smith for a teacher, if you didn't know how to write at all or if you didn't like writing, or whatever, it wasn't particularly good for you because writing was mostly what we did in that class. (Student Interview #4)

I noted when I observed in Ms. Smith's class (Classroom Observation #1), that she spent about 40 minutes of the class period writing with the students. I asked Sean if she did this "periodically." Clearly from Sean's answer we see more than a periodic attempt to show students that the teacher can write, too. She does that most of the time. (Student Interview #1) Sean's comments from the beginning indicated that he was both impressed with and appreciative of Ms. Smith's writing with her students. That she took the time to write during class when she required the students to write was a positive force for Sean's own writing.

What was the message that this teacher was sending to her students? Sean offered some insights.

It made me think that, you know the old expression, "practice what you teach." You know she wasn't just giving assignments and then going back, kicking her feet up and reading a book as I've seen more than one teacher do. (Student Interview #4)

Sean noted that while Ms. Lucas, his last semester English teacher did not fall into the category of a teacher who might kick up her feet during students' writing assignments, she did not provide a model of the teacher as writer as did Ms. Smith.

She does a lot of grading papers while we are writing. As far as sitting down and writing a rough draft to Lord of the Flies, no. (Student Interview #4)

In interactions between Sean and Ms. Smith as writer to writer, Sean began to see that writing could be easier

than it had ever been for him before, that writing was something personally valued by this teacher, and that she fully intended to "pass on some of that wisdom to her students."

Perhaps it was the influence of Ms. Smith's writing with her students and Ms. Lucas' not writing with her students that made a difference in Sean's approach to writing in their classrooms. He wrote without stopping for the full 40 minutes allotted during Ms. Smith's class (Classroom Observation #1) and for only 20 minutes of the allotted 50 in Ms. Lucas's class (Classroom Observation #3). Perhaps it was the difference in the nature of the writing assignments themselves--a rather free-flowing personal memory piece in Ms. Smith's class and a prescribed external revision of a carefully structured essay assignment in Ms. Lucas' class. Or, perhaps it was a combination of these and other factors. Whatever the reasons, I observed that Sean appeared to be engaged in his writing assignment for Ms. Smith and seemed to be merely going through the motions in his writing assignment for Ms. Lucas.

#### Teacher Comments

It was in the area of teacher responses to student writing that Sean discovered specific ways to approach writing, ways that were different from what he had

experienced before. He reported that conferences with Ms. Smith and responsive journaling helped him most of all.

She's helped me a lot with the--talking about the form of the papers and setting them back for a week after we've written them originally. Her comments on the paper have been real helpful, too. (Student Interview #1)

Having an individual conference with Ms. Smith was helpful because it gave her a chance to explain just what she meant by some of her comments on Sean's papers.

Instead of an occasional "why" or "how" on the paper, she points out "this is why I said this" and "this is why I said that." (Student Interview #1)

As Sean reflected on his discovery of voice, he indicated the importance of reciprocal student-teacher interaction in discussion of both writing and ideas for writing. He found individual conferencing more helpful to this discovery of and development of voice than the receipt of written comments on the final product.

Conferencing also offered a chance for another kind of interaction to occur between student and teacher.

Her and I worked well together as far as writing goes. She had an idea, she'd tell me and that was good. (Student Interview #2)

The sharing was mutual because Sean began to feel comfortable expressing some of his ideas for his writing to Ms. Smith.

Sean's experience with journaling had been unhelpful to him prior to experiencing what Ms. Smith termed

"conversations on paper." Thus, he was not eager to use journaling as a technique for voice development when he entered Ms. Smith's class. However, he was willing to give it a try.

She encouraged a conversation on paper with her. Last year and this year some, we kept journals where we would write something, write our ideas down, and she would make remarks on paper. Then the next day or something, we wouldn't write at all. We might discuss some more, and then write our remarks again, write back to her anything she might of said, or prove a point, or really, whatever. (Student Interview #2)

To his surprise, Sean found the responsive, interactive journaling advocated by Ms. Smith to be quite different from his prior journaling experiences. While he remained unconvinced that journaling as a technique was the best way to proceed, he did acknowledge that these conversations on paper offered him an opportunity for extension and expression of thought that he might not otherwise have had. He liked the interactions with Ms. Smith that this type of journaling afforded him, later elaborating on these "conversations on paper."

When we'll write journals I'll say something she liked and she'll write down "good point" or whatever. [Sean indicated that the comments went beyond simple comments such as "good point," comments designed to help Sean think further than he had already.] Yeah, I might make a point, but she'd say, "but what if...?" or something like that. [After Sean had responded in his journal to the "what if" question, Ms. Smith would continue this conversation on paper.] ...and she might write a response about that. Yeah. (Student Interview #5)

What Sean liked the most about this kind of journaling--other than its radical difference from any

journaling he had previously undertaken--was the potential it had for pushing him to think and write more than he had planned to or thought he could.

Ms. Smith always seemed to be able to give you another angle on what you were thinking about. When you were reflecting on a book or whatever, she would say, "what if...?"--something like that. Give you another point of view or another angle. (Student Interview #5)

After Ms. Smith's retirement, Sean described himself as "fading back into the crowd" in English class. He did not feel that Ms Lucas' comments about his compositions gave him any insight into her assessment of his writing.

She hasn't really said one way or the other. She really hasn't said anything. (Student Interview #3)

Her written comments generally dealt with the editing aspect of external revision. There were few "what if...?" questions for Sean, who chafed under this narrowly defined revision process. He perceived that there was little room for his own thought to develop or to be expressed.

His reactions to Ms. Frye, the teacher who assumed Ms. Smith's responsibilities in the journalism class, were negative. Ms. Frye, herself, noted that her constructive criticism was sometimes met with hostility from students, especially Sean.

Ms. Frye doesn't seem to like the way I write, and, personally, I don't really care. (Student Interview #3)

After the defensive tone of this comment, I asked Sean if he liked the way he wrote. His answer was an emphatic "Yeah!" This indicated a significant attitude change for

a student who acknowledged that he "feared and hated" (Student Interview #3) writing prior to his junior year.

It was a change Sean could explain. Entering his junior year of English, Sean felt that he "didn't know how to write." According to his teacher, this was not true.

Ms. Smith said that I could write, but I didn't, the biggest thing is I didn't have confidence in it. I didn't like it and...I didn't think I could. I still don't think I'm a great writer [but] I feel better about it. (Student Interview #4)

### Student Ownership

Although Sean never used the words "student agency" or "student ownership" in reference to his own writing, a number of his comments dealt with that transfer of authority from teacher to student in the matter of a student's owning his own writing. Other comments indicated that once this transfer had occurred, he had serious questions about relinquishing his authority.

The transfer of authority began for Sean in the first semester of his junior year with Ms. Smith.

Her whole attitude towards the class, you know, she believed that class isn't supposed to be "I'm the teacher; I'm teaching. You're the student, learn. She tried her best to make the class learn from each other, and she, of course, learned from us. (Student Interview #2)

Achieving ownership was far easier for Sean in Ms. Smith's classes than in either Ms. Lucas's or Ms. Frye's. This was partly due to Ms. Smith's stated perception that she was a co-learner with the students. Such an idea appealed

to Sean's desire for his thoughts to be on an equal footing with those of the teacher, especially in areas of personal reflection and reaction when the teacher could not possibly know his experience as well as he could.

Ms. Smith freely admitted that when she started a conversation going that she didn't know the final answer. She was just somebody taking part in the discussion. (Student Interview #5)

It was during the writing of his second "memory piece" in junior English class (Writing Assignment #1) that this transfer of authority began to manifest itself in Sean's writing.

When I said what I wanted to say in the memory piece, I'm saying what I want to say. I'm not [saying] what everybody wants to hear. (Student Interview #1)

Once Sean discovered his voice early in his junior year in Ms. Smith's standard English class, he became almost fiercely protective of it. In the interviews and autobiographical writings he frequently expressed a desire for determining his own topics for writing and his belief that it was his absolute right to have final authority on the shape and content of his compositions. Ownership of his own work was far more important to him than grades.

Having become accustomed to this kind of ownership of his writing, the change of approach to writing by Ms. Lucas during the second semester of his senior year was difficult for Sean.

In English there's very little writing. Basically what I write is--like we just did a finished paper on Lord of the Flies, and I used her format, Ms. Lucas' format she gave us. (Student Interview #4)

Sean described this format as one designed to prove the teacher's point. Ownership has again become the province of the teacher. While Ms. Lucas regretted what she described as the necessity for maintaining her own control over students' writing, she did not see students as capable of nor even desirous of ownership of their own writing. Sean's response to this belief was one of regression. After three semesters of being allowed--even urged--to assume ownership of his writing, he quickly saw the direction Ms. Lucas was taking and decided to "fade" into the crowd rather than fight what he saw as the inevitable necessity of relinquishing his ownership so that he could finish his senior year without too much frustration.

He described the requirements for his Lord of the Flies essay.

Three topics, and we chose one. She gave three questions. The one I did was describe the breakup of civilization on the island, and she gave us a whole list of examples you could use, like the destruction of the shell and two or three others. You had to take that and make a paragraph out of it. You had your own input in it, which she's basically put it, say, in the main topics. You're proving her point, really. (Student Interview #5)

Sean, however, was comfortable in speculating on what topic he would have designed for himself had he had the opportunity.

If I had anything to write on, if I had to do it, the subject I would choose is, just basically why is Jack so irrational in his thinking. (Student Interview #5)

This was a theme that Sean felt was important to understanding the novel, a theme that he could have followed throughout the book--and, more importantly for Sean, a theme of his own choosing.

The issue of student ownership was, not surprisingly, at its peak in Sean's journalism class, a class generally noted for a less structured approach to students' writing. Sean described rather passionately an article he had written for the school newspaper about one of his teachers who had died during the school year. It was a teacher with whom he had been close; therefore, he was also very close to the article he had written. Partly because of space limitation in the newspaper, his journalism teacher wanted to print the article in two installments.

It was one of these things that meant a lot to me. If this wasn't printed I was going to quit journalism. And she almost split it up into two parts, two different papers, and I didn't like that a bit. (Student Interview #2) It seemed like if she [Ms. Frye] were doing that, she would be pushing what I wrote aside. If you did put it in two parts, its like reporting, you know, continued next week. It wasn't just a story! (Student Interview #5)

The ensuing events served as Sean's examples for his frustration with the issue of student ownership.

We cut a couple of things out and fit it in there. I found out later that she edited it. I didn't notice it before it went down. You know, the proofreading I don't care about, but there have been other stories where she completely rearranged the idea. Like I did an editorial not long ago about break-ins in the parking lot, and she put a couple of sentences in there that just completely threw the whole idea off. (Student Interview #2)

This kind of situation sends a message to Sean.

If she [Ms. Frye] does like the way I write, that's not the indication I get 'cause she changes everything. She takes my stuff and puts it in her own words. She takes my idea and changes it to what she wants. (Student Interview #3)

While I observed some of Ms. Frye's attempts to relinquish teacher-control of the student newspaper (Classroom Observation #2) and discussed with her at length her conviction that student ownership of student writing was a high priority in her teaching, Sean's perceptions of what was happening were different. He experienced some situations early in his interactions with Ms. Frye that negatively colored his perceptions of their interactions for the remainder of the semester.

Although Ms. Frye expressed a belief in student ownership of student writing, her early responses to Sean's writing were perceived by Sean as manifestations of her intention to usurp his control, his agency. While he attempted to "fade" back somewhat in journalism class just as in Ms. Lucas's English class, it was with anger rather than with a sense of bowing to the inevitable. Perhaps this was so because he did have the agency in journalism class to determine many of his own topics; but when he perceived that this agency was being undermined through what he defined as unfair and even dishonest editing, he responded with bitter anger.

Sean recalled for me the ways in which Ms. Smith had dealt with revisions, both in journalism and in English.

As far as the newspaper was concerned the only thing she ever did was to check for spelling and punctuation and things like that. But she never changed anything in the article. No--that was one of her strongest rules. And in English class, when we did a multi-stage assignment, she would write down, "You might want to try it this way"--and she didn't push me or anything. She just suggested it. (Student Interview #3)

Sean indicated that there were times he chose not to follow Ms. Smith's suggestions, and at those times she did not hesitate to give him a lower grade on his writing if it deserved it. The grade, however, was not as important to Sean as his having the authority to maintain ownership of his own writing.

### Connected Teaching

The concept of connected teaching has to do with teachers trusting in their students thinking and interacting with their students in such a way as to help students begin to make connections between their experiences and their thoughts about those experiences. In the sense of Freire's partner-teacher or Belenky's mid-wife teacher, a connected teacher can help students articulate their thinking and communicate those thoughts.

Such connective interactions--and the lack of them--made deep impressions on Sean's approach to writing.

Towards the end of the year last year she [Ms. Smith] asked me if I wanted to be on the journalism staff this year. I said "yeah." I hold Ms. Smith in rather high regard, and her asking me, sure. And being on the journalism class, of course, I started writing a whole lot more, and, you know, I enjoy it! She helped me a lot improve, as far as improving my writing goes. I'm feeling

better about writing. A couple of articles I've done for the paper I'm really proud of. And, I guess, starting last year, if Ms. Smith hadn't pushed me, I guess I wouldn't be. I really miss her now that she's gone. (Student Interview #2)

Sean did not use the terms I have used. He did not refer to connective interactions. Rather, he talked about teachers who care, teachers who are interested. He credited Ms. Smith with helping him make his words "flow." How did she do this, I wondered?

She didn't give you a page number and tell you to do the questions at the end. I don't think we did three assignments like that the whole year I was in there. Like I said before, she gives you suggestions, and she's not afraid to tell you what she thinks. She genuinely cares about what you write, and how you write, and what you think. (Student Interview #4)

Sean exhibited a positive response to teachers' interest and concern as he perceived it. He especially valued the time offered by Ms. Smith, whom he regarded as a caring, responsive teacher, for a sharing of ideas. But some teachers, Sean felt, did not care.

A lot of times I've done an assignment, and then a month later I've done it again. Whether I wrote one draft or a hundred, it doesn't really matter to the teacher. (Student Interview #1)

I wanted to know how Sean could tell when a teacher cared, when a teacher was interested, when things really mattered. He was explained. The contrast between his perceptions of his ninth grade teacher (not interviewed), of his current journalism teacher, of his current English teacher, and of his former journalism and English teacher, Ms. Smith, was telling.

He [Sean's ninth grade English teacher] would sit in his desk and somebody would ask, "What is this?" His favorite thing to do was to make up a sentence using that particular whatever it was [in grammar], and sometimes he would even put the student down using it. And his lack of interest when I asked for help--he couldn't, I don't think he could care less. (Student Interview #4)

I think the biggest thing was he was there for the job. His job was to hand out papers and explain what they were. If you asked him to slow down, he wouldn't. If you asked for help, he had something else to do. (Student Interview #5)

Although Sean did not perceive it as such, Ms. Frye attempted to trust her students' ability to ask their own questions and to make their own connections. Rather, Sean perceived her "editing" of his articles as unwarranted tampering with and an attempt to silence his voice.

Ms. Frye takes your raw material and puts it, and changes it into something she wants. She doesn't even bother letting you put it in your own words a lot of the time. (Student Interview #4)

Again, Sean chafed under what he perceived to be a lack of appreciation on Ms. Frye's part for student agency. He interpreted this as a lack of caring.

He indicated that his current English teacher was willing to give help when asked. Even though Ms. Lucas did not offer him the same kind of autonomy with his writing that Ms. Smith did, he sensed her interest.

Ms. Lucas is interested enough to tell you what to do with your paper. (Student Interview #4) She would go back and answer a question for you. You know, she seems to be trying hard, and I can tell she's pretty new to teaching, and I can't blame her for that. Yeah, if you asked for it [help] she would [give it]. (Student Interview #5)

While Ms. Lucas attempted to connect students' reading assignments with something in the students' life experiences and to connect students' writing assignments with what students are reading at the time, she did believe that most students are not ready to "think...on their own." And she expressed her frustration with what she perceived as students' constant need for her reinforcement of their ideas. Sean might have responded more positively to the connections Ms. Lucas was attempting to make between students' reading, writing, and life experience had he felt that his ability to think on his own was recognized, accepted, and valued by Ms. Lucas.

Sean's perceptions of the difference in the intensity of his teachers' concern were most clearly expressed as he described Ms. Smith, his relationship with her, and her relationship with her students.

Her and I got along very good. In the conversations and the discussions we had, I was interested a lot in the same things she was. And you know, her and I got in several discussions. As far as I know, school--teaching school--is just about what she lived and looked forward to. She put everything, all the energy she could spare and then some she couldn't, and I think that's one of the reasons she had to retire. She just ran out of steam. She won't admit it; but I think that's one of the reasons. (Student Interview #5)

#### Student-Peer Interactions

For Sean, student-peer interactions, while helpful to a degree, were the least effective in the development of his writing and his voice. There were several reasons for

this that Sean identified. Generally Sean did not describe himself as a "people person." In his after-school job, for example, he felt most comfortable in the back of the store engaged in mechanical, "fix-it" activities. He much preferred this to dealing with customers. At school he often felt uncomfortable with other students, sensing the necessity for projecting a certain image for people.

In school you have to act all big and tough, and one of my favorite things is not working with people. (Student Interview #1)

Although Sean's friendships were few, he did acknowledge the value of some of these limited interactions with peers. And he recognized from Ms. Smith's approach to teaching the value of students learning from each other.

She tried her best to make the class learn from each other and, you know, she, of course, learned from us. (Student Interview #2)

It was in Ms. Smith's English classes that Sean first discovered the potential value in collaborative learning. As he was given the opportunity to dialogue with his peers and with Ms. Smith, he began to feel that his voice was being heard.

### Collaborative Learning

For Sean the aspect of collaborative learning that was most significant was classroom discussion--either with

the entire class, or with a small group, or with the teacher. According to Sean, discussion was one of the major ways for starting his "word flow."

Part of it was, she [Ms. Smith] did so much group work, and you could talk to one another, and she doesn't mind talking to you. (Student Interview #4)

Opportunities for open group dialogue were helpful to Sean. When the dialogue was characterized by mutual peer respect, he found the discussions to be quite beneficial to his own learning and the development of his thoughts. When such dialogue worked for Sean, his writing, as he described it, seemed to come alive. His thoughts were stimulated by the discussion; but, more than that, he perceived that his voice was valued by his peers as well as by his teacher.

Freewriting, a method of writing one's thoughts without restraints of form or time, is a technique often used to achieve students' "word flow." It was also a technique that Ms. Smith employed. But for Sean, it was the collaborative learning through the give and take of dialogue that he found helpful. He stated that freewriting was a fairly frequent occurrence in Ms. Smith's classroom, but that it did not have nearly the impact on his writing that class discussion did.

In comparison, the approach used in his second semester senior English class did not give Sean the needed stimulus for generating the "word flow."

The English class now is, to me, really, really boring. Ms. Lucas seems to be a pretty good teacher, but now it's more hand out a worksheet, we do it, we turn it in. There's almost no discussion in the class anymore.  
(Student Interview #2)

While I did not observe the give and take of student discussion in Ms. Smith's class since the day's assignment was to write (Classroom Observation #1), both Sean's and Ms. Smith's descriptions of other class sessions indicated a high level of student interaction. In Ms. Lucas's class, however, I observed quickly that Sean was willing to do only what he had to do to fulfill the day's assignment. (Classroom Observation #2) His body language (leaving his materials in his bookbag until Ms. Lucas gave instructions for the day, sitting very still and staring into space for approximately fifteen minutes after completing his assignment) and his lack of interaction with teacher or students were examples of his response to what he perceived as a "boring" class.

The type of prewriting oral discussion in Ms. Lucas's English class was characterized by class discussion of teacher-generated points. It was, as described by both Sean and Ms. Lucas, designed in a question-answer format. This is not surprising in light of Ms. Lucas's belief that students want and need straightforward guidance through their thinking as well as her belief that students will not work together naturally. Sean expressed a frustration with a regression to a question-answer discussion format,

feeling that it limited the possibilities inherent in open-ended dialogue. It was a situation that tended to stifle his voice.

At one point in our conversations, I asked Sean to give me and other teachers of writing some advice about how to help students develop their voices. He did not hesitate to emphasize the value he saw in dialogue.

I would put a lot of emphasis on discussion, because that really helps. (Student Interview #2)

In Ms. Frye's journalism class, Sean began to collaborate with his peers in ways that he could not, or did not, in other classes. Ms. Frye saw the journalism class as a place naturally conducive to collaborative learning, and encouraged the students to work together to achieve their common goal of producing a student newspaper.

Many times during our conversations together, Sean referred to his "best friend," Rick. How he and Rick worked together on the school newspaper is a good example of the kind of collaborative learning that did occur in Sean's writing development. He described for me the way he became one of the two associate editors of the school newspaper. His friend, Rick, was the other associate editor.

After the end of the first nine weeks, it's traditional for an associate editor [to] be chosen. I think that had to do with...Rick and I stayed, we were a spread sheet short. There was nothing to go on it, we thought. So we

stayed until like 5:30 and made two pages for the paper. And this was the day both Ms. Smith and the regular editor were out. So we didn't know anything else to do, or didn't have any choice, rather. I think that was the biggest part. There's usually only one associate editor, but Rick and I are, we work real good together. (Student Interview #5)

I observed Sean's and Rick's casual give and take during one journalism class. (Classroom Observation #2) They proofread material together, chatted informally together, and "cut up" a bit by tossing a ball of paper back and forth.

### Peer Feedback

Sean felt that the opinions from peers about his writing were helpful if there existed a mutual respect for one another's ideas. He saw that the opportunities for peer feedback afforded him the chance to sort out his ideas in ways that he had not experienced before.

Sean's collaboration with Rick carried over into the day to day process of writing for the school newspaper.

With Rick, we'll be sitting in class writing something and I'll say, "Hey, take a look at this and see what you think." And he'll take a look at it, and he might make a suggestion or something, and he'll do the same with me. (Student Interview #3)

This kind of peer feedback was important to Sean because it gave him "somebody else's opinion."

That Sean liked Rick's work, as well as liking Rick, was evidenced in his description of their relationship.

We met in seventh grade. We think a lot alike. He can turn out something that will be short and to the point, and he can turn out some stuff that's horrendously funny. And he was the only one I knew in that class [journalism] before this year. (Student Interview #3)

Sean said that he only interacted with Rick, with Dana, the newspaper editor, and "a couple of other people" on the staff, underscoring that insight with, "You know, I don't talk much in that class." (Student Interview #3) However, he received some positive peer feedback from Dana in a rather oblique way.

She [Dana] doesn't say much. She's somebody who almost looks for something to go wrong. But she very seldom complains about what I do. Dana's really pretty much open as far as, within reason, of course. She's willing to listen anyway. (Student Interview #3)

I did observe Sean's work with both Rick and Dana during a journalism class. (Classroom Observation #2) It was notable that Dana "consulted" with Sean as an equal (both were editors) while her interactions with other students suggested a more "top down" approach.

A more formal kind of peer feedback is often achieved through peer review groups. Ms. Smith employed this technique. Only "sometimes" did Sean find such group work helpful.

A lot of times, not really, because there wasn't very much enthusiasm in it as far as most of the other students go. (Student Interview #3)

Because he was in standard English classes, he frequently experienced frustration with his peers' seeming reluctance to participate in open ended dialogue and their preference

for a lock-step discussion of "what's on the test." When peer review did help, Sean noted the meaning making aspect of the peer interactions.

Sometimes it helps me sort out some of the nonsense paragraphs that don't really belong there. (Student Interview #1)

I asked Sean to reflect on the influence of others' reactions to his work--to think about how he used those reactions to determine whether his writing had communicated with others. He remembered a time during his junior high school years when neither the positive evaluation of peers nor of teacher gave him any confidence in his ability to communicate in writing.

I fired off a couple of pages, but I didn't really think it was that good. And I showed it to the person that was sitting beside [me] who was then my best friend, and I showed it to the teacher, and both of them liked it. You know, I just didn't really think it was that good. (Student Interview #1)

Having already noted for me that he entered eleventh grade lacking confidence in his ability to write, Sean tried to explain how some of the peer review was conducted in Ms. Smith's English class and what its impact was on his writing.

We don't do anything like, "This is trashy," and throw it in the garbage can or anything like that. (Student Interview #1)

However, if he were told by peers to throw out his paper and start over, he had his own way of dealing with it.

I would ask them to give me one good reason why. If one of them said that, no, but if the whole class said something like that, you know, I'd take a good look at it and decide whether or not to. (Student Interview #1)

Sean was becoming more confident in his ability to write and to judge the value of that writing.

Because Ms. Lucas believed that it is difficult for peer pairings to be helpful when students were not "strong writers," she provided for few opportunities for peer interactions of this sort in her classroom. When she did arrange for peer review, she provided her students with evaluation guidelines for each other's work that emphasized form over content. For Sean, such guidelines reinforced his perception that there was no room for his voice to emerge as it might otherwise. He would welcome an honest and mutually respectful discussion with a peer about ideas and their clarity and value, but criteria that asked him to focus only on the external editing aspects of writing, did not engage him either in his own writing or in his interactions with his peers about their writing.

Ms. Frye, however, recognized that students often responded better to peer criticism of their work than to teacher criticism of the same work. Indeed, this did work better for Sean in journalism class as he shared ideas and insights with his friend and associate editor and as he responded to his editor's suggestions without the hostilities that he exhibited with face of Ms. Frye's criticisms.

### Trusting Communities

Perhaps one of the reasons Sean began to become more confident in his ability to articulate his thoughts,

especially in writing, was due to the sharing of thoughts in Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English class. She encouraged dialogue, both oral and written. Such dialogue was a prelude to the development of a trusting community within the classroom. Toward the end of his first semester with Ms. Smith, Sean was able to say that he "usually" liked sharing his writing with his class.

Since this sharing was fairly new to him, I asked how he handled sharing writing that might be very personal. The trust was not so great that he was willing to take that risk.

Probably I've never really written anything down that I just flat don't want anybody to read. (Student Interview #1)

As Sean and I talked I began to see a pattern in his thinking that indicated to me his belief in the importance of honesty, both in relationships and in his writing. Several points he made emphasized this theme: his appreciation that the teacher who died had been honest with his students about his illness; his desire to be able to count on what he wrote not being changed without his knowledge and approval; his insistence that neither he nor those who were his friends would project some false image of who they were.

I don't like people who have to put out an image, somebody they're not. That drives me up the wall--make them more important than they really are. And, I just like people to be themselves. I guess that's one reason why I like Rick so good--because he doesn't try to be somebody else. (Student Interview #3)

Sean emphasized the importance of honesty in interactions between himself and his peers and between himself and his teachers and between himself and his actual expression of ideas in his writing.

I asked him to comment on his strong desire for honesty in relationships.

I don't have that many friends, but the ones I do have, I like to say I'm pretty close to. [When] people start lying, it just destroys a friendship. They're not your friends if you can't tell them the truth and...then what do you have? (Student Interview #5)

This emphasis on honesty carried over into his understanding of writing. He stated that he had a goal of writing honestly.

I try to. I try to. Sometimes I admit I miss my mark, but who doesn't? Of course, anything I don't want to be known, I hold back...depending on what the subject is. There's like Mr. Samuels [the teacher who died]. I didn't hold that much back. (Student Interview #5)

When Sean trusted his own thoughts, for example those thoughts about this man who had been so important to him, he trusted that those thoughts needed to be communicated. He gave those thoughts to a larger community.

Ms. Smith's approaches to collaborative learning emphasized an honesty of response between herself and her students, between the students themselves, and between the students and their own work as a vital element of trust building.

Ms. Lucas, however, felt that peer parings do not work well because students do not feel comfortable

criticizing their friends. In other words, students do not trust each other enough to open themselves and their writing to others' criticisms. Sean usually chose not to participate in the peer pairings in Ms. Lucas's class. Part of that decision was based on the lack of honesty in student responses, part on the evaluation criteria that emphasized form over content, and part on the dearth of a trusting community in which to participate.

In journalism class Sean worked more openly, more trustingly, with at least two of his classmates than he did in any other writing class. Even though he did not feel that he could trust Ms. Frye with his writing, he did find a small community within the class with which he felt comfortable expressing his thoughts.

### Meaning Making

The interaction of peers was important to Sean as a way of clarifying his thoughts. Through peer interactions Sean discovered the possibility of meaning making. He noted that sometimes peers could help him "sort out" parts of his writing that "don't really belong there," that do not make sense.

However, it was through discussion, once again, that Sean found the most value in discovering meaning as he articulated his thoughts. He emphasized the importance of open ended dialogue with peers and the importance of

opportunities to speak for one's self--to discover one's own questions as well as answers.

Like when we would be discussing something, she [Ms. Smith] would start out with a question. She may have an idea where the conversation would go, but she wouldn't know for sure, and we would discuss it throughout--through a whole class period, and just talk about what we thought. (Student Interview #2)

Such discussion made it easier for Sean to write what he found to be more meaningful prose. This kind of open dialogue was, for Sean, the prelude to writing as a way of clarifying and expressing his thoughts.

His primary regret was that achieving what he considered to be an acceptable depth of discussion was often difficult.

I wish we'd gotten a better, more responsive class, 'cause the class didn't give her [Ms. Smith] any breaks in either class [junior English or senior English]. Getting group discussions was real hard. Ms. Smith always said that school shouldn't be study the test and take the test type thing. Most of the students couldn't relate to that. They wanted her to teach what's going to be on the test. Ms. Smith didn't give tests like that, and the students, some of them just hated it....Some of them never have [thought for themselves]. (Student Interview #4)

In Ms. Smith's classes, where she created opportunities for students to reflect on their writing together, Sean discovered that he and a few of his classmates began to demand clarity of meaning from each other.

Both Sean and his subsequent English teacher, Ms. Lucas, indicated that Sean did not participate in class discussion. Since this had been such an integral part of Sean's meaning making interactions, I asked him why he did

not participate. His answer showed that he perceived the kind of classroom discussion that was pursued to be counter to the opening up of ideas and the possibility for meaning making.

There's just really nothing to discuss. She gives you the notes and...you take the test. (Student Interview #5)

This changed when Ms. Smith left and Ms. Lucas assumed the responsibility for the final semester of Sean's senior English class. Her emphasis of form over content (eg., five-paragraph essays with rigidly structured paragraphs were the rule) left little room, in Sean's opinion, for any meaning making efforts.

#### Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions Curriculum as Dynamic Form

A dynamic curriculum is one which is open to transformation as students and teachers interact with it. It incorporates spaces for student response. Sean perceived such an approach to curriculum in Ms. Smith's English classes.

There's a whole lot more freedom. You get to speak out a whole lot more. And when you walk in the door the teacher doesn't throw you a paper with [a] writing assignment every day. (Student Interview #1)

The openness of Ms. Smith's approach was evident in the journalism class as well. Sean described an English assignment which asked for student response to an editorial from the local newspaper. He found one "that got me pretty hot under the collar." Because there was

space within that assignment for individual students to respond, an aspect of a dynamic curriculum, Sean ran with it.

I wrote an editorial about it in our newspaper [the school newspaper], on my own time, and Ms. Smith was really impressed. It ended up serving three major purposes: it got me an article in the newspaper as well as the grade [for journalism]; it got me a major grade in English as well as, you know, she just used it for several minor grades because it took the class three weeks to catch up. (Student Interview #2)

Sean's encounter with a dynamic curriculum came in Ms. Smith's classes. He described such a curriculum as one which offered him freedom--freedom to speak out, freedom to discuss ideas, freedom from static writing assignments, and, most importantly for Sean, freedom to explore his own interests.

Sean did not express this level of enthusiasm about his final semester of journalism nor his final semester of English. When I asked him why he did not attempt to participate in the class process more, perhaps in that way offsetting the boredom he felt, his response was that even when there was time for discussion, the format was "boring--a question and answer format." (Student Interview #5) Such a format was, for Sean, a very static one, representative of a curriculum that did not value space for students' responses nor growing student autonomy.

In descriptions of her assignments and classroom activities Ms. Lucas conveyed the decided message that she

felt more comfortable with a structured and specified curriculum than with a more free flowing one. Sean's description of the writing assignments he had with Ms. Lucas indicated a return to static writing assignments of teacher origin. After his three-semester experience with Ms. Smith and her dynamic approach to curriculum, he felt cheated by the assignments he was given by Ms. Lucas.

Despite Sean's perceptions that his freedoms were curtailed by Ms. Frye, his writing from his journalism class indicates that he was able to write, at least to some extent, about something that was of interest to him. To a degree, Sean was able to choose his own topics.

Was he ever bored in Ms. Smith's classes?

There were a couple of times. They spent two weeks on a paper that I wrote overnight. And Ms. Smith said that if you've got anything else to do, be my guest. And a couple of times I worked on a newspaper [article]. It was in the same classroom. And a couple of days I just parked myself and went to sleep. Every great once in a while she'd lose my attention. (Student Interview #5)

In line with his emphasis on student ownership of student writing, Sean offered some advice to English teachers--indeed, any teacher who uses writing as a way to learn--that underscored his positive response to an open, changing, and flexible curriculum.

Instead of writing about when you went to the store three years ago, or, you know, the first time you saw your baby brother, or something like that, let the writers choose a topic. 'Cause sometimes mine have been limited to like five or six topics. You could just let them totally choose the topic. Say you're in social studies or history...anything on history or anything on, say the Civil War if you happen to be studying the Civil War. Just anything like that. (Student Interview #1)

He considered five or six topics limiting if they are chosen by the teacher and not by the students. And limits and artificial boundaries to thought, to knowing, were anathema to Sean. This is another theme that repeated itself throughout my conversations with Sean.

### Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate

On two occasions Sean spoke forcefully about his need to communicate and how he had been able to use his writing to meet that need. Because the curriculum provided for a journalism class, Sean had a ready-made vehicle for meeting his need to say something and to be heard.

Journalism...I've been kind of using the paper. I've done a lot of editorials and letters to the editor...I took a lot of issues and said what was on my mind and used it that way. (Student Interview #2)

As noted earlier, he became incensed at an editorial in the local newspaper, leading to his authorship of a responding editorial in his own school newspaper. He was angry at what he believed to be a "put down" of teenagers' ability to handle the responsibility of both school and employment. He felt a compelling need to communicate his dismay, especially since his experience with working after school had been so positive for him.

I wanted to get the idea through, yeah! (Student Interview #5)

The curriculum, through his journalism class, offered Sean the opportunity to reach a wider audience

than that to which he had been accustomed. He relished the opportunity. When Mr. Samuels died, the newspaper seemed to be the best way he could communicate his feelings for the man. I asked him why talking about his feelings with other students who had known and cared about this teacher was not sufficient.

Part of it was because I'd lost such a good friend and I wanted everybody to know why he meant so much to me. Writing reaches more people. (Student Interview #4)

Sean said that he was using the school newspaper, using writing, to try "to tell everybody what one person's view of Mr.--what Mr. Samuels meant." (Student Interview #2) Did he accomplish his purpose? Was his need to communicate met? Was his voice heard?

The attendance secretary stopped me a couple of days later [after the article about Mr. Samuels was printed], and they read it, and you know, everybody who read it really liked it. [She said] it said basically exactly what they thought, too. (Student Interview #2)

#### Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum

Sean talked about his experiences with composition curriculum in three ways: his initial dread of writing and where that originated; the contrast of his experience with an open curriculum and a more traditional, limited curriculum; and his experience with grammar instruction and its non-relationship to his writing. The picture that emerged from his reflections is one of a rule-oriented curriculum vs a meaning-oriented curriculum. It was clear

that a rule-oriented curriculum was one to which Sean responded poorly.

Early in his experience with composition Sean began to dread writing.

In my next year [third grade], I was taught to write in cursive. We used to practice our handwriting by writing compositions. My grammar [sic] wasn't good, neither was my writing. I'd try and try, and I'd get so frustrated, and then it [a composition] would come back with a C- or a D or something like that. It got to the point where everytime I picked up a pencil I shuddered. This grudge stayed with me all the way through junior high. I wrote as little as I could get away with and still pass. (Student Autobiography #1)

Sean understood what this kind of experience did to him.

When I was young I just hated to pick up a pencil. It's, you can't really put a finger on it, actually. But, you know, school work, we did, like I said, we practiced in the writing, the way we wrote by major compositions, and I wasn't really crazy about writing anyway, and that just didn't help it. (Student Interview #1)

Prior to his junior year in high school English Sean was accustomed to a fairly traditional composition curriculum.

Mainly compositions--reports, you know, book reports, things like that. (Student Interview #1)

A meaning-oriented approach to curriculum similar to the one he began to enjoy in his time with Ms. Smith was much more to his preference than a rule-oriented curriculum.

As he became more involved in the writing process during his junior year, Sean became aware of a new way to look at writing, a way that minimized the arbitrary boundaries of a more traditional approach and maximized the possibilities available through writing.

The second [memory piece] was where I really started learning that writing isn't too awful bad, and maybe I could work on improving it a little bit. Instead of turning it [a first draft] in, I wanted to improve on the second one a lot. (Student Interview #4)

How did this change in his attitude come about?

I felt freer because I knew Ms. Smith would give her opinion about it, and she would give me suggestions if she didn't like it on how to fix it. That was the biggest thing. (Student Interview #4)

This approach to learning and writing carried over into Ms. Smith's testing.

The tests were a whole lot different...again, there wasn't really any right or--well, there were right or wrong answers, but it wasn't--she [Ms. Smith] just didn't use a key when she checked it. She was looking for new ideas...how much you can pick up from a paragraph, just things like that. (Student Interview #2)

Sean felt that such testing "probably" helped him to learn in ways that were not previously available to him.

He compared this kind of testing with the more traditional testing to which he was accustomed and to which he returned when Ms. Lucas became his second semester English teacher.

Well [now] most of it's memorizing. On the yes/no true/false tests, it's all memorizing--you know, who was born in 1838? Who cares?! Maybe the big difference between first semester [senior year with Ms. Smith] and this semester [second semester senior year with Ms. Lucas], is Ms. Smith didn't focus much on the history of English and we mostly analyzed work. She definitely didn't leave out essay questions. A lot of times she [Ms. Smith] would ask for your opinion on something, and there was more than one test where you found yourself reflecting and analyzing on the test itself. You know, for that there's no one right answer. (Student Interview #5)

Sean's assignments in Ms. Lucas' second semester English class differed from those in Ms. Smith's classes.

In journalism she [Ms. Smith] gave me a couple of...at the beginning of the year she gave me a couple of subjects I really didn't want to write about, but she still let me write it. [Ms. Lucas] gives you the questions; she gives you how to do it. You do it. (Student Interview #4)

During both my observation in Ms. Lucas' class (Classroom Observation #3) and in subsequent discussion with her, I noted this element of emphasis on form over content. Students' answers to her study questions for chapters of the novel they were reading, according to both Sean and Ms. Lucas, were used for class discussion.

The more traditional, rule-oriented approach to the composition curriculum was a deterrent to Sean's voice development. It was more difficult for him to find his own meaning.

If she [Ms. Lucas] had taken a format similar to Ms. Smith, I would have come out a little bit and spoken up every now and then. But she'd gone back to the question and answer [format] that I spent eleven years with and really don't feel like answering again. (Student Interview #5)

Such assignments as the study questions for Lord of the Flies with Ms. Lucas were not helpful to Sean in his endeavors to find meaning and broader understanding.

They were all right. I didn't really mind doing them. I personally didn't see much of a need for them, 'cause they didn't do much for me. (Student Interview #5)

The grading of Sean's compositions was also different. Ms. Lucas's approach to writing was more form and product oriented while Ms. Smith's was more content and process oriented.

Ms. Lucas works on more, on punctuation and grammar and what all. It's kind of more of a checklist, you know. She's looking for this and she's looking for this, making sure I'm saying it. She's not looking quite as much on how I'm saying it. (Student Interview #4)

Sean was able to speak forcefully about his earlier problems with a rule-oriented composition curriculum.

I got so tired of looking at this word should go here and not there and seeing how many lines you can draw a sentence on and memorizing all these rules and regulations and what all. And in ninth grade I just hit the brick wall and said "No more!" And that's one reason I failed. (Student Interview #4)

In part he was describing his frustration with the diagramming of sentences.

Up until Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English class, English was my most feared and hated subject. Most of the time I couldn't really care less how to draw a sentence into several different lines. I never was good at them, and I couldn't care less. (Student Interview #3)

Sean later reflected more on this aspect of his composition experience.

I have a hard time understanding the mechanics of English as far as this word goes here, and I hate it partially because I don't understand it. And the teachers, with the exception of Ms. Smith and one other teacher--I didn't have blue ribbon winners! (Student Interview #5)

Clearly this rule oriented approach hindered rather than enhanced Sean's voice as it tried to emerge through his writing. He described diagramming sentences as "seeing how many words you can put on a stick." (Student Interview #5) I asked Sean what he thought such exercises had to do with writing. His reply was an emphatic "I have no idea!" (Student Interview #5) When I asked Sean to

elaborate on this by trying to explain what his teachers who emphasized the diagramming of sentences and other such exercises thought this had to do with writing, he attempted to do so.

I guess it was supposed to help you understand where the words go. (Student Interview #5)

Did it help him?

No. I had more trouble with those things than I did in putting the words where they belonged [in my compositions]. (Student Interview #5)

A meaning-oriented curriculum is a curriculum which does not require the words to "go on the right stick" but rather one which creates a climate where the words can find the right place in the written composition itself. Sean appreciated writing that has personal meaning for him. He liked Ms. Smith's emphasis on content (meaning) rather than Ms. Lucas's emphasis on form. Such an approach to curriculum gave him an opportunity for reflection and analysis as he wrote and thought. It moved him away from a yes/no approach to questions and issues. When he was faced again with what he perceived to be a rule-oriented curriculum in Ms. Lucas's class, he did not fight it; he just gave up. Perhaps had this not been his final semester in high school he would have pushed harder to maintain his own voice. At the time this return to a rule-oriented curriculum occurred, he did not feel that the potential gain was worth the effort it would have taken.

In journalism class Ms. Frye attempted to allow journalism students opportunities to determine which articles were important for them to pursue. While Sean was angry about what he perceived as her "tampering" with his voice, he nevertheless enjoyed the results of her belief that meaning-oriented writing should reflect the students' interests and experiences. The articles and editorials he wrote gave evidence of the freedom he had to pursue his interests.

### Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions

#### Teacher/Self-Reflection

Other than noting that Ms. Smith was "real good at analyzing--reflecting" on the meanings that are in "a book or whatever," (Student Interview #5) and indicating that she frequently wrote when her students wrote, Sean did not comment directly on the impact of teacher-self interactions on his voice development through writing. He was, however, in a position to comment on his own interactions with self as they were evidenced through reprocessing, revision, and reflective planning.

#### Student/Self-Reflection

##### Reprocessing.

Reprocessing is a process of transformation, a process in which a student actively changes that which he has written in order to clarify it for others and to understand it better himself. In this sense, reprocessing

is epistemic. Sean realized that prior to his experiences in Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English class, his writing had not been a process of making sense of his experiences nor of his understandings.

It has never been easy for me to write. Sometimes when I went to pick up a pencil or a piece of paper, my hand would seem to freeze up, and what came out would be a worthless mess. Only recently have I been able to turn out papers that make sense. (Student Autobiography #1)

Sean had not been accustomed to self-reflection (or interactions with self) until he entered Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English class. It was here he discovered the importance of multiple drafts, especially "to clear the mind." Through Sean's experiences with reprocessing in Ms. Smith's classes, he came to value this aspect of self-reflection.

Very seldom what I write the first time comes out the way I want it to. There have been a couple of things I've done where I wouldn't have turned it in as a final draft, 'cause in my eyes it was a "worthless mess." If I had time I'd write it over. (Student Interview #4)

One of the ways Sean learned to deal with reprocessing in Ms. Smith's classes was to put a draft away for a week, then return to it.

I've cleared my mind. I've got a new--I've got a place to start over...just like reading someone else's paper. (Student Interview #1)

He noted that if he tried to do this kind of reflection and reprocessing in a shorter time period it is doubtful that it would be as effective; it certainly would be "harder" to be as objective.

I asked Sean if he had found the kind of journaling he did with Ms. Smith to be helpful in his reprocessing of knowledge and understanding. He stated that he found it to be moderately helpful.

Occasionally you run into a story that you don't quite understand and maybe, you know, going back and writing about the story and maybe writing a summary or whatever about the story would help me understand it. (Student Interview #1)

#### Internal and external revision.

Sean's understanding of revision prior to his experience in Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English class was limited to a narrow interpretation of external revision.

Look through it and correct all the spelling and punctuation, mainly. (Student Interview #5)

His experiences with Ms. Smith helped him to begin looking at revision in a broader, deeper sense. Indeed, as he continued to reflect on the meaning he was trying to convey through his writing and on clarifying that meaning on each subsequent draft, he began to see how personal meaning could be enhanced through internal revision. He began to look at internal revision, at a revision dealing with developing understandings and with extended goals for the piece of writing in question.

Change-for-change sake was not how Sean learned to interpret internal revision. He noted the importance of revision beyond change-for-change sake if voice had a chance of emerging through his writing.

With Ms. Lucas you have to change something; no matter what it is, you have to change. (Student Interview #4)

Sean discussed his revisions on Ms. Lucas' Lord of the Flies essay, which served as an example of the change-for-change-sake mind set in which Sean found himself.

My comment: Right here she's asked you to write an introductory sentence. You said: "As for purpose, there was no reason for the hunters to paint their faces. They did it simply to make themselves feel more powerful, etc." So you changed that. You put: "Was there any purpose to face painting? No. The only purpose face painting gave was to help the boys hide themselves from their actions."

Sean's response: That didn't come out quite like I wanted it to.

My comment: What were you trying to say here in your revision? You were doing something different. She [Ms. Lucas] just asked for an introductory sentence, and you were really revising and changing and trying to say something else there.

Sean's response: This is one of the many examples that I wasn't paying that much attention to what I was saying. If I remember right, I was writing a poem. I didn't feel like doing this....So I just changed it a little bit. It didn't turn out quite how I wanted it to turn out, so I left it.

My comment: Is there anyplace else on here that you feel she made a comment that didn't come through to you, that didn't make any sense to you?

Sean's response: Not really. A couple of her comments I didn't see a need for, but I did it to make her happy. It was easier.

(Student Interview #5)

He explained that he had decided to make the changes Ms. Lucas suggested, even if he did not understand or agree

with those changes, because he was just biding his time until graduation.

I noted in my fifth interview with Sean that during my observation in Ms. Lucas' class (Classroom Observation #3) I saw a seeming lack of active participation on his part. I observed that he came into the classroom, took his seat, and waited until Ms. Lucas gave instructions for the class period before he even opened his book bag and took out his notebook. He did not take advantage of either dictionary or novel [Lord of the Flies] available for students' use in their revision of their essay draft. Sean was the first to turn in his revision--15 minutes before class ended--and he just sat at his place until the bell rang. This performance, or lack thereof, was quite different from his participation as I observed it in Ms. Smith's first semester eleventh grade English class or in Ms. Frye's second semester twelfth grade journalism class. I asked Sean to explain the difference in his class participation.

A total lack of interest...It [this kind of revision] was just question and answer. She told us what to do and we did it. (Student Interview #5)

This approach to revision was, in Sean's interpretation, a move backward to a lock step revision approach that offered no space for his own responses.

Earlier, when Sean was talking about revising a piece of writing that meant something to him, he approached the

concept of internal revision. Such revision must begin with a connection between the student and the work. Sean found that writing something such as a memory piece or an autobiography of his travels gave him "a pretty good feeling." He wanted to revise such compositions in ways that would convey his feelings more clearly.

I was writing about something I liked, and when I get something I like like that just right, you know, you really can't help but get a good feeling. (Student Interview #4)

#### Reflective planning.

Sean's introduction to reflective planning occurred in Ms. Smith's eleventh grade English class. The foundation for all his writing was class discussion. These discussions, initiated by Ms. Smith, helped Sean reflect on the literature the class was reading and would later write about. Ms. Smith's "questions, ideas, conclusions, just about everything, really" gave Sean a basis for reflection that translated itself into his writing. (Student Interview #5)

Ms. Smith always seemed to be able to give you another angle on what you were thinking about. When you were reflecting on a book or whatever, she would say, "What if...?"--something like that--give you another point of view or another angle. (Student Interview #5)

Another way Sean began to do some reflective thinking was through the journals Ms. Smith asked students to keep. In this journal students wrote their reflections about the various pieces of literature they were reading and

indicated their thoughts and plans for possible writing exercises. It was partially through this kind of journaling that Ms. Smith encouraged the "conversations on paper" between herself and her students.

Sean liked the class discussions; he liked the conversations on paper; he did not like even the idea of journals.

I still didn't enjoy doing the journal. I never have, never will. The difference between those two [the ninth grade "new word" definitions journal and the eleventh grade "reflective" journal] is you're still putting your own ideas in the one Ms. Smith was asking for. You know, there was no right or wrong answer in most of the ones she wanted. And the one in the ninth grade, it was a definition journal. If you heard a new word that you didn't know, you were supposed to diligently run over to the dictionary and look it up. And if my journal had been a hardback, I'd have crowned him with it, too! I didn't particularly enjoy it [Ms. Smith's journal], but I did it because it was your own ideas. (Student Interview #4)

During his first semester with Ms. Smith, Sean discovered a third way that self-reflection influenced his writing. Ms. Smith assigned a type of writing she called "memory pieces." Students were to recall a particular event or moment from their past, reflect on that memory, then write it in such a way that the readers of the piece would see, feel, and experience that event as vividly as possible. Sean's first attempt at this kind of reflective writing was difficult; but by the second memory piece assignment, he had found his footing.

Starting on my first memory piece was easier than most other compositions I've done, and even though it wasn't that good, it was better than a lot of other things I've done. That also set the stage for the second memory piece. I have more ideas for this memory piece to make it even better. I am looking forward to English this year instead of dreading it like I have in past years. (Student Autobiography #1)

Ms. Smith helped the students engage in a step by step process of reflective planning for the second draft of the second memory piece. Her questions were designed to help the students both to evaluate what they had already written and to move beyond the writing to elaboration and to new ideas. Sean liked this guided reflection through multiple drafts.

I like the, kind of, as far as it getting it better and better, I like the step by step, you know, first draft, second draft, and what all. (Student Interview #1)

After Sean had written a first draft for this second memory piece, had engaged in some reflective planning for its revision, and had completed a second draft, we discussed the process he had just been through as well as the particular revisions he had made. He was excited about writing a third draft.

I will probably do another draft of it because it's still not quite the way I want it to be. (Student Interview #1)

He was feeling so positive about his piece and the possibilities inherent in it that he said he would "probably do another [draft] anyway," even if it were not assigned.

Sean came to believe during his time with Ms. Smith that open ended questions and the expression of many ideas

is essential to planning writing that has voice. This kind of discussion and reflection and planning takes time. Sean, who might be expected to want to write his assignment, turn it in, and be finished with it because of his early experiences in composition instruction, began to value the time offered by Ms. Smith for reflection, analysis, and redirection of his own writing. He appreciated the opportunity for multiple drafts. Ms. Smith, in allowing her students to revise their graded "final" drafts for a better grade, showed them that there were "no final drafts."

Some of Sean's written reflections on this memory piece are examples of the kind of reflective planning in which he engaged.

I like this piece because of what its' [sic] talking about & what the place means to me. When I was reading this, I could feel the power and emotion coming from the words off the paper.

This piece brings back some of the best times of my life. It shows me what true friendship means, it shows me how to be myself, not somebody I don't even know in my body.

I disliked this piece because, oddly enough, It dug up times & experiences people I'll never do, see, or know again.

I am going to add on a considerable amount to the end so the reader (and I) can feel the power of what this place means to me.

(Student Writing Assignment #1)

This kind of reflective planning actively translated itself into Sean's second draft. An example follows:

(From First Draft) When I was at the pool, I met two people who turned out to be cabinmates, Jeremy and Kevin. My tension was fading.

(From Second Draft) While I was at the pool, I met two people who turned out to be cabinmates, Jeremy and Kevin. ...While I was in my cabin, I met the rest of my cabin mates and continued to find out how easy it was to meet people.

(Student Writing Assignment #1)

When I asked Sean about a particular change he had made on the memory piece, he was very aware of why he had made the change.

It just seems to show a little bit more about how the place was and it shows the reader a little bit more, I think, than this [the first draft] does. It was just something that I thought would make it sound a little better, and it seemed to show what I think a little more.  
(Student Interview #1)

Sean's first ending consisted of one sentence: "This place was such an easy place to be yourself." In his reflective planning he indicated that he wanted "to add on a considerable amount to the end so the reader (and I) can feel the power of what this place means to me." He added "a considerable amount to the end"--17 sentences instead of one. An example of those sentences through which Sean hoped to convey the "power" of his experience follows:

On the day before we were scheduled to go home, there was an event which meant as much or more than anything at camp--the campfire....we sat around a huge campfire, thinking of what kind of a week we'd had, who'd we met, what did we learn? Every once in a while, someone would get up and quietly answer this and other questions. They might tell the group something that's bothering them, and the group would listen. The atmosphere was very solemn [sic], we were our true selves. We had left our macho image and "coolness" back at the lodge. (Student Writing Assignment #1)

Sean learned to value the possibilities inherent in revision, multiple drafts, and reflective planning. He was also aware of the time this kind of process demands. In his first autobiographical writing for me he mentioned a writing assignment he had had in seventh grade when the words would not come. Toward the end of our time together I asked him if he ever felt this way anymore, if there were times the "word flow" was absent. He told me of his struggles with the article he wrote about his teacher who died.

When I was writing Mr. Samuel's thing for the paper, it took me a real long time to write that, because I couldn't get the right words. 'Cause that one I knew I wouldn't be able to write a second draft for. And...I wouldn't be able to get the right words...I wanted to be real, real careful, 'cause, you know. [Long Pause] It still didn't turn out quite as good as it could have, but----.  
(Student Interview #4)

With Ms. Lucas, however, the assignments were structured in such a way as to discourage the reflective planning Sean had come to value. One class session was devoted to a teacher-guided discussion of the topic assigned. One class session was spent in the writing of the rough draft which was graded. And one class session was spent in revising the graded rough draft according to the teacher's specifications, primarily for external revision. This structure did not offer Sean the kind of time for reflective planning that he now wanted. Such an approach discouraged his voice development. He saw no need to spend any more time than

was absolutely necessary on a paper that he did not define as his to begin with.

Sean responded positively to Ms. Smith's use of open-ended questions for prewriting activities and negatively to Ms. Lucas's use of highly structured study questions for the reading of the text. The answers to the study questions were used for plans for the assigned composition. Ms. Smith used questions for helping students compare earlier compositions to current ones or to earlier drafts of the composition in progress.

Ms. Smith also used freewriting and journaling as a part of her emphasis on writing as a process. While Sean still had reservations about required journals, he began to value the "conversations on paper" that they offered. Through Ms. Smith's reflective comments in his journal, Sean was able to extend his thinking. Ms. Lucas, however, did not use journaling as an approach to students' reflective planning, believing that students cannot extend their thinking through this method.

#### Conditions Conducive to Voice Development

Apprenticeships as described in the literature were not a part of Sean's classroom composition experiences. He did, however, refer to Ms. Smith in ways that indicated his respect for her as a mentor. The fact that she wrote with the students, that she respected the students' thoughts and their expressions of those thoughts and that

she "practiced what she taught," represented an honesty and an openness to which Sean responded. He valued her assessment of his work.

As far as opinions go, I think Ms. Smith is the one that means the most. (Student Interview #4)

There were no ways that Sean directly commented on conditions in his composition classrooms being targeted toward "the teachable moment." We will see later, however, that when such moments occurred and were seized by his teacher, Ms. Smith, Sean did respond in a positive manner.

Sean was able to talk at length about connected classes and midwife teachers, although he did not use those terms. And he reflected on the various writing experiences that have been conducive to his own voice development as he defines it.

#### Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes

Ms. Smith offered Sean new ways to think and to express those thoughts. One way that he especially liked was classroom discussion of various topics. As the class engaged in dialogue with Ms. Smith and with each other, Sean discovered that his thinking and his understanding could be expanded. He described this experience in a number of ways: Ms. Smith could give students "a different angle"; she asked, and expected

answers to "what if...?" questions; she gave students a way to reflect in depth on their writing; she encouraged "conversations on paper"; she told the class that they, and she, were to learn together, and she attempted to create situations that would encourage this.

Sean anticipated spending a second year in these kinds of conditions. He looked forward to an English class for the first time in his experience.

I wanted to spend a long and enjoyable year again with her as a teacher. (Student Interview #4)

Ms. Smith tried to convince Sean to register for the "high" level English class during his senior year, citing his accomplishments in her class and encouraging him to move on. Sean commented on this.

Last year Ms. Smith tried to talk me into high English and I told her "forget it." Because ninth grade English was a high English course, and it put such a bad taste in my mouth. The teacher went so fast and wasn't in the least bit interested in slowing down, that, forget it. I don't need the hassle. (Student Interview #4)

Sean had described his experience with the ninth grade teacher in an earlier interview.

It was a higher English, and I just, he went so fast I just can't, completely got lost. He wasn't interested [in helping me]. (Student Interview #3)

There was another reason Sean decided against changing to a higher level English class for his senior year.

Another reason I took standard English [senior year] is because a couple days before she [Ms. Smith] suggested it [that he take "high" English], she said she'd put in to

teach senior standard English. And I didn't want to go back to writing the notes and taking the test if I could. (Student Interview #4)

Sean did enroll in a standard senior English class, and he did have Ms. Smith as a teacher again, both for English and for journalism. When Ms. Smith retired in the middle of that year, Sean felt severed from those conditions of connectedness that had nurtured his development.

[Now] I try not to get too much involved because we've gone back to taking notes and taking tests on my notes. (Student Interview #4)

For Sean, Ms. Smith was a midwife teacher--one who helped him deliver his words to the world. He spoke of this initially in his first autobiographical writing.

The next thing to happen was the best thing to happen to me as far as writing compositions. Ms. Smith. I'm not saying this to flatter her; she has made writing so much easier for me. Words come out much easier. I can really say what I want now. (Student Autobiography #1)

How did she do this? How did she help Sean's words to "come out much easier"?

Ms. Smith was always pushing everybody to write, and we did several major papers. We'd turn in a rough draft, and then she'd go over them and give suggestions on how to make it better, and those suggestions really helped. And she'd talk with you for a while and, you know, you had like three or four drafts that you did, and that helped a lot. (Student Interview #4)

Ms. Smith's nurturant approaches to the teaching of writing were new to Sean. He responded positively to Ms. Smith's instruction; and, because he found himself for the first time in an environment conducive to risk taking, he

was willing to try some of Ms. Smith's suggestions for his writing. She designed composition assignments in ways that helped Sean find and express the words and ideas within him. Those that offered open-ended questions and suggestions for further thought, that helped to transfer the ownership of Sean's writing to him, and those that created opportunity for his dialogue with the teacher and with his peers were the ones most appealing to Sean.

Basically before I got to Ms. Smith for English, I couldn't, you know, I hated to write. Ms. Smith just basically showed me how to write, what to write, when to write, etc., and she was real good about it. Now I'm to the point where I don't mind it as much. (Student Interview #3)

Part of what Ms. Smith was attempting to do was to help students begin to make connections--helping them to connect what they already knew with new ideas, helping them to see that they could learn from their own writing and from each other, and helping them to understand that she was a learner with them. Her written reflections expressed her concern for determining appropriate nurturant conditions from individual students' voice development. This nurturant concern was the catalyst for Sean's budding voice development.

Sean would not describe himself as a "good" writer. He did, however, recognize that his writing had improved. He acknowledged that he felt better about his writing, seeing himself as a "competent," if not "good" writer. I asked him what, in his opinion, made the difference in his

perceptions of himself as someone who "couldn't write" to someone who is a "competent writer." He was quick to answer: "Ms. Smith!" (Student Interview #4)

Sean described Ms. Smith as being "extremely good at what she does."

She gave me a lot of different ways to look at writing... and...reflecting. (Student Interview #5)

It seemed almost an understatement for Sean to say that he held Ms. Smith in "rather high regard." (Student Interview #1)

#### Encouraging the Emerging Voice

When Sean talked specifically about his experiences in the composition classroom, he talked about voice-- about his own voice development through writing, about the times he has felt that his voice has been heard, and about the times he has felt that his voice was silenced.

Sean described how he saw his voice developing.

The way I write to me seems a little bit more fluid. You know, I'm not saying "Jack had a ball" anymore. I tend to make it a little more flowing. "Jack had a ball. The ball was red. Jack threw us the red ball." It's not like that anymore--I hope! (Student Interview #4)

I asked him what had made him write that way to begin with, what might have been cramping his word flow. He did not answer directly.

I didn't like writing...and...I just didn't write that much. (Student Interview #4)

However, he had described an earlier experience with- in a composition classroom setting that might serve as an

example of the kinds of conditions that stemmed his voice development.

In ninth grade, one of the reasons I failed English, because he, we were supposed to be keeping a, what do you call it? Like a "new word journal." If you hear a new word you didn't know, go look it up and get the meaning. And I hated that! Oh, good grief! And I was getting 20s and 30s on this, and these were major grades. And... forcing somebody to do something like that is dumb, because you're making a student hate writing. (Student Interview #3)

Sean's ability to move on with his voice development came about through his experiences in Ms. Smith's classes. Her guidance opened for him an experience with writing that was new, that helped him extend, clarify, and articulate his thinking.

Ms. Smith always seemed to be able to give you another angle on what you were thinking about, when you were reflecting on a book or whatever, she would say, "What if...?"--something like that--give you another point of view or another angle. (Student Interview #5)

Sean was able to articulate clearly his understanding of the connection between his writing and his voice development. He appreciated the opportunity to consider and develop different points of view. Ms. Smith's encouragement to think about ideas from different angles was helpful to Sean in the evolving processes of understanding and expressing his thoughts.

I pushed Sean to think about himself as a writer. After so many years in school thinking that he could not write, this was difficult for him.

My comment: Are you seeing yourself as a writer now? Can you say, "I am a writer"?

Sean's response: I can put words together and make a sentence. I don't know if I could make a living at it, if that's what you mean. I don't know if I'd want to.

My comment: No, but if you wrote "Jack has a ball," that's writing--and you're beyond that.

Sean's response: My writing gets me by. If you say I can write good, well, that's fine. I'll say you...say I write good. I'm, I'm still not really into it enough to where I can say, "Yes, I can write good."

My comment: But you are into it enough that you can say, "Yes, I can write better"?

Sean's response: Yeah.

My comment: You feel better about your writing than you ever have before?

Sean's response: Yeah.

My comment: ...you might not be able to say "I'm a good writer" but you can say "I have improved; I can write"--how does that make you feel about yourself?

Sean's response: Better...I do get a good feeling when somebody asks me, when...they're looking at the school paper, you know, I can say I had a part in it.

As Sean reflected on his competence as a writer, he arrived at a point of seeing the growth reflected in connections with others--in the recognition of his words as published in the school newspaper. Sean sensed that his voice had been heard.

When we reviewed some of Sean's articles that had been published in the school newspaper during the year, Sean was able to cite more examples his emerging voice being heard. For example, he had written a humorous, tongue-in-cheek article on valet parking for students' cars.

One thing I liked about this one is, there's always somebody who'll come up to you and ask you if it's true. This article was basically the talk of the journalism class that Friday, 'cause so many people had come up and asked "Is this story really true?"--or--"Can you really park your own, can't you park your own car in the parking lot?" And I loved it! That was, that was great! Yeah! (Student Interview #5)

Another example Sean gave was a response to the article he had written on Mr. Samuels.

The biggest thing I can think of is after Mr. Samuels passed away there was the attendance secretary. She stopped me in the hall and asked me who I was, and I told her. And she complemented me on the thing I did on Mr. Samuels, because it was exactly what she would have written. (Student Interview #5)

Sean knew that he had communicated, with at least one other person, some of his feelings about Mr. Samuels.

Sean was aware that a connection had been made, that his voice had been heard.

His article in response to a local newspaper editorial about the pitfalls of students having after-school jobs also made some connections between his own thoughts and experiences and those of other students. Their response to him after the publication of his article was another example of his knowing that his voice had been heard.

When I wrote [that] piece--a lot of people liked that... students. (Student Interview #5)

Sean noted the importance of outside confirmation of his writing. He especially liked the opportunities the school newspaper afforded him for expressing his voice and for being heard. Sean's own satisfaction with a piece of

writing was, however, not dependent solely on the response of others. He was able to talk about the importance of intrinsic satisfaction with his writing. He expressed, for example, his willingness to spend time in reflection and revision when his writing had personal meaning--even if the revision was not a requirement by the teacher. He talked about the positive and negative aspects of various journalism pieces. His evaluations showed evidence of his own reflective planning and evaluation.

Although his article on students' after school jobs was limited because of space in the school newspaper, he felt that he had successfully met his objective.

I think I've effectively blown his thesis out of the water! (Student Interview #5)

Sean spoke also of certain conditions in the writing experience that were not conducive to voice development, giving examples of ways in which his voice was silenced rather than nurtured.

In reference to one of his articles for a new column for the school paper, "The Lighter Side," Sean related an instance in which his ownership of his writing was challenged.

I liked the idea. It started out as an assignment in class, you know, come up with something new that will make the paper better. But the thing I didn't like about it is, the story was a pretty long story, and it turned out to be about this [indicates smallness with his fingers] big--after The Chopper [referring to Ms. Frye]. I did one more that made it in the paper, and I just said "no more!" 'Cause everything I wrote, she didn't like, she didn't

want, she didn't think was funny, whatever. And I just said "forget it." I don't need the hassle. (Student Interview #5)

During the course of our conversations, I heard Sean say in a number of ways that it was very important for him to choose his own topics, that when he was interested in what he was writing the words flowed easier, that when he was trying to communicate something he felt he was willing to spend the necessary time in reflective planning and revision. I wondered about personal interest as a motivating factor for Sean's writing. "Why do you write?" I asked him.

Why do I write? I guess the first answer that comes to mind is that I have to. Having Ms. Smith for a teacher, it pays to write. I have written a few things because I wanted to, though. The editorial I did on ["Work Is Not A Distraction"] I wrote because I was tired of hearing the same old crap about how work is bad for a high school student. When I wrote the article on Mr. Samuels, I wrote it because I needed a way to let everyone know what kind of person Mr. Samuels was. (Student Interview #3)

I noted some recurring patterns in Sean's descriptions of various motivating factors for his writing --that he wanted to choose his own topics, that he was willing to spend time in reflection and revision if he felt connected to the topic, that he valued having autonomy in the decisions he made about his writing, that when he was interested in a topic he found that the words flowed more easily.

Two examples from his first autobiographical writing were evidence of his motivation being based on interest and on fairness.

The first writing assignment I can remember doing was in second grade...I was in a "special" class that I later learned was a GT [gifted and talented] course. I would go there every week and eventually wrote a "book." I came up with a main character, a take-off from Superman who goes around saving helpless animals. (Student Autobiography #1)

Some parents had printed a book of some of the children's stories. Sean's story was one of the ones omitted.

I was mad when they read the book and my name wasn't in it, so mad I wrote a book myself. It was never published of course, but the book gave me satisfaction. (Student Autobiography #1)

Another special assignment occurred in a high school biology class.

The next big assignment I did was in my tenth grade biology class. It was year after the Challenger [sic] exploded, and we wrote essays on the hottest topic going--should we continue space exploration. I'm interested in aerospace anyway, so I jumped into this. I was going, writing like crazy, explaining again and again that we should, giving every reason I could think of. I turned in one of the longest reports I have ever done. (Student Autobiography #1)

Since he had indicated that he did not feel "properly motivated" to write in Ms. Lucas' class, I asked him to tell me what did "properly motivate" him. Again he used the "Work Is Not a Distraction" article as an example of being motivated to write so that his voice can be heard.

That article I did on "Work Is Not a Distraction," that irritated me, oooohhh! I was just so tired of hearing the same old crap about "work isn't any good, work is damaging to us." And it just ticked me off!" (Student Interview #4)

An example of "improper motivation" for Sean was the assignment for his Lord of the Flies essay in Ms. Lucas's

class in which he felt he had to "prove her point."

That is the way the whole class is now. That is the way the whole class is now. And that's one reason I tried to fade back in the scenery a little bit--or a lot! 'Cause I'm not interested in any of it. (Student Interview #4)

Indeed, there was nothing I observed of Sean's actions in Ms. Lucas's class (Classroom Observation #3) that would indicate the slightest bit of interest on Sean's part. He had been with a teacher who saw his thoughts as valuable and his expression of those thoughts as possible. When the nurture, the respect, the emphasis on voice development was removed from Sean's writing instruction in Ms. Lucas's class, he responded negatively.

One of the most important motivational factors for Sean's writing was the freedom he discovered in Ms. Smith's classes to own his own writing, to develop his own interests through that writing. He noted more than once that while Ms. Smith made many suggestions for possible revisions in his writing, she left the decisions about those revisions up to Sean. He did feel as if his writing belonged to him. In journalism class with Ms. Smith, Sean perceived her editing as focusing strictly on commas, sentence fragments, and the like. There was no "fooling around" with his ideas; his voice remained intact.

Sean discussed with me his understanding of voice and the importance of voice in a piece of writing.

When I write, I try real hard to write very close to what I'm thinking. One thing Ms. Smith stressed real hard last

year is, you can have a letter that's grammatically perfect, and she gave us one last year that was terrible and had no voice to it whatsoever. And she gave it to us and told us to add voice to it. And what I tried to do was just, what I was really thinking. (Student Interview #5)

He recognized the impact writing and voice development could have on his own understandings. I asked him if he thought writing had made any kind of difference in how he now understands himself.

I don't think I'm really a different person because I've written a few things, but it's made me understand a couple of things different....It's given me a different point of view sometimes. (Student Interview #5)

He described how his own voice had developed over the course of the two years of this study.

I think over the past couple of years that it's [his voice as expressed through his writing] gotten a little, you know, when I write, it gets, it's a little more personal than earlier--when I started in Ms. Smith's class. (Student Interview #5)

From Sean's own descriptions and examples I attempted to synthesize the various components of his personal definition of voice. Writing gives him better understanding of himself; he gets a different point of view sometimes when he writes; and his writing has become more personal because he is more in touch with what he is thinking, feeling, and knowing. He assured me that this was an accurate description of his understanding of his own voice.

### Teachers' Perceptions

But the worst is that these students will later become teachers themselves, and pass on the stuff that's being fed to them now. I suppose you've thought about the consequences. What they need to do is learn to use their imaginations, to recognize imagination.

--Welty in Prenshaw, 1984, p. 66

Research Question 2. What are his [the student's] writing teachers' perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that contribute to students' writing and voice development?

Because of the important influence of student-teacher interactions in a classroom situation, an understanding of the perceptions of voice development of three of Sean's writing teachers was crucial to the study.

Ms. Smith, Teacher A, was Sean's English teacher during his junior year of high school. She was also his English teacher and journalism teacher during the first semester of his senior year until she retired. Ms. Lucas, Teacher B, assumed responsibilities for Ms. Smith's English classes for the second semester of Sean's senior year. And Ms. Frye, Teacher C, assumed responsibilities for the journalism class.

These three composition teachers influenced Sean's voice development through their interactions with him and their approaches to the teaching of writing.

(Teacher A)

The data presented here came from two interviews with Ms. Smith (November, 1987 and February, 1989), from one classroom observation (November, 1987), from Ms. Smith's reflective journal (November, 1987), and from writing assignments she gave her students.

### Student-Teacher Interactions

#### Writer to Writer

Sean spoke to that important dynamic of the teacher sharing her voice with students. He was quick to spot Ms. Smith's commitment to writing, calling her a "write-a-holic" and noting that "it paid to write" if one were in her class.

During my first classroom observation, Ms. Smith and her students wrote for 40 minutes of a fifty-minute class period. The only time Ms. Smith stopped writing was to answer questions students brought to her. (Classroom Observation #1)

In my later discussions with both Sean and Ms. Smith, it became clear that this was not an unusual occurrence. By mid-November, after only three months with Ms. Smith, her students knew that when they wrote she would write also. Because of her actions, her students were aware of her commitment to writing. Ms. Smith's own comments, both in interviews and in her reflective journaling,

emphatically underscored her belief that a writing teacher must have a personal commitment to writing.

### Teacher Comments

Ms. Smith's responses to her students's writing efforts ranged from quick reminders in class, to individual conferences, to written comments on papers and suggestions for revision. Her responses appeared to come from a desire to understand the underlying motivations of her students as well as to facilitate their growth through their writing.

I would say that in the course of writing one paper I'm probably going to have a conference lasting as short as a minute up to maybe ten minutes--and some students, even longer if they come back after school. (Teacher A Interview #1)

...but by conferencing, maybe the two of us are over here to one side and we're talking about specific things. Either I've initiated it, or they've initiated it. (Teacher A Interview #1)

I asked Ms. Smith to comment on how she decided to initiate a conference with a student and when she determined a conference was necessary.

It's not always at the same stage of the process, not always at the same drafting or revision stage.... There are some people now--from watching the peer review going on--I feel pretty comfortable about what they're doing. They need some help in editing, which they may get from me, or they may get from somebody else. But the conferencing, I want that before we get to the peer editing stage. And, so, there're people that I'm definitely--if they don't come to see me, if they don't initiate a conference, I'm going to do that before we get to the peer editing stage. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She estimated that she conferences this way with approximately 75 percent of the students. She noted that with the other students her sharing of a comment or two with them on their way out of class might suffice at certain points in the writing process.

In 5th I talked with HM, BH, BJ, KC, TJB quickly and individually to tell them that I have yet to see a first draft from 4 of them (due 11/9) and no yesterday's work from any of the 5. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #1)

As much as Ms. Smith believes in individual conferencing, the time factor is often a problem.

I prefer being able to talk to them, because it's so much shorter. You know, I can say a whole lot more in the same amount of time [as writing comments]. There have been years when I have tried using a tape recorder. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Her journal entries indicated both frustration when there was not time for individual conferences and satisfaction when there was.

But--where do I go from here--what I need is an immediate conference w/ each one and I can't do that. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #1)

Individual conferences were especially helpful....The class was so small and the ones not in conference were so involved with other activities that the student and I were not distracted as we talked about the composition. They also made notes as we talked. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #5)

While Ms. Smith expressed her preference for oral comments and conferencing with students over written comments, she recognized that limited time for individual conferences influenced her interactions with students. Her conferences "on paper," to which she referred as

"conversations on paper," were written responses to students' ideas. Her "what if...?" questions in both discussion and on students' written drafts helped her to incorporate some of the positive facets of oral interactions into her written responses to her students' writing.

Written comments are also important ways for Ms. Smith to respond to her students' individual needs in the composition experience. She described her written comments as "prompts" to extend students' thinking rather than instructions for editing emphases. She recognized that conferencing is both student- and teacher-initiated and is, as well, fluid, coming at different stages in the writing process as different student needs become apparent.

Two examples of these responses to students' specific needs were recorded in her reflective journal entries.

And Max...I just went back and wrote him long supportive, yes-I-know-it-is notes and asked him some questions-- "prompts" is what Donna [another teacher] calls them. That's a more precise term. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #1)

She noted also in her journal that Charles had turned in a "barely acceptable" draft two weeks late.

I wrote him a long page of questions--suggestions including go back to all writing handouts/lessons we had in September. I have been too kind to him, and I should have called his parents. Soon. Soon. He's taking full advantage of my caring. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #4)

She elaborated on her "page of questions" in an interview session.

Charles is sitting there being lazy, not anywhere working up to his potential. He turned in his first draft ten days after it was due, and then he'd just gone through the motions. And I thought, "What the heck? What is wrong with this kid?" I want to take him and shake. So I just dashed off these questions on the--he'd written about a page and a fifth there--and I filled up the rest of the page with questions. (Teacher A, Interview #1)

A common teacher response to students' work is grading. Ms. Smith said that she tried to downplay grades so that the process of the writing can be emphasized. Although she sometimes used grades to motivate a student to "work a little harder," the use of grades as a comment on students' writing was a strategy that Ms. Smith attempted to minimize. She saw grades as causing premature closure of student thought. Too often, she said, grades can prevent the development of a student's ideas. By putting the emphasis on the grade, the product is given more importance than the process--an emphasis that Ms. Smith wanted to avoid.

She tried to describe some of her own grading processes.

If they go through all these stages--I mean I'm giving them a check through the peer review through the first draft and so on, and those checks are going to translate into 95's probably--or check-minus for some. That would be if the first draft was due and they turned in half a first draft; that might even be a 70. Turning things in late, that's going to be a penalty, and that's about the only penalty on these. And then the final draft is a major grade. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith noted in her journal her concern that a student was refusing to consider revision.

I'm not saying the right words to her. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry # )

"How do you find the right words?" I asked.

Sometimes I just start with little pat things and I see that some things click with them more than something else. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Underlying her struggle to fine the "right words," words that will "connect with" individual students, is Ms. Smith's belief that responses to student writing must come from the teacher's desire to understand students' own underlying motivations.

Sometimes, Ms. Smith acknowledged, responding honestly to a student's writing is difficult. She does try to respond to the writing itself as the student's honest words.

You know--I've done that, I'm sorry to say. I have--when a student comes on strong, particularly if he's saying something I disagree with or if I personally do not like this student, I will be pickier in responding to his ideas --or will not show the enthusiasm I might for others--or if I disagree with his values. (Teacher A Interview #2)

Written or oral comments, according to Ms. Smith, must be highly specific responses to individual students. In addition, she is very careful to direct her comments toward the individual student's writing, attempting to avoid the problem of letting her personal response to a student's personality color her own honest response to that student's writing.

Sean found Ms. Smith's oral and written "conversational" responses to be quite helpful to him as he began to discover that he not only had something to say but that he also was quite capable of saying it in writing.

### Student Ownership

Ms. Smith addressed the concept of student ownership.

It's their paper; it's not mine. And I'm doing a better job of letting it be their paper. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She said that while giving such agency to her students was often difficult for her, she practices doing it.

I get better every year, but really, when I just know something ought to be changed, I mean, I know that it would be better, I still say, "Why are you saying this? What do you want this to do? What kind of effect are you trying to get from it?" And if they tell me something, I'll say, "Had you thought about trying this?" (Teacher A Interview #1)

She spoke in other ways of helping students grow into ownership of their own writing.

So, nobody has yet said, as they will later on in the year, "Well, I don't want to. It's not your paper." I mean, that happens later on in the year, you know. But "This is mine," or "You told me it was my paper, and that's the way I want to do it"--nobody is at that stage yet. If I pushed real hard and said, "I just don't think that ought to be in there," they'd all, I think almost everybody, would take it out now. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She indicated that there were times when she will give the students an example of how another student in another class handled a similar problem. This helped

her avoid that situation in which the students interpret her suggestions as encroaching on their ownership.

...that doesn't intimidate them. It's not like, "Hey, the teacher says this is wrong, and I have to do it like this." (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith recognized the difficulty that she and many teachers have in transferring authority and ownership to the students in the matter of their writing. Yet her belief that this process of transfer was absolutely necessary for students to discover and express their voices communicated itself to Sean as he began to discover his own voice.

### Connected Teaching

Connected teachers attempt to help students make connections with their own knowledge and with that of "distant teachers" (Belenky, et al., 1986). Connected teachers ask questions to facilitate this knowing, and they trust their students' abilities to make connections themselves.

Ms. Smith recognized her role as facilitator. Asking questions to help her students begin to make their own connections was a major part of this role.

I ask much better questions now than I used to. You know, they're deeper; they're "why" questions. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith told of sharing the wisdom of Joyce Carroll Oates--a "distant teacher"--with her students when she

discussed with them the importance of owning their own writing.

She [Oates] tells her students to find their true subject. And they say, "Well, how do we find our true subject?" And her answer was, "If the writing is easy, and if you are reluctant to stop." (Teacher A Interview #1)

How can students find their "true subject"? Ms. Smith encouraged them to focus on those subjects that interested them.

They use "boring" so much, and I try to get them, I keep telling them that boring is in the mind of the speaker and not necessarily that the writer has done it. [Therefore] if you were bored by writing it, the reader is certainly going to be bored by reading it. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith attempted to create frequent opportunities for her students to connect with each other. She assumed the role of facilitator as she encouraged students to find this "true subject" for their written expressions. Primarily she asked questions and remained open to the possibilities within students' answers to those questions. She was guided in her connected teaching by her belief that her task was to help students discover relationships--or connections--between what they already know and what she wants to teach them. It was important to Ms. Smith to try to help her students make these connections.

The more my lesson relates to something they already know, and shows them that I have something that will help, that I'm not asking them to be a different person--I think some students come in, and they think, "Hey, this teacher's trying to change me from what I am into something else." But if they can begin to see that I'm helping them grow--I mean literally, I'm not trying to take any of them away--but, "Hey, this teacher's got something that I can use

with what I already know and I can see it's valid, I can see it's worthwhile"....It could relate specifically to them. It's not a game we're playing, but it's honest. (Teacher A Interview #1)

I found one of the clearest examples of how Ms. Smith helps students make connections with their own meanings in one of her journal entries.

I gave Janak my why-you-should-write-about-your-native-country talk as I had with April on Wednesday. I went through his mem. piece, asking questions where I wanted to know more. As he told me more about the escape...to Pakistan, he saw how his additional info. clarified confusions I had and also caused me to suffer more empathetically with him. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #4)

By becoming more in touch with his own knowledge and understanding of the event he described in his paper, Janak was able to begin making connections with another person as well. The teacher's role of questioner facilitated the connecting.

Connections can be made through the teacher, through other students, through various classroom aids. Ms. Smith noted that when students arrived at the editing stage of their writing that there were certain connections to be made there as well. Students were aware that they could get help from the teacher, from other students, "or they may pull out their Warriner's [grammar text] for some help in spelling." (Teacher A Interview #1)

Although his interactions with peers were limited, Sean appreciated the opportunities available in Ms. Smith's classes for making connections--connections

between his thoughts and those of his peers, between their thoughts and those of the teacher, between his experiences and the experiences of others.

### Student-Peer Interactions

#### Collaborative Learning

A major way Ms. Smith approached collaborative learning was through peer review groups. The number of students in a group ranged from two to four. Ms. Smith planned carefully for this peer review.

For peer review tomorrow--I'll have to have one side of the room for those who are ready to review. This time I'm pairing them. And after that pair completes review, I'll move one of each pair on to the next pair. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #2)

She served as facilitator for the reviewing.

I spent about half my time monitoring the pairs of reviewers--about 7 pairs in 5th period and 6 in 1st. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #3)

A part of facilitating was evaluating.

...the peer reviewing that is going on appears to be productive....For this peer review, I paired them and then after 10-12 mins., moved one member of pair, then moved again--so they read to three partners. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #5)

Ms. Smith recognized that collaborative learning does not occur by itself and that students needed a time for appreciating its potential benefits. She referred to an occasion when she allowed students to revise their final drafts for a better grade. By the time they had worked through the process of multiple drafts together, many of

the students had come to appreciate the value of collaborative learning.

That's when they started finding somebody that was a serious writer and that wasn't just playing around. I mean, they were doing this on their own. They were saying, "Hey, Terry, come over here and sit down with me, and let's go through this."...Almost everybody who revised, there was a substantial increase. (Teacher A Interview #1)

As students began to search for answers among each other, not looking to her for all the answers, Ms. Smith reflected on the possible meaning this had for their growth and development.

The peer review was different & much better than last time --no complaints about doing it. They were more confident, more willing to take initiative. Perhaps they're showing more ownership. Those who didn't care as much were not involved in peer review because they had not completed latest revision for one reason or another. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #3)

It was in Ms. Smith's English class that Sean first discovered the potential value in collaborative learning as he was given the opportunity to dialogue with his peers and with Ms. Smith. He began to feel that his voice was being heard.

### Peer Feedback

Although peer feedback can, and does, occur informally and spontaneously, Ms. Smith tried to create an environment so that it becomes more likely that students will use feedback from their peers as a tool in their writing development.

There's all of this talking and so forth, so I try to have different little niches set up in the room where people can get help if they want it. (Teacher A Interview #1)

One aspect of Ms. Smith's affirmation of peer interaction was this arrangement of the classroom for various peer interactions. During peer editing she helped students establish "centers" for various aspects of the review. A place for student-run spelling centers, for example, was set up using those students who were "good" spellers. However, it takes a while for students to begin to see the value in looking for this kind of help.

But on that first paper, they're still kind of playing a game, and think that this is just this crazy teacher who lets you talk and play if you want to. And it's not till they get that evaluation sheet back that they see, "Hey, I got a 42; I didn't want a 42!" So they're all more serious this second draft. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She did not rely solely on students' desires for better grades to help them see the benefits in organized peer feedback. She planned activities to help students grow in their understanding of and appreciation for the peer review process, designing evaluations for the peer review experience itself.

They had done the peer review, and we had about the last five minutes. I wanted them to evaluate their peer review and I asked them who was a good peer reviewer, or who had reviewed theirs, what changes they had made, and what questions or what things had the listener said to them that made them make those changes. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She was not satisfied with the comments she was receiving: "Everybody who heard mine said it was good."

"I didn't make many/any changes." So she asked them why, if it were true they did not have any changes to make, should any more class time be allotted for peer review. At this point she was counting on their interest in talking with each other--"They had a wonderful time!"--to push them into thinking about the real benefits of peer feedback.

I said, "If it's not doing any good, there's no point in our having peer review." And then it was dawning on them: "Uh-oh! If we don't say something good about this, we won't have it." So I said, "You've got to convince me why we should have peer review again. What good's it doing?" (Teacher A Interview #1)

Pressed to think about the benefits of peer review, even if their initial motivation was to keep time in class to talk with each other, the students began to give more substantive answers to Ms. Smith's "What good's it doing?" question: "We'll take criticism better from each other than from the teacher." "They'll know more about what we're doing."

Ms. Smith found the concept of audience to be one of the major motivating factors for the development of a student's voice.

The idea of a wider audience is generally appealing. That appeals to them, that makes them be more conscientious. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She related a specific incident which confirmed this belief.

"...if I know other students are going to hear my paper, it makes me think more about what I'm writing," I remember

one girl last year saying. "When I'm writing this," she said, "I don't know who's going to be put in my group." I used to have four in a group, and I would decide most of the time who was going to be in that. Sometimes I let them choose themselves. And she said, "Suppose Ms. Smith puts so and so in my group? I want to be sure that they can't make fun of it." So that was certainly one of the reasons I wanted to have the peer review, so that they would think, "Well, hey, these people are going to be listening...." (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith also tried to provide avenues for even wider audiences for students' writing, using the school newspaper as a tool as well as displaying students' work on her bulletin boards and creating booklets of students' writing.

We're in the process of typing these up and making little booklets out of them. And so some of them who are typing are getting to read the others, and they have seen, I have had posted up here on the bulletin board, stories that other students wrote in past years. And I said, "Now we're going to do the same thing with yours." I said, "Next year your ears are going to be burning because people will be reading yours." And they liked that idea. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Because Ms. Smith believed in the importance of widening the students' audience beyond teacher-as-audience, she gave attention to a conscious structuring of situations with a wider audience for students' writing.

### Trusting Communities

Ms. Smith referred often in our discussions to the importance of honesty--honesty in her interactions with her students, honesty among students, and honesty between students and their writing.

It's not a game we're playing, but it's honest. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She tried to help her students respond honestly--but with care--to each other's writing. This was not always easy as the following example illustrated.

I printed up several stories without the names and handed them to the class. We would talk about them, and I would ask them about certain things--what kind of grade would they give this paper. And, boy, we would get into some kind of, I mean--I would find out so many things about what they thought. I guess they were showing me what they thought that teachers did--these really picky things! A paper that didn't say much that was weak on content but all the words were spelled correctly, they'd give that an A. And this guy over here who was struggling to spell, or he was still writing run-on sentences, but he was saying a lot, he had ideas and he was saying it in an honest voice, give him an F....If I hadn't said, "We have to say good things first," they never would have said anything good. It was just kind of, "Let's tear this guy up, because this is what teachers do," I think. (Teacher A Interview #1)

As she tried to become sensitive to students' intentions in their writing, to listen for their voices, Ms. Smith also helped students learn specific ways of responding to other students' writing.

Building trusting communities involved understandings on the parts of both students...

Once they realized--early in the assignment that someone other than me would really read their story and respond to it, they were--almost all of them--so surprised/interested that someone would care about their words-- (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #5)

...and teachers.

I do believe that conferences help teachers to become more sensitive to the intentions of the students.  
(Teacher A Interview #2)

### Meaning Making

Can student-peer interactions influence the process of meaning making as students write and share that

writing? Ms. Smith believed that this does happen.

...they just come together. I'll hear them saying things like, "Well, what did you mean by this?" You know, serious, serious things. It's not just when I come around and sit in they start saying all these things they think teachers want to hear. They'll say, "Well, I didn't know what you were talking about back there; now I know." And then the writer says, "I hadn't thought about that." And I know something is going to happen as a result of that. (Teacher A Interview #1)

As Ms. Smith later reflected on the connections between collaboration and trust and meaning making, she expressed regret that she was no longer in a teaching situation.

God, I want a class to interact with--to try these practices. But it can happen in adult groups, too--if all comes together--collaboration, trust, writing, and thinking. (Teacher A Interview #2)

### Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions

#### Curriculum as Dynamic Form

A recurring theme in Ms. Smith's reflective journal seemed to be a question of "where do I go next?" Her explanation of this question indicated that it was not to a printed curriculum nor to a set pattern of instructional strategies that she turned for the answers.

I know how things worked with last year's classes and the classes before that. Each class is different, so I get better every year. And this is kind of frustrating; I think, "Oh, if I'd known this last year I could have, maybe it would really have worked out for them, certain things." But I have to put that out of my mind real fast and just go on. I know where I'm headed; I guess that helps me know. I mean, I really know where I'm headed--all the way to the end. I want them to leave...this class knowing that they can write, not thinking that it's something they can't do. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Sean's first noted encounter with a dynamic curriculum came in Ms. Smith's English and journalism classes. This is not surprising when we look at Ms. Smith's description of her approach to curriculum. The question of "Where do I go next?" with particular students influenced her approach to curriculum far more than did the printed curriculum guide. Her curriculum decisions were based on her commitment to students leaving her class knowing they can write. As Sean described it, it "pays" to write in Ms. Smith's class.

#### Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate

Ms. Smith reacted with dismay to author Marianne Gingher's comment about the way she sees students begin to withdraw their eagerness to communicate through their writing as they enter early adolescence. She expressed concern that her own actions had contributed at times to what she called a "squelching" of students' voices. This occurs, she said, when teachers cut off students' natural desire to communicate through their writing by focusing more on their lack of formal control than on the message and intention of their communication.

How much I did that I regret more deeply than I am willing to express. (Teacher A Interview #2)

Yet, despite her fear, it was in Ms. Smith's class that Sean found that others would listen to what he had to say. Ms. Smith focused her instruction on what she described as students' natural desire to communicate.

In conjunction with her belief that writing is a way of knowing, a way of making meaning, her approach to curriculum emphasized content over form. The form was not ignored; it was simply relegated to a back seat. In the forefront was the meaning and the students' need to communicate that meaning. An emphasis on form would, she believed, ignore the student's need to communicate.

#### Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum

Ms. Smith offered an example of how she approached the teaching of grammar and usage--an example to show how she avoided the traditional drill and practice approach.

One day I'll come in here and I'll put up on the board, "I ain't got no money." And somebody will say, "That ain't proper English." Of course, we'll go from there. And I'll say, "Why does the State of North Carolina want me to teach you, "I don't have any money"? They start looking at things, thinking about things that they've--if they've ever thought about them before, I'd--they act as though they haven't. It's really eye-opening to them, and we talk about levels of usage and reasons for dialect, and that in some cases you might not want to speak standard English, that it's just not appropriate. And so it just turns out well, instead of just, as I call it, playing the game. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She spoke candidly about her approach to the curriculum and her rationale for the approach, indicating that "there are ways around it [the curriculum] if you're creative, imaginative."

I teach the exact same pieces of literature as others. But how I teach it, what I bring to it, are personal and situational....Memory pieces are not in the curriculum, but writing description is in the curriculum, and we certainly get at that within the writing of the memory pieces. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She also noted her ambiguous feelings about how to approach the curriculum with her students, and how she determined to resolve that ambiguity.

So it's big things like that--that I know where I want to go--and so I don't get too, I try not to get too bogged down into trivial things. But then I know I've got to break it down into these discrete parts that I can teach to them or get them to see. You know, you really want them to know everything at one time. It's so frustrating at the beginning of the year. But I always start off with --I mean the last few years it's always been--voice.  
(Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith certainly avoided the traditional drill and practice approach to the teaching of grammar and usage. In looking for creative, imaginative ways "around" the printed curriculum, she attempted to extricate herself and her students from the "trivial" aspects of the curriculum and focus on the "big things." She defined those "big things" as the discovery and nurturing of students' voices. With this approach, Sean was happy.

### Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions

#### Teacher as Reflective Practitioner

Ms. Smith gave conscious attention to creative self-reflection. She used journaling for reflection on strategies used with students and for planning further activities. She used freewriting herself to discover answers to questions that arise about students, about her own writing, about her instructional methods, and the like. She valued colleagues reflections on the teaching of writing, using their views to enlarge her own.

There were a number of examples in my interviews with Ms. Smith and in her reflective journal entries of how she reflected on her teaching.

I've got to think and see if I can figure out any common denominators that are occurring in these days when things just go right....Maybe the lessons were just good...maybe what I was asking them to do was something that they considered worthwhile....I also would like to think that the fact that I have spent some time planning for what they're going to do and so forth [has had an impact].  
(Teacher A Interview #1)

Another example of her planning and her reflection on her actual practice in the classroom was in one of her journal entries.

(Think I'll read "Scarlet Ibis" to them. It's shorter than "Two Soldiers") They don't know how to use the text to find evidence that will support their conclusions. In this respect--and others--they are considerably weaker than last year's juniors. We didn't even work with vocab., irony of the story--later, later. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #2)

Ms. Smith also noted that she found answers through freewriting and through journaling. Again, an example of this kind of reflection came from her reflective journal.

I also want to go back and classify what happened. How much actual revision? How many revised intro? ending? How many lengthened pieces? How many cut out irrelevancies? focused on a narrower topic? etc. I want to sit here and take all the time I need to analyze what happened today, to learn what I can from it, and do just the right thing tomorrow. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #1)

There was other evidence of the major role reflection plays in Ms. Smith's actual practice. She kept herself in a reflective and receptive mode. Because she did, she noted that there were special times when her mind was most receptive to creative reflection.

Self-reflection is very important. My best times for this kind of reflection are those periods between sleeping and waking; I call it "my creative time." Once I'm awake, I can try out those "creative time" ideas consciously.  
(Teacher A Interview #1)

### Teacher as Artist

According to Grumet (1988), self-reflection is a vital component for artistic teaching. Approaching teaching as an art, Ms. Smith attempted to use writing as a way of coming to know herself before and as she helps her students become self-reflective. She further attempted to discover strategies which could open up possibilities for growth and voice development for her students. These discoveries were made in private reflection as well as in collaboration with colleagues and with the students themselves.

Almost all of Ms. Smith's comments--written and spoken--expressed her desire to know "why." Her keeping of a reflective journal in which she analyzed her own motivations as well as those of her students, and in which she reflects on the impact of her instruction on her students, indicated in part her approach to teaching as an art.

Further, her recognition of writing as a way of knowing for herself as well as for her students was indicative of the "web of possibilities" (Greene, 1986) that she, as an artistic teacher, tried to offer her students.

### Teacher as Writer

That writing is a way of knowing and learning was the foundation for Ms. Smith's approach to the teaching of writing. She described writing as the most important way of knowing and learning for herself. She offered students opportunities for reflective writing, and she participates in the process with them. She addressed this issue.

I want them to be able to learn about themselves and just to learn through writing. I do believe, because it works for me, that by writing we can learn--that it's another mode of apprehending, of finding out things. (Teacher A Interview #1)

I asked her if she wrote frequently and her answer was an emphatic "Oh, yes!" She indicated that she often journaled: "Oh, I've got books of it!" And she spoke of the value of freewriting as a way she learned.

As I freewrite...I find as many answers to questions, you know, when I'm freewriting, or more so, than they [the students] do. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She offered an example of how she tried to work with her students to help them understand the value that reflective writing could have for them, a rather lengthy, but telling, illustration.

By writing, we can learn....I want them to find that out ....with these memory pieces...I come back to this every now and then, and I really owe that aspect to the head of our department. One time when we were doing a little booklet that was a collection of writing, she wrote this real nice piece about why she writes. She had read a couple of biographies that she really liked, and one of them was Russel Baker's Growing Up. And she said "I know more about Russel Baker's parents than I do about my own." And she said that when you want to know, the other person

may be gone. "So, therefore," she said, "I'm writing about my history. Then when [my children] want to know these things, it'll be written down." And she says it's so hard to be honest about things. It's so tempting to make herself look good, and it's especially hard to be honest about it....I keep saying [to my students], "One day your grandson's going to say, 'Granddaddy, what did you do when you were in school?' and you're going to say, 'Well, I had this crazy English teacher that made me write all this stuff down, so here's the booklet, and you can read it.'" (Teacher A Interview #1)

Sean's understanding of writing and voice began to develop under Ms. Smith's tutelage. She not only told her students to write, she wrote with them. Her actions communicated to Sean that she personally valued writing as an activity--not simply that she valued writing for her students. This was, for Sean, an example of the honesty in relationships that he requires for the building of a trusting community that can nurture his growing voice.

#### Reprocessing (Student)

Ms. Smith talked of two different instances of students' reprocessing as a way of students' self-reflection. One example concerned the reprocessing of a student's writing as a way of meaning making.

[I think of] what happened to Drew as he went from a cocky tone of "wasn't I cute" to an honest account of how scared and remorseful he was. (Teacher A Interview #2)

A second example dealt with her use of revision criteria for students' application to reprocessing.

...When I was checking it, one girl whose paper had not been so great--I mean it, you know, she'd just been kind of playing the game--but when I read the paper [the

revision] it was so good. She had made more change in hers, more revision than any other one person. So when I handed the paper back I said, "Well, Traci, yours was just so much better." And it was--and I hadn't done it, I mean, it wasn't anything that I had helped her with. I said, "What made you get such a--change it so much?" And she said, "After I saw that sheet [the revision criteria], I knew I had to do something!" (Teacher A Interview #1)

Her handout during my classroom observation (Classroom Observation #1) offered students some specific criteria for reprocessing and a process for moving through the criteria.

The revision criteria were sets of open-ended questions. These questions were designed to help students learn to reflect on their writing and to reprocess their ideas: Her instruction emphasized the honesty inherent in a strong expression of student voice. This honesty, she believed, could not be achieved without opportunity and direction for students' self-reflection.

#### Internal and External Revision (Student)

Ms. Smith commented on students' initial lack of understanding concerning the revision process.

I don't think they really understand exactly what we mean by drafting and revision. Revision to a lot of them is still copying it over or editing it. (Teacher A Interview #1)

For Sean, learning how to revise beyond editing was helpful. Ms. Smith's instruction tried to expand her students' understanding of revision beyond the normally recognized editing and copying over approach. For example, she believed that if her students could read

their drafts aloud to other students, it would help all of them focus on the content and not on the form.

There are a number of ways Ms. Smith attempted to convince her students to revise their papers. One example she shared referred to an instance when she allowed her students to revise their graded final drafts for a better grade.

I gave them a chance to revise. You know, I hadn't done that for a long time. Then I had a student teacher who said, "Well, of course you let them revise major papers for a better grade?" And I said, "Of course, I do!" [Laughter] But, because most of them don't want to--I mean, to them revision might mean changing a few spelling words or something--but then, that's when they start paying attention to that evaluation sheet. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Did the revision make an impact on these students?

Several people said [during some reflective journal writing] that revision was what they liked best. I think that's the hardest part. Maybe they liked it because their paper started becoming better or something. (Teacher A Interview #1)

A second example showed another way Ms. Smith used grades as a "prod" for revision for students' who could do better work.

...if I have to, it's the grade. I'll say, "Well, now, you could get, as this paper stands right now, it's probably just a C-, but you could certainly have a B paper if you do this. You know, that'll make a lot of them pay attention. (Teacher A Interview #1)

As Ms. Smith talked about revision, she made a distinction between internal revision (a process she addressed through "peer review") and external revision (a process she addressed through "peer editing").

In the [peer] reviewing the author reads his paper to the listener or to the listeners. They don't look at, the audience doesn't see his paper, so he might have all kinds of mechanical errors, but he doesn't have to worry about those. I just really don't want them to get bogged down in that. I know how easy it is for them to do it. So then, peer editing....We have done peer editing, but it has not been grouping or pairing people. I think in some years we've maybe gotten our good spellers over here together, and if somebody knows he's a poor speller, he just wants somebody to read his paper, then he'll take it over to them. (Teacher A Interview #1)

This separation of revision and editing was helpful for Sean. It gave him an opportunity to reflect initially on his own understandings of his own experiences without the restraints of comma and semicolon rules.

In her planning, Ms. Smith reflected on her students' revision, trying to determine her role in that process.

How much revision? How far shall I push them? These stories started off better than 1st ones. They feel good about them. Let's have them peer review--revise-grammar lessons--peer edit and wrap it up. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #1)

#### Reflective Planning (Student)

Ms. Smith noted that reflective planning about their writing was not something that occurred naturally for most students. Therefore, she designed activities that would help her students engage in reflective planning for their own writing.

Before we started the second memory piece I had them write in their journals. I asked them questions--I can't remember all of them right now, but there were lots of them. But this was to get them to thinking back again about writing a composition. They were going to write the same kind they've written before, a memory piece. It was going to have the same kind of restrictions; it had to be below age 12 or grade six. I think I asked them things

such as "What did you do last time that you won't do again?" And I explained to them at that time--or reminded them--that authorities now consider writing as a process, and it's not just the product that counts. And I went through terms like freewriting and drafting and revision and so forth. And I asked them which of these they liked best. Most of them said freewriting...some of them said "finishing it up," the final draft.... (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith also reflected on how well her students were understanding and applying the concepts of revision and reflective planning to their writing. She also reflected on how much of her influence in this process was appropriate.

I do need to help them see that they are learning and growing. So why do I keep skirting big issues like what do I do next. How hard do I work to get them to do more substantive revising? If then don't see what I see about what this mem. means to them--if they can't make it more than straight narrative now, why can't I just leave it, gather together all the writing they have done on this piece AND ABOUT this piece--put all that away until next spring (?--that long) and let it be one of several pieces they can choose from to revise for major grade.  
(Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #4)

### Conditions Conducive to Voice Development

#### Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships

Although Ms. Smith did not speak about apprenticeships specifically, nor did she refer to herself as a mentor, she did talk about the value of putting her students in touch with the insights of professional writers about the writing process. She recounted several instances of sharing with her students the insights of what the literature calls "distant teachers." One such account follows:

I had also written down some things that I had read that professional writers have said about writing, and tried to show them that the same thing applies to them. (Teacher A Interview #1)

For Sean, Ms. Smith did serve as a kind of mentor. Her modeling of the writing process was an important factor in his growing awareness that he could write. Ms. Smith was the only writing teacher Sean ever had who wrote with her students. Because she let her students see her own struggles with writing, they were able to see that she valued the process. Perhaps this is the way that Sean came to understand that his struggles were of value also.

Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth  
of Connected Classes

Many of the ways in which Ms. Smith spoke of her students, both individually and collectively, were indicative of her attempts to help her students learn from their writing and from each other. A number of these ways have already been catalogued under other categories--Connected Teaching, Collaborative Learning, Trusting Communities, and Teacher and Student Self-Reflection among others.

However, one particular reflection in her journal gave additional insight into Ms. Smith's concern for nurturing her students' growth.

BH, HM had 1st drafts & BH had part of 11/18 work. Jack and Charles neither--a threat to call Jack's folks got him back this afternoon to talk to me. How can I bring him out and into the rest of the class? (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #2)

She believed that by helping Charles find some connections with "the rest of the class," he just might begin to find some value in the struggle to be heard, to give voice to his thoughts.

Another way Ms. Smith described her teaching was indicative of a midwife approach--that of helping her students make connections between what they already know and what is new for them.

...so maybe the lessons were just good. I mean, maybe they touched whatever that knowledge--or maybe what I was asking them to do was something that they considered worthwhile. That they could see it had some significance for them. (Teacher A Interview #1)

#### Responding to "The Teachable Moment"

Ms. Smith was a believer in "the teachable moment," seeing it as a time of insight and discovery for both herself and her students. Her "Wonderful Wednesday Lesson" was an example of her willingness to seize such a moment.

Her reflections on this lesson illustrated clearly how Ms. Smith was able to recognize and respond to a "teachable moment." A portion of the interview transcript follows:

Question: You seemed very pleased [about] the day I observed.

Answer: The eighteenth, yeah! I called it the Wonderful Wednesday Lesson.

Question: Why?

Answer: I've got to think and see if I can figure out any common denominators that are occurring in these days when

things just go right....If Keith behaves himself--it's like, if Keith says, "Okay, class, we're going to pay attention to her today," you know, then he puts his seal of approval on what I'm doing, and everybody goes along with it. I mean, maybe it's as simple as that or maybe... well, I also would like to think that...I have spent some time planning for what they're going to do and so forth.... (Teacher A Interview #1)

This particular lesson was not what had been in Ms. Smith's plans for that particular class session. However, when I entered her class for an observation on the day of the Wonderful Wednesday Lesson, she apologetically informed me that in her reflections on the previous day's work that she felt this new plan "was just pushing to be done." (Classroom Observation #1) Somehow she had recognized a "teachable moment" and was willing to put her regular plans on hold.

That she was not afraid to veer from her own plans when an appropriate opportunity arose was testament to her willingness to take risks and to learn from the risk taking. Sean participated in the Wonderful Wednesday Lesson with enthusiasm, an indication that Ms. Smith's evaluation of the moment was, for Sean at least, the appropriate moment.

Ms. Smith also reflected in her journal about this Wonderful Wednesday Lesson, noting that it had been a moment of discovery, and wondering how to approach a follow-up so that this moment would not be ignored or taken for granted.

Where do we go from here? I do have the O. Henry lesson--and they are expecting--as a one-day cushion--another day to plan, but I want to rush right in while we're on a roll. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Her Wonderful Wednesday Lesson was an guided exercise in reflective evaluation. She gave her students a list of questions to use in an evaluation of their first drafts of the second memory piece and in the reflective planning for their revision of that piece of writing. She noted in a later discussion that "Perl's 'process journal' is... generic for our Wonderful Wednesday Lesson." (Teacher A Interview #1) Perl recommended process journals as a tool for students to use in reflecting on their writing in progress.

There were times when Ms. Smith tried to duplicate a particular successful lesson with her students, yet found the attempt futile. She related one such time. Her students had done so well in their reflections on evaluating and revising their first drafts of the memory piece, that she attempted a similar lesson for their evaluation of and reflection on a peer review session.

I was hoping it was going to work out with a lot of insights on their part as the Wonderful Wednesday Lesson had. But it didn't.... (Teacher A Interview #1)

"Teachable moments" come in their own time.

### Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice

Ms. Smith began all writing instruction with an emphasis on voice, believing that students were capable

of discovering and developing their voices through writing. She saw her role as the facilitator of students' discovery and development of their voices.

Ms. Smith emphasized that she began writing instruction with a focus on voice.

I know where I want to go, and so I...try not to get too bogged down into trivial things. I always start off with ...voice. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She said that she believed a student's self-image was enhanced when that student began to write and to believe he or she had a voice that could be heard through that writing.

It helps them develop a sense of self-worth, of self-esteem, that "I can do this." (Teacher A Interview #1)

Further, Ms. Smith expressed her belief that such an emphasis on voice "validates" a student's personhood. Acknowledging the stages of adolescent development as factors in students' voice development, noting that students are at different stages of development and maturity, she used writing to validate the adolescent's search for self. Her instruction was based on her belief that a student's self-image is enhanced through the student's discovery and expression of uniquely individual voice.

In a later reflection on this aspect of her practice, Ms. Smith affirmed her belief that writing was an important vehicle for the development of an individual's voice.

Pushing voice at the beginning is apparently what needs to be pushed. Validation comes in there. (Teacher A Interview #2)

Ms. Smith described for me her "World's Worst Paragraph" lesson. In this lesson she shared a paragraph with her students that is mechanically correct but lacks voice. Although there is nothing in the paragraph to indicate that it could possibly have been written by a "real" person describing an actual experience--it is supposedly written by a teenager to describe a picnic he attended--there is invariably someone in the class who says, "I think that sounds good!"

The first sentence of the paragraph is "I had an extremely enjoyable time at the picnic." Ms. Smith told her students that she did not believe any teenager would describe a picnic that way--therefore, there is no voice in this particular piece of writing.

...and I say, "Now, you keep the same idea here, but you write it so that it sounds like a real human being is telling another real human being that he had a good time." But it is still hard for them to do it. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith continued her description of the lesson stating that she did not give the class a chance to finish rewriting the entire paragraph. Rather, she used the rest of the class time for students to share one or two of their sentences with the rest of the class.

...and you can see little lights coming on....they just see how they can begin to use details. So that helps a lot at the very beginning to get voice across. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith once encountered some hostility from a class that did not understand what she was trying to show by using this paragraph. She remembered the incident.

One guy said, "But that's not the way. You keep telling us to write like we talk." And I said, "Now, there'll come a time when I'll say, 'This is too much like you talk.' It will be too casual, too full of slang; but we're writing personal pieces right now. Later on we're going to write more formal [pieces]." (Teacher A Interview #1)

The student still was not satisfied.

"Well, that's not the way English teachers want us to write," he said. "They want us to write nice." And I thought about that, and I said, "What do you mean by 'nice'?" And he said, "You know--more like this sentence over here [in the lesson paragraph]." (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith tried to interpret the underlying message of this student.

That's what we've done; we've made them think that voiceless, emasculated writing is good, whether it says anything or not! (Teacher A Interview #1)

Her instruction emphasized the importance of an honest voice in students' attempts to communicate with others, and tried to move students away from this "voiceless, emasculated writing." Through the process of this instruction, Ms. Smith helped her students learn that the development of voice is an individual growth process that must be nurtured and encouraged. It was this nurturing aspect of her writing instruction that so appealed to and influenced Sean.

She believed that a loss of voice is typical in early adolescence, but that writing teachers can do quite a bit

to validate a student's search for self. She responded to the professional writer's comment that students between sixth and seventh grades seem to lose their willingness to share their writing with others.

[It's a] terribly damning statement about what we do when we squelch them. (Teacher A Interview #2)

I asked Ms. Smith for her definition of voice, the definition she gave her students at the beginning of her writing instruction.

When I read a piece [and] it sounds like one human being talking to another human being, that there's a real person there--you know, a blood and guts kind of person that has said something--I tell them about Macrorie's "Eng-fish"--the stuff we give teachers...not the way we really talk, but what [we think] English teachers want to hear. (Teacher A Interview #1)

When she evaluated students' writing for voice she told them whether or not they sounded as if they were real people trying to communicate with other real people.

"That doesn't sound like you," I say to students. (Teacher A Interview #1)

She also reflected on students' voice development in her journal.

Warren finally, finally wrote like a real honest human being--for a whole paragraph--then back to that phony, affected stuff. (Reflective Journal, Teacher A, Entry #1)

She was pleased when I shared with her Sean's impromptu comment on voice as we had walked down the hall earlier that afternoon. He had said, "Voice is kind of like when I write, I want to make sure that it connects with somebody else." "Oh," she said, "Isn't that good!" (Teacher A Interview #1)

Ms. Smith also reflected on one student's lack of progress in voice development, recognizing that perhaps Angie just was not ready yet to discover her voice.

I told Angie, "Of all people, I cannot get you to do any revision," Now she tacked on, she added to. But then she said, "Well, I like it the way it is." Not only do I think she doesn't really know what it is she's trying to tell yet, she's got run-on sentences, she's got misspelled words. I mean, I hadn't even brought that up [editing]. But she said, "They [her peer review group] think it's fine just like this." ...I think there's a lot there, but she's still operating on the shallow level...there's not much depth yet. She just doesn't catch on to some of the deeper things that some people are talking about. So that may be it; it may just be immaturity. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Nevertheless, Ms. Smith pushed on with her instruction in voice development.

I really know where I'm headed. I mean, all the way to the end. I want them to leave this class knowing that they can write, not thinking that it's something they can't do....I want them to go out knowing that they can write, not feeling that it's some kind of punishment, some terrible kind of thing that just these artsy-craftsy kind of people do, or you know, just authors. I want them to be able to learn about themselves and just to learn through writing. I do believe, because it works for me, that by writing, we can learn. (Teacher A Interview #1)

Toward the end of our interview sessions Ms. Smith reflected on Knoblauch's statement--"to undervalue the power young writers bring to the classroom while over-emphasizing the control they lack" (1985, p. 38)--and on her impact as a teacher on students' voice development.

How much I did that I regret more deeply than I am willing to express. How many seeds have been blighted, smothered ...yet kids, some of them, are wonderfully resilient. I have to believe that. Yet, I know--I could have fostered where I frustrated; I could have helped where I hobbled. (Teacher A Interview #2)

(Teacher B)

The data presented here came from two interviews with Ms. Lucas (April, 1989), from one classroom observation (April, 1989), from Ms. Lucas' reflective journal (April, 1989), and from writing assignments she gave her students.

### Student-Teacher Interactions

#### Writer to Writer

Ms. Lucas did not write with her students except on those few occasions when she chose to write an answer to an essay question as a model for students to use. Although Ms. Lucas did not make writing with her students a priority in her teaching of writing, she could relate to me two examples of her writing with students. These examples indicated a type of modeling.

With my tenth graders I do the "bio-poem" where they write about themselves, and I'll do one about myself and then share it with them so that it makes it a little bit [clearer]. ...And in the past sometimes I have written an essay in response to a question and put it up on an overhead so that they can see the kind of answer that I wanted. (Teacher B Interview #2)

While her example of writing a "bio-poem" of her own and sharing it with her students when she assigns this personal writing to them was a good example of the writer-to-writer interactions, this was not an assignment she does with her twelfth graders. Therefore, Sean was not exposed to any writer-to-writer interactions with Ms. Lucas.

### Teacher Comments

Ms. Lucas described for me her approach to making written comments on students' compositions. Her students had written a rough draft of an essay in class.

I took it home, and put all the comments on it, and gave them a grade for the rough draft, and turned it back, and they did it over in class. (Teacher B Interview #1)

I asked her why she had not used peer pairings for review and revision on the students' essay on Lord of the Flies, even though this is a technique she said she did use occasionally. She responded:

I had written all the comments on so all they really had to do was look at it themselves. I like them to do that for themselves sometimes--look at my comments and then revise [their] own work. (Teacher B Interview #2)

During my observation in Ms. Lucas' classroom, I noted a number of the comments she had written on students' first drafts of their Lord of the Flies essay. Some comments were general: extend; explain; vague; OK; rework; overall good work; excellent; put in finishing touches; I don't understand. Some comments were more specific: explain how--who--when; don't use the "I" in a formal essay. Other comments directed the students toward specific content: tell how Ralph was different--he bathed and was bothered by his appearance; explain that Simon's discovery went unnoticed because they killed him; say something about the savage that emerges when civilization is absent; now compare to Christ.

Ms. Lucas acknowledged that her response to individual students occurred in her written comments and her oral interpretation of those comments to students.

It [individualizing] is just basically in my revisions. A lot of times if I mark something on their papers, they will ask me about it, so I can go and talk to them specifically about what was wrong with that or how they can fix that. And so, as I'm walking around the room when they're revising, I get to do some individual attention work. (Teacher B Interview #2)

This was her preferred way of conferencing with her students.

Ms. Lucas did not set up individual conferences with her students citing time as the limiting factor. She did, however, use class time for students' revisions--revisions based on her written comments on students' papers. During this time, she made herself available to students by circulating around the room clarifying those written comments and encouraging students' revisions individually.

I don't set up [conferences] because, you know, when I tried it, it doesn't work. If I set up, first of all, they don't have any time, unless I did it in class, and if I set up, and if I stayed at my desk with them and bring them up there, the other ones will not stay on task. So I do it circulating around the room. (Teacher B Interview #2)

I noted in my classroom observation that Ms. Lucas had indeed spent the majority of the class time circulating around the room, dealing with the questions of individual students. (Classroom Observation #3) I asked her about this in a subsequent interview.

Question: I noticed that you never stopped moving or responding to students' questions and needs. One example that I saw when you were up close to where I was sitting was, you told the student, "That really wasn't the right word; I know what you meant." And then you went on to explain to him what--how he could clarify his phrasing. Is that the kind of thing you were going around doing with students--clarifying your own comments...?

Answer: Clarifying my own comments and also, if I made a comment and they changed it [revised accordingly], they wanted to say, "Is this better?" And they wanted me to reinforce that--"Yes, that's right." "Keep writing; you're doing a good job." A lot of it--that's all it is--they just want that little [encouragement]. (Teacher B Interview #2)

This process of response was an interactive one in that Ms. Lucas tried to reinforce students' accurate responses to her written comments and suggestions for revision.

### Student Ownership

Ms. Lucas was reluctant to allow for full student ownership of the student's own writing. As she described for me a typical reading/writing assignment, she spoke of this reluctance.

[After reading and discussing the novel chapter by chapter], we had a pre-writing assignment. On the board we put each topic. I would put Roman Numeral I, II, III on the board. Then I asked them what were some indications of [each of those points]. We wrote a whole list of all those things for each topic that they could talk about in their writing. And then I told them to try to focus on three things...the format of the five-paragraph essay. So really, we're still at the point where I can't give them this [assignment], and they couldn't come up with those things on their own. I still need to kind of take them through it. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Had Sean persisted with his insistence that he did have his own ideas that were valuable, as he had learned

during the previous three semesters, rather than falling into a "let's get by with the minimum amount of effort and fuss" pattern, Ms. Lucas might have been able to see that this student, at least, was able to think on his own in ways that she could come to appreciate.

She nevertheless provided for some student initiative in this assignment. As she gave instructions for this structured writing assignment for the Lord of the Flies essay--a five-paragraph theme supporting the three major points given by the teacher, using the supporting details from class discussion--she suggested that some students might think of some points or details that had not been discussed.

...try and focus on those three or any [others]. If they came up with something else, that was fine, and some of them did. They came up with their own interpretation of one of the three [points] and put that in. (Teacher B Interview #1)

She seemed to regret what she saw as the necessity to maintain her own control over students' writing.

[I would expect to see] just more thinking on their part. If I don't tell them the three major things to come up with, or give some prewriting, they can't think about it on their own. They can't do it. I feel like by the time I read their final papers, I feel like I've written them instead of they have. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Yet, while she regretted what she described as the necessity for maintaining her own control over students' writing, she did not see students as capable of nor even desirous of ownership of their own writing. Sean's response to this belief was one of regression. After

three semesters of being allowed--even expected--to assume ownership of his writing, he quickly saw the direction Ms. Lucas was taking and decided to "fade" into the crowd rather than fight what he saw as the inevitable necessity of relinquishing his ownership so that he could finish his senior year with a minimum amount of "fuss."

### Connected Teaching

The literature defined "connected teaching" as those interactions between teacher and student in which the teacher trusted her students' ability to ask questions and who helped students learn to make their own connections.

For whatever her reasons, Ms. Lucas did not trust that her students were ready to ask the right questions: "...they can't think about it on their own. They can't do it." (Teacher B, Interview #2) She also reflected on this dilemma in her journal.

Today the students completed their rough drafts in class. Many students had questions and needed me to read their introductory paragraphs before they could continue. They still have trouble writing independently and need constant reinforcement. This can be very frustrating for me with a 27-1 ratio! (Reflective Journal, Teacher B, Entry #2)

Ms. Lucas did, however, attempt to help her students see the connections between what they read and what they write. She indicated that the writing assignments she gave were usually connected to something the students had read--like Lord of the Flies.

I usually connect it to what we're doing at the time.... with the more structured writing I usually put it with whatever we're doing in literature. (Teacher B Interview #1)

When I asked her to reflect on this aspect of her writing assignments, she was quick to note the importance of students' ability to connect the reading, and ultimately their writing, with their own experiences and understandings.

That's important, or else they can't identify with it at all, and it doesn't matter to them. (Teacher B Interview #2)

### Student-Peer Interactions

#### Collaborative Learning

The clearest example of collaborative learning in Ms. Lucas' class was that of her oral, prewriting activities. In a heavily teacher-guided class discussion (described earlier), the students shared with Ms. Lucas and with each other their ideas concerning the supporting details for the three major points for the Lord of the Flies essay.

A lot of them wrote that down in their notebook....so that they had a list of things for each topic that they could talk about in their writing. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Otherwise, Ms. Lucas had difficulty determining examples of collaborative learning in her classrooms. She described her work with a former creative writing class and its publication of a literary magazine to show her frustrations in establishing an atmosphere for collaborative learning.

But it was hard; doing a publication in a high school is hard because you always have five kids that will do it and the rest that won't. You have thirty kids in a room, and what do you do with the rest? So that was kind of difficult. But the, just the teaching of creative writing, I enjoyed. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Sean stated, and I observed, that he did not participate in Ms. Lucas' English class. Indeed, during my observation of Sean in Ms. Lucas's class (Classroom Observation #3) I noted that Sean spent about five minutes reading Ms. Lucas' comments on his rough draft, approximately 15 to 20 minutes copying over and making the suggested changes, then sat quietly in his seat for the remainder of class time. He asked no questions of Ms. Lucas nor did he use a dictionary or novel during his rewriting as a number of students did.

During the entire class period, Sean did not speak with nor acknowledge anyone except for a brief "hello" to the student sitting next to him and an initial nod to me when he entered the classroom. Other students talked a great deal with each other--the class period was punctuated by frequent "shhs" from Ms. Lucas--as well as with the teacher.

I asked her to comment on his behavior--his participation in classroom discussion and the like.

He's above average in ability I would say. I'm not sure that he really shouldn't be in advanced class instead of standard class. I don't know if he's just bored with the standard class, or if he's just tired...but he really doesn't do much of anything except put his head down most of the time he's there. He doesn't really participate in discussions at all or anything like that. (Teacher B Interview #2)

I asked Ms. Lucas if there were any times since she had assumed the teaching responsibilities for this class that she had seen Sean taking the initiative in class discussion or other areas. Her reply was a clear, "No!" She had reflected on his approach to his work in a journal entry.

Sean worked independently. He does not however get to work quickly. He often is very tired and will sit, sometimes with his head down before he will begin his work. He did not ask any questions or ask me to read his paper. (Reflective Journal, Teacher B, Entry #2)

#### Peer Feedback

The focus of Ms. Lucas's discussion and reflection on peer feedback was two-fold. She dealt primarily with the importance of audience for student writing and with the her design of activities for student-peer interaction.

Ms. Lucas stated that she wanted her students to learn that writing to an audience beyond the teacher was important to their development as writers.

I have to keep telling my students they will write papers directed to me and assume that I know what's going on, so they don't need to explain it. So we always have to go through that where I have to say no....I mean, I've had students say, even in the middle of the paper, "Well, you know what I mean." (Teacher B Interview #2)

Her conviction that a wider audience helped students to refine their writing came from her teaching experience in another state. She spoke of the schoolwide literary magazine and the schoolwide Writing Enhancement Literary Fair. She did not see the school publication as

having as strong an influence as the Fair and Contest.

The ones who wrote things that were eventually published were probably the ones who were writing for a wider audience from the beginning anyway. And the ones who were writing just to complete the assignment didn't write things that they submitted for publication anyway. [However], the Literary Fair helped. I think they did a little bit better with that because they knew that everyone was going to read--it was required, because the teachers used it as writing enhancement and required the students to do it. And they know that it was going to be posted. We had, in the gym, the big boards, and all the papers were up, and their parents could come and see the papers. So they did a little bit better with those assignments than just with inclass assignments that only the teacher reads. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Because Ms. Lucas did not have her own classroom, she did not have the opportunity to display students' work the way she would like. She regretted this aspect of "floating" from one classroom to another. She reflected on the difference it might make in her teaching to have her own classroom.

One thing I would do is I would, just bulletin board wise, I would use their writing, and put it up, and do things that I can't do. You know, the things, the projects that we do end up down here [in her office]. (Teacher B Interview #1)

This would be her preferred way of widening the audience for students' work. Since this was not a possibility in her current situation, she simply encouraged her students to "assume" a wider audience.

Peer pairing, or what is sometimes called peer review groups or peer partners, was Ms. Lucas's approach to providing for opportunities in student-peer interactions. One of her journal entries dealt with some of the problems

she encountered in peer pairing.

Since many students did not complete the rough draft in class yesterday, I let them work in peer pairs today. They were given certain evaluation guidelines that they were to follow. Most students worked well in this type of arrangement. Others had a problem evaluating someone else's work. (Reflective Journal, Teacher B, Entry #3)

I asked Ms. Lucas to elaborate on the problems she had observed.

They couldn't get through that they just don't read the paper and say "good" or "bad." They didn't want to take the time to look at the individual parts that I had put on the board and told them about. They just skipped that part. They said, "Yeah, it's okay," and gave it back.... And then, if they're not really strong writers, they will say something's wrong that's not wrong, and the writer will say, "Well, that's fine" and then they'll argue, and then I'll have to go over. Or they would say, "I don't understand what she means" and it was a clear statement, and they just didn't understand. So, then,...you give them the chance to evaluate and then they're not real strong--it's hard to do. (Teacher B Interview #2)

She also reflected specifically on Sean's failure to choose a peer partner during a particular class session.

Sean did not get a partner on his own. I had to match him up--he seemed uninterested in working with another student. He works independently--does not usually interact with the other students. (Reflective Journal, Teacher B, Entry #3)

After reading this entry, I asked Ms. Lucas to think aloud about why this happened with Sean.

He would just rather work by himself. He doesn't want, didn't want to share his ideas with the others, didn't think that anyone, probably didn't think that anyone in that class could have helped him on this paper, so why bother. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Even after Ms. Lucas provided a peer partner for Sean, he did only the minimal amount of review required.

He did [work with another student], but only half-heartedly. I think they just did to the extent of changing papers. And he did it at his seat, and they didn't even move their chairs together or anything. They just kind of looked over each other's papers and handed them back. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Ms. Lucas did not consider this to be a true reflection of peer partnering.

### Trusting Communities

Perhaps the few opportunities students had to interact with one another in Ms. Lucas's classroom would account for the absence of any comments from Ms. Lucas about trusting communities. I asked her if she felt that part of the reason for peer pairing not working the way she would like to see it work might be due, in part, to a lack of trust among her students.

Yeah, that's true. [But] then the other problem is that they're friends; they don't want to pick out things that are wrong. (Teacher B Interview #2)

### Meaning Making

Ms. Lucas alluded to meaning making as she spoke of her attempts to help her students connect the meaning of what they were reading with their own life experiences so that their writing would "matter" to the students. Within her framework for peer interactions, however, there seemed to be little room for meaning making. Her description of the evaluation guidelines her students were to use in peer paring activities responded to the form rather than the content of the writing.

They fit a five-paragraph essay. (Teacher B Interview #2)

The five-paragraph essay format, however, did not always "fit" Sean's ideas. This structure, which was not his, did little to encourage his attempts at meaningful discourse.

### Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions Curriculum as Dynamic Form

Ms. Lucas's teaching experience involved interaction with rather structured and fixed curricula. It was in this type of structure that she seemed most comfortable. She described the state mandated writing program in her first teaching position in another state.

Every student had to do one writing assignment per week-- a rough draft and a final copy. This was in all English classes, nine through twelve. And that assignment was logged in a folder and graded. The grade was also logged in the folder, and those were kept in the folder all year. And with the grading, if they, for each assignment missed was one letter grade dropped off their nine-weeks grade. So if they missed more than four assignments, they failed the course. So it was very strict....And, it worked. (Teacher B Interview #1)

In further discussion about this particular writing program, it became evident that the teacher had some leeway in interpreting the curriculum.

I taught my ninth graders how to write a five-paragraph essay...and they learned it, and they did it, and it was no problem. It was on the tenth grade curriculum to write a five-paragraph essay. The reason why my ninth graders learned how to write a five-paragraph essay was because we had a literary fair that all the students submitted different writings to, and they wanted it to be a five-paragraph essay. So, I taught them how to do that, and it was one of their writing assignments for the writing

enhancement program. And they did it, and they won. They won most of the prizes just because they learned the format to do it. (Teacher B Interview #1)

One of Ms. Lucas' interpretations of curriculum in her present teaching situation showed this same static view of curriculum.

If they can write a good three-paragraph essay, I let them do that. But I taught it as a five-paragraph this time. (Teacher B Interview #2)

However, she did share with me as an example of how she "broke away" from a structured interaction with curriculum, her "imaginary journey" writing assignment that occurred on a day that "just seemed right" for that type of writing activity.

I did do an imaginary journey creative kind of assignment. That was on a Friday, and it was just a kind of day that I thought, "Well, we should try this." And they did a good job on that. We listened to music, and I took them in their mind down this path and made a setting and just let them write....So we do things like that, too. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Nevertheless, this kind of activity was not a usual occurrence in Ms. Lucas's classroom.

#### Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate

Ms. Lucas did not directly address the issue of students' need to communicate as an aspect of the writing curriculum nor of her instruction.

#### Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum

A primary way in which the literature addressed the issue of a rule-oriented curriculum was through such a

curriculum's approach to the teaching of grammar-- mechanics and usage. Ms. Lucas stated that her approach to the teaching of grammar did not involve the traditional drill approach.

I incorporate it into the composition. I don't pull out a grammar book. I just, I've never done that. I just can't. I just remember doing that in high school, and I didn't get much out of it. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Ms. Lucas elaborated on her reasons for incorporating this aspect of writing into the actual compositions of the students.

If I can correct it on their papers and they can see where they did it wrong in their writing, it makes more sense to them than doing the drills out of a grammar book. So I really don't use a grammar book. (Teacher B Interview #1)

She did, however, recount for me an example of using the more traditional grammar book drill approach.

I will do it. I did it with tenth grade. We did do a unit. It was covered on the Competency Test, and we just reviewed the parts of speech and things like that. So I did do that with them. (Teacher B Interview #1)

I asked her in a later interview how she would judge the success of that kind of teaching.

It worked with them because it was a review right before a test. And the questions that were asked on the test were in the same format that we studied in the grammar book. So, it worked. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Nevertheless, Ms. Lucas emphasized that this type of learning was temporary and that approaching grammar instruction through a student's writing was a far more lasting approach.

With the exercises they'll learn those exercises; they'll learn the rules. And then they won't do it right in their writing, because all they've learned is how to pick "was" or "were." It's much easier if they can see why it's wrong in that sentence that they wrote, and fix it and make it correct. Then they say, "Oh!" (Teacher B Interview #2)

Ms. Lucas believed grammar instruction had more meaning for students when incorporated into their writing rather than when it is approached through traditional drill and practice. Yet she still preferred to approach the writing curriculum as rule-oriented rather than as meaning-oriented. An example of this is in her emphasis on the five-paragraph theme with both thesis and supporting points highly structured by the teacher. Sean felt stifled by this approach.

Ms. Lucas did not discuss the concept of a meaning-oriented curriculum with me. Yet, as she described another special writing program with which she had been involved, I saw the possibilities for such an interpretation of curriculum.

We did a lot of creative type writing just to get the kids interested in writing. That's what it was meant for. One thing was called "Consideration," and they had to think about what their life would be like. They had a choice--in one year, ten years, if they were a famous personality, or if school weren't mandatory--and that way they could just think about a situation and then write. I also had them--they had to pretend--they had five inanimate objects that they had to write [about] from the perspective of that object--if they were an old shoe or a pencil, or whatever. And they liked that sort of thing. (Teacher B Interview #2)

However, the possibilities were not realized. Such "creative type" assignments were, in Ms. Lucas's words,

"just to get the kids interested in writing." The primary purpose of this writing program for "low level" students was to deal with the elements of basic paragraphing.

Basically we just did very basic writing. We didn't get past the format of a paragraph. (Teacher B Interview #1)

She acknowledged that the students responded to the "creative type" assignments very well and that she saw the paragraphing begin to emerge in that kind of writing.

(Teacher B Interview #2). Nevertheless, it was the more structured approach to paragraphing--a topic sentence, three supporting details, and a concluding sentence--that was the focus of the program.

### Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions

#### Teacher as Reflective Practitioner

Although Ms. Lucas has kept a journal in the past, she did not see herself as a reflective journaler. She kept a journal at my request only for the purposes of this study. I asked her to comment on her reasons for keeping a journal in the past as well as on her reasons for not keeping a journal now.

I guess when I first started teaching, I just wanted to keep down my thoughts about what was going on....And now I guess I just don't make the time for it any more.  
(Teacher B Interview #2)

The only way that reflective practice surfaced in our conversations was in Ms. Lucas' expressed need for common teacher planning time. It was through her interactions with other teachers that she had found her reflections

most rewarding. She discussed the structured planning time in her teaching assignment in another state.

We had a teacher planning area where all the English teachers were, which I really liked because then you got to talk, and you got to get your things together on planning periods. I liked that a lot. Our teachers got together. They planned units together. They did, you know, they--you just can't do that here. I mean, you have one planning period and I'm the only English [teacher] that is planning this period.... (Teacher B Interview #1)

Provision for this kind of colleague interaction was helpful to Ms. Lucas.

We were able to exchange ideas for writing; we were able to plan together. (Teacher B Interview #2)

This kind of structured planning/interaction time was also beneficial for the students, according to Ms. Lucas' assessment.

The best thing about the planning time was that the way it was set up with the Writing Enhancement [Program], if you gave an assignment, you had a planning period to take care of that assignment. And they [the students] got their papers back much sooner. That's great. They need that feedback quickly, or else they forget what they were doing, and they forget why they did it, and they just don't really care about that mark on that paper anymore. The next day it makes a bigger difference. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Now that there was neither common planning time with other teachers nor adequate planning time for assessing students' work, Ms. Lucas felt that her approach to teaching writing has changed.

I probably do less writing assignments because I don't have the time. I know I do--and I hate that. That's bad, but you know, when you can't get it done---. (Teacher B Interview #2)

She regretted the lack of common planning time in her current position.

### Teacher as Artist

Ms. Lucas' approach to teaching appeared to be more scientifically oriented than artistically oriented. Her planning and teaching reflected a highly organized hierarchy of step-by-step, whole class instruction. Her emphasis on form rather than on content is one indication of her preference for a more rule-oriented base for her teaching.

### Teacher as Writer

Ms. Lucas did not see herself as a writer. It was not a part of her planning; it was not a method of reflection nor of learning.

I used to do some writing, which I don't do anymore....I just don't have the time. (Teacher B Interview #2)

### Reprocessing (Student)

Ms. Lucas attempted to allow for some student input, but her students' planning time was highly structured and their opportunity for reprocessing was rather limited.

The design of Ms. Lucas' writing assignment for Lord of the Flies did not provide very much room for students' reprocessing--a procedure requiring time for reflection. She outlined her assignment for me.

Day 1: Prewriting Activity (three major points for discussion/writing on board--teacher designed) - Students discussed supporting details for each of the three points.

Day 2: First Draft Writing - Teacher reviewed format for a five-paragraph essay (introductory paragraph, one paragraph for each of the three major points, a concluding paragraph). Students were instructed to write their rough draft. They did so during that class period.

Day 3 (a week later): Final Draft Writing - Teacher returned the rough drafts to students with comments and suggestions for revision. Students used the comments and suggestions as they wrote their second and final draft of the Lord of the Flies essay.

The provision for possible reprocessing--or for reconsidering what they had said and determining whether that is what they meant to say--came during Day 2 of the assignment. Ms. Lucas told the students that they could use the list of supporting points from their class discussion the previous day, or they could use their own interpretations for the significance of those points.

If they came up with something else, that was fine. And some of them did. They came up with their own interpretation of one of the three things and put that in. (Teacher B Interview #1)

#### Internal and External Revision (Student)

Ms. Lucas described her approach to students' revision of the rough drafts for the Lord of the Flies essay.

I took it home and put all the comments on it and gave them a grade for the rough draft and turned it back and then they did it over in class. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Because there was little opportunity for reprocessing or for internal revision, students responded to Ms. Lucas' suggestions for external revision.

Sean's revision appeared to be entirely external. I observed his five-minute reading of Ms. Lucas' remarks on his paper and his fifteen- to twenty-minute recopying and editing process. He did not read his final draft after writing it; he turned it in. (Classroom Observation #3)

Ms. Lucas commented on Sean's revised essay. She had asked him to write an introductory sentence for one of his paragraphs.

He didn't. I marked that again on his final copy, I remember. He changed it, but it's not....I would think that he would know what I meant by introductory statement. That kind of surprised me the way that he changed that and still didn't write an introductory statement in that paragraph where I marked it. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Perhaps Sean's failure to write an introductory sentence, which Ms. Lucas agreed he knew how to do, was due to his cursory approach to the editing of the first draft.

#### Reflective Planning (Student)

In the past Ms. Lucas had her students keep a journal regularly.

I have in the past, but I'm not right now. It worked real well when I did it. I did it with creative writing, and they knew to come in--I left their journals in the room and they picked it up on the way in, opened it, and the first ten minutes they wrote every day. And then we have like a journal expansion assignment, like once every two weeks, and they pick something from their journal and then expand it. So they could see how they could use their journal in their writing. But I don't do it with my regular students; I did it with writing students. (Teacher B Interview #2)

I asked her why she did not use journaling now, in Sean's class for example.

They don't do it. Or they write, "I went to third period. I ate lunch. I saw my boyfriend. I went home," if I have them do journals. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Ms. Lucas did not use journaling as an approach to students' reflective planning, doubting that students could extend their thinking through this method.

Ms. Lucas provided study guides for her students to use as they read the novel, Lord of the Flies. This, in combination with class discussion, seemed to be the techniques Ms. Lucas used for students' reflection on what they were reading. The reading, the discussions, and the study guides were used prior to the writing assignment.

We did it chapter by chapter. I did a lot of reading out loud. They like it, too, and they'll listen and it works. And what we usually did, is I'd read a chapter. I just started the next chapter; they finished reading it silently. And then we talked about it. And there was a study guide that I gave them--not for every chapter, but for most of the chapters they have a study guide that they followed. So they answered the questions, and there were quizzes on the chapters and a final test. And then this paper. (Teacher B Interview #1)

Sean's was a negative response to such a tightly controlled approach to discussion.

### Conditions Conducive to Voice Development

#### Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships

In our conversations, Ms. Lucas made little reference to an apprentice/mentor relationship. Her description of writing her own essay and using it as a model for students' essays was as close as she came to acknowledging teacher modeling as a nurturant condition for students' writing.

Sean was not able to receive the kind of feedback about his writing that he needed. His reflections on his instruction indicated that he received feedback best when he perceived that the teacher personally valued writing--therefore valuing his own writing efforts.

Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth  
of Connected Classes

According to the literature, one of the functions of the midwife teacher is to help students make the kinds of connections and have the kinds of interactions that will encourage and nurture their voice development. Since Ms. Lucas felt that Sean was perhaps misplaced in a standard English class, I asked her about suggesting that he enroll in a high English class.

Question: Do you think if you had been here the whole year that you would have made a recommendation that he be moved to an advanced class?

Answer: I don't know. I probably would have hesitated because he doesn't seem that motivated. I don't know how he would have done if he was moved up, and I don't even know if he would have wanted to be. (Teacher B Interview #2)

We discussed Sean's reluctance to participate in her class, his choice not to interact either with her or his classmates.

I really can't figure it out. Usually the assignments that I give, he can do on his own--unlike the other students who need that guidance. He doesn't need it, so he would rather just sit there and do it than to have me help him do it. He can usually do it. I think that's the biggest reason right there. He'll sit and do his

assignment. He can understand it, I guess, enough to do it on his own without asking questions. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Sean felt no connections with Ms. Lucas, no connections with his writing in her class, no connections with his peers or their writing in Ms. Lucas's English class. Ms. Lucas herself expressed frustration and regret that she had not discovered a way to help Sean make these important connections.

#### Responding to "The Teachable Moment"

One of Ms. Lucas's comments seemed to acknowledge that certain unplanned moments occur within the classroom learning experience that require response. She described the way she tried to incorporate students' interests into what they write in class as an example of her response to such moments.

...usually off the top of my head. Sometimes I'll think of something that will relate to what we're doing, and I can relate it to them, too. And I'll just bring it up that way, and they'll say--and that kind of sparks it for them. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Nevertheless, she did not specifically acknowledge that the teachable moment was any more than a tangential aspect of her teaching.

#### Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice

Ms. Lucas expressed some frustration about teaching literature and writing in the standard English classes.

I think the hardest thing about teaching the average is most--a lot of the average kids aren't going on.

Basically it's just plot; I mean, if they can get that, you say, "Oh, good!" And writing--even the writing is not what I think it should be. (Teacher B Interview #1)

She expected to see "more thinking on their part," she said of the writing in her standard class.

If I don't tell them the three major things to come up with, or give some prewriting, they can't think about it on their own. They can't do it. I feel like by the time I read their final papers, I feel like I've written them instead of they have. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Since Ms. Lucas frequently used the term "prewriting," a term used within any description of a process approach to the teaching of writing, I asked her to comment on her understanding of the process approach and how that influenced her approach to the teaching of writing.

I guess it's just a little bit from everything, and I just try and put it together so that they can understand it. But definitely they need prewriting; they need to somehow get those ideas started. And I like to teach them the structure of different things that they have that background. And then revising and getting everything together--requiring them to write a rough draft and then a final copy. (Teacher B Interview #2)

Ms. Lucas's approach to the teaching of writing was rather eclectic, part process, part traditional. She saw writing primarily as mastery of form rather than as development of voice. She did not feel that most students were interested in thinking indepth and in expressing those thoughts. Even if this were true of some students, it was no longer true of Sean. Yet the conditions necessary to his voice development were no longer a part of his formal composition experience.

I asked her to comment on the difference she had observed in the writing of her tenth grade standard students and her twelfth grade standard students.

I have [seen progress]. They [the tenth graders] have to take the competency test, and part of it is writing an essay. So we spend a week writing a paragraph and I had to work on writing a paragraph...writing a topic sentence and writing supports. So they're still at paragraph [stage] whereas my seniors can write a five paragraph essay. So that was a pretty big jump. (Teacher B Interview #2)

However, as she described her process of evaluating students' writing, she alluded to a more intangible aspect of writing--an aspect that was as close to an understanding of voice as Ms. Lucas seemed to get.

It's not only what they say, but they've got to have a little bit of style or something in order to get a higher grade, so it's an overall, an overall grade. And it's punctuation, capitalization--everything kind of all rolled into one. (Teacher B Interview #2)

(Teacher C)

The data presented here came from two interviews with Ms. Frye (March, 1989 and April, 1989), from one classroom observation (March, 1989), and from Ms. Frye's reflective journal (March, 1989).

### Student-Teacher Interactions

#### Writer to Writer

None of Ms. Frye's comments, oral or written, indicated that she interacted with her students as a writer herself, although she did make reference to her own

writing. She maintained that in ways other than teaching, writing was a "big part of her life." She used her own writing of book reviews for the local paper and her personal, though erratic, use of journaling as examples of this. However, neither of these examples played a direct role in her interactions with her students. As I observed in her journalism class I saw no evidence of her relating to her students as a writer herself.

#### Teacher Comments

Ms. Frye's initial response to the issue of making written comment on students' English class compositions indicated a level of sensitivity to the fragile nature of students' writing. She did not use a "blood letting" approach to the marking of papers, and she relied more on oral than on written comments.

I don't use a red pencil. I use a green pencil or a blue pencil, something that doesn't indicate that kind of a sacrificial blood-letting. I always found that intimidating. (Teacher C Interview #1)

Her method of commenting on student writing in her journalism class, especially for the rapid writing of newspaper articles to meet printing deadlines, was a bit different.

I say a lot more than I write, simply because of the volume we do. I do encourage as much as I can. And when I do want to go over an article with a student [I say] "Well, could you explain this a little more or elaborate here?"...or sometimes I say, "Just fine." (Teacher C Interview #2)

She found these oral comments to be far more immediate and practical than written comments could be in such a situation. These oral comments often sought elaboration, asking questions or making suggestions to help students extend their thinking.

Ms. Frye noted the value of praise for students' written efforts while at the same time voicing regret that she probably does not praise enough. She expressed her concern that she did not encourage students often enough in their writing.

I'm afraid I'm not--perhaps I don't praise as much as I need to, but sometimes it seems students hear from me if something's wrong and not when something's right.  
(Teacher C Interview #2)

Since she tried to approach the school newspaper as "belonging to the students," she reflected a desire to remain in the background as much as possible.

I try to stay in the background when she [the student editor] has the floor. I did tell the class how pleased everyone was with the April Fool's issue and suggest two story ideas. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #5)

Ms. Frye spoke directly to the issue of her interactions with Sean.

He'll just get so mad at me, and so defensive, and throw up his hands if I tell him [to change something]. He... does not take criticism well, even if it's constructive. He's very defensive. I don't know if it's just out of self-defense, or whether he just feels insecure about what he's doing...or if he's just used to being told that he's screwing up, so to speak. (Teacher C Interview #2)

She did note, however, that as Sean assumed more responsibility on the newspaper staff she had observed a change in his attitude.

He has risen to it [the editorship of the Senior Issue] quite nicely. I think that's made a difference....I try to interfere as little as possible in that. (Teacher C Interview #2)

At one point during my observation of Sean in Ms. Frye's classroom (Classroom Observation #2), I noted that she offered him a pocketfile to hold the proofed Last Wills and Testaments of the senior class. She also gave him what she thought were some completed proofs. Sean took both the pocketfile and the proofed copies, but when he saw that only one student had read each proof sheet, he handed those back to Ms. Frye saying, "I want at least two people to read them." She responded, "Oh, OK," and, taking her directions from Sean, proceeded to give the sheets to some other students.

#### Student Ownership

When Ms. Frye began teaching English at this school, one of her classes was in the middle of a writing assignment that she felt was too difficult and that did not recognize the necessity of student interest being the catalyst for student writing. However, the students completed the writing assignment.

They muddled through, because they're good children, and they did what they were told to do. (Teacher C Interview #1)

She described their next assignment, one which she designed as an assignment in which she determined the form but her students determined the content. She reflected on

the interactions between her influence and students' need for autonomy.

So sometimes I wonder how much I imposed my view of creativity on them instead of just letting them create.  
(Teacher C Interview #1)

Later Ms. Frye considered these same interactions as they were apparent in her journalism class.

Sometimes I do [impose my views], I think, because of many factors. Part of it is the time of day. By fifth period I think everybody's schooled out, or they seem that way. And I've got to throw something out or nothing will get started. I mean, that is my prime responsibility. Ideally, I would love for it to come from them. But they're used to doing things differently, so it just depends. Sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't.  
(Teacher C Interview #2)

Ms. Frye had taught in the English Department at this high school for two semesters when Ms. Smith retired. She was asked to assume the responsibilities for the journalism class mid-year. She described her initial frustrations with the class process, a process in which she seemed to be bearing the students' responsibilities.

It was rough going...but I wasn't going to do the newspaper for them. My other classes started to suffer because I was just spending time proofreading, keying in, typing in...and I decided I was just making myself miserable....I wasn't teaching them, but I was learning a lot about putting out a newspaper. But I finally said, "My name is nowhere on this masthead. It's yours!"  
(Teacher C Interview #1)

Letting go of the responsibilities she saw as belonging to the students was not easy. She described how she began the process of letting go and where she and the students were some three months into the process.

I've also taken for a while [the position of] benign neglect. But now my staff is...responsible; their names are on the masthead, and if the job doesn't get done, the paper will reflect that. Everyone has to contribute, and they've been scurrying. Now, how long it will last--? (Teacher C Interview #1)

It appeared, during my observation in Ms. Frye's journalism class, that she was exercising her belief that the newspaper and its production belonged to the students. She was available for answering students' questions; she circulated among various student groups; she directed students to tape, scissors, glue sticks, rulers and other equipment. The student editor, on the other hand, moved around the room talking with other staffers about more substantive issues--upcoming article possibilities and the newspaper in progress.

Ms. Frye offered a possible reason for the students' difficulty assuming the bulk of the responsibility for the production of the student newspaper.

They're so used to being told what to do, where to sit, what to do, and when to do it, that it's like independent study...graduate students have trouble with that. I mean, we all seem to--[it's] the way we're trained. And we [teachers] have to sort of meet the needs of whoever walks in through that door. And the easiest way to get a product out is--"You do this at this time." But, I said, "Really, in this class you are free to pursue whatever interests you, whatever about school, about the world." (Teacher C Interview #1)

Ms. Frye had reflected on the difficulty of student agency in her journal.

Student generated articles remain difficult for some. They are so accustomed to writing to instruction that the concept of finding and digging out their own ideas for stories is difficult. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #4)

In a follow-up interview, she elaborated on this freedom of choice she had offered to her students--and what she saw as her responsibility when students did not accept the responsibility of this freedom.

I encourage students to follow and dig up stories that they are interested in. I feel that they'll do a more complete job and follow through on it better, perhaps, than just an arbitrary assignment, which I sometimes have to make--you know, if it's not getting done. I would prefer that they write all their stories following their own interests, but if they refuse to do anything, then I'll take over. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Ms. Frye also noted in a journal entry that allowing student ownership to develop was a risk. I asked her to describe that risk more fully.

We just may get a collection of absolute garbage to go into the paper, or stories that may be either too superficial or perhaps too controversial for us really to handle, which is a fine line to walk. I'm not against controversy so much, but not just agitation in order to stir up trouble. I don't think that's appropriate. But, we're at risk in two ways. A totally student generated newspaper may not have the diversity that a good newspaper would require or a balance. It may focus on something so narrowly and forget the rest of the activities that're part of us. The other aspect is getting caught in the middle of a storm in which I really have to put the editor's hat on. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Ms. Frye seemed to be making a strong effort to assume the role of facilitator rather than as controller insofar as possible. However, these attitudes were not conveyed to Sean.

She noted that students sometimes do not seem to want to responsibility of ownership because they are so accustomed to "writing to instruction." This, however, is

not the determining factor of student ownership.

According to the literature, the teacher is responsible for helping students in the transfer of authority from teacher to student.

### Connected Teaching

Ms. Frye's comments indicated that she attempted to trust students' ability to ask questions and to make connections. She shared two specific examples of how students in her journalism class were free to experiment with making connections between their own experiences and the expressions of those experiences in their writing.

We have one student who writes music reviews, and he's a serious musician and goes to lots of different concerts, so this is a nice way to combine both interests for him. (Teacher C Interview #2)

We have some special features. We have one--I don't know whether she's the only Jewish student in the school, but she may well be...and she wrote about Passover...which [offered] a cultural perspective for International Day--I think that's when it appeared in our last issue. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Ms. Frye's attempt to trust students to ask questions and make connections did not communicate itself to Sean. It did not breach the gulf that Sean perceived in his journalism class between his voice and his teacher.

### Student-Peer Interactions

#### Collaborative Learning

Ms. Frye saw the journalism class as a place in the curriculum design that could be most conducive to collaborative learning.

That class is interesting in many ways. It's composed of students from ninth grade on up, so that makes for an interesting mix with experience and maturity, all kinds of things. They've gotten better about this [assuming ownership of their own writing], especially the ones who really enjoy writing and pursue it actively. (Teacher C Interview #2)

In our first interview, Ms. Frye described Sean as something of a loner.

He works with one student--Rick--and he will cooperate. Donna [the editor] asks him to do something, and he visits around, but he keeps mostly to himself. He's coming out a little bit. I imagine he has one or two friends who he spends his time with mostly. They pair off in general. (Teacher C Interview #1)

I noted that Sean consulted with Dana, the student editor, periodically as she checked for progress and asked questions. He worked with Rick also as they shared proofreading responsibilities. (Classroom Observation #2)

As she reflected in her journal on Sean's progress with "coming out a little bit," a fuller picture of Sean's interactions with his peers began to emerge.

Sean is really taking his additional role of Senior Issue Editor quite seriously. He has delegated tasks and followed up on responsibilities well. I don't think that he's been placed in charge of many projects before, so this is a pleasure to see. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #1)

Sean spent today downstairs printing senior issue articles and directing his folks. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #3)

Sean was roaming about and checking on Senior Issue progress. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #5)

There was also student recognition of Sean's leadership position. For example, in response to a

question asked during my observation, a student said, "Sean's the one who knows about all this." (Classroom Observation #2)

I observed also, Sean's willingness in this class to be more relaxed with his peers than he had appeared in either his junior or senior English class. When Sean finished his work for the day with the Senior Issue, he moved to the layout table in the back of the room and joked with the students there about the April Fool's Issue. And, with two minutes left until the end of class, he and his friend Rick tossed a ball of paper back and forth a few times with surreptitious glances toward Ms. Frye.

### Peer Feedback

Ms. Frye indicated that Sean responded better to criticism of his work by the student editor than he did to her criticism of his work. An example she gave of his response to peer feedback involved Sean's interactions with the editor, an interaction that seemed to balance her criticisms with a vote of confidence in Sean's abilities.

Sean was named to this post [editor of the Senior Issue] by Donna, our editor-in-chief. Another student, a sophomore, had been in charge but did little, so Donna replaced her. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #1)

### Trusting Communities

Sean's writing, according to Ms. Frye's assessment, served as a distancing element rather than as a community-

building facet of his relationships within the journalism class. Although his writing improved both in quality and in quantity during his time in the journalism class, after his obituary for the teacher who had been such a motivating influence in his life, he wrote "mostly humor articles."

Everything since then has been in a humorous vein. He wanted to have a humor column, and...I said, "If you want to...." That's what I've seen since; and humor is a great distancer....He enjoys it, but it's also a way to keep people at bay. (Teacher C Interview #1)

On further reflection, Ms. Frye speculated about Sean's own understanding of his peers' expectations and what he was willing to give.

I think his interests are different [from those of most students]. He seems to be a little bit nervous, as if...the kind of talents he has to offer, you know, a good wit, a funny wit, is not something that's highly valued by those around him and those of his own age. (Teacher C Interview #1)

Ms. Frye recognized Sean's assumption of a leadership role in the journalism class as he served as editor for the special senior issue of the newspaper. But her evaluation of his writing did not include a recognition of the trusting community that Sean was actually building. She saw Sean as distancing himself from others by the type of writing he chose to do--primarily humorous writing.

### Meaning-Making

Ms. Frye did not comment directly on students working with their peers through writing as a meaning-making

endeavor. Several times, however, she referred to the necessity of students being "engaged" in what they were writing in order for it to have meaning for them and for it to be "good" writing. While she did not, perhaps, realize the intensity of Sean's engagement with the article that he wrote about his teacher who had died, she did realize that Sean was engaged to some degree in the article. But her evaluation of Sean's other writing for the newspaper, his humorous articles, indicated her belief that Sean was disengaged from other people, that he was using humor as a distancing agent.

Yet Sean's descriptions of what he particularly liked about some of these articles belied that evaluation. He saw himself as quite engaged in his writing. Indeed, he was able to describe his positive feelings when it was evident from student response that his voice had been heard through some of those articles.

#### Student-Curriculum and Teacher-Curriculum Interactions Curriculum as Dynamic Form

In our first interview, Ms. Frye emphasized the importance of student interest in any approach to teaching writing.

As a teacher, I feel the most important student writing comes from something that interests the students themselves. (Teacher C Interview #1)

Later she expressed a concern that constraints are often placed on teachers' delivery of curriculum by

systemic expectations that deny teachers autonomy as well as by teachers themselves who are more confident with a highly structured and clearly defined curriculum.

The sophomore curriculum...seems to be so amorphous. I don't think anyone's really happy with it. It's a vague rubric of world literature and that just takes in everything. I think we need to be in a curriculum committee working on this more thematic focus approach....I'd like to see a more thematic approach to it. It's hard, really. That's what the risk is with absolute freedom. In a way...it's teachers not being able to handle lack of structure very well. I just sometimes feel at odds. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Within the guidelines of North Carolina's Basic Education Plan there exists enough latitude for teacher interpretation she felt.

[The expectation] is that you'll meet curriculum guidelines by the end of the course....Yes, I have to follow curriculum guidelines [but] there is a lot of latitude in in. Now next year...I think I'll be able to handle it a little better--and design my own approach within the guidelines. (Teacher C Interview #2)

At one time Ms. Frye served as a reader-scorer for the writing test of the North Carolina Competency Exam. She reflected on the absence of latitude in scoring this exam and how alienated she felt with the lack of flexibility.

It was like going to a foreign land and having to judge--let's say...I'm in another galaxy, and I'm supposed to judge a contest following the rules of that galaxy, because I had to judge and grade by requirement criteria from the State Department. And it was very strict. Some essays which might have at first glance looked both illegible and illiterate would pass; and, on the other hand, William Buckley could write an essay, and if it didn't have two reasons and two extensions, he would fail the North Carolina Competency test....There was no latitude at all in that. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Ms. Frye attempted to offer her journalism students at least some of the freedoms and the responsibilities of a dynamic curriculum. Sean, however, perceived her interactions with him to be directed toward curtailing his autonomy as a writer. Nevertheless, he could, to a greater degree than in his second semester English class, choose his own topics and write about them.

Ms. Frye did struggle with her assessment of how well she was able to allow for and encourage student agency. She noted that it was sometimes difficult for her to "let go" and take the risk that such an approach has. She specifically offered the insight that as the journalism teacher she felt responsible to see that the paper avoided controversy simply for shock effect. She felt equally responsible to see that student articles which were published had some merit, that they said something.

#### Curriculum and Students' Need to Communicate

Although Ms. Frye did not address students' need to communicate as having a direct influence on curriculum, she did address curriculum and students' needs in general.

In an ideal world...where we could design our own schools with limitless funding and all kinds of things, where each contained classes for those who need it, flexible schedules--I think we could more realistically address those. But here where our job is to whoever walks in the door needs to be served the best way possible--that puts a lot of constraints on it. (Teacher C Interview #2)

### Rule-Oriented vs Meaning-Oriented Curriculum

Ms. Frye's comments about writing and curriculum suggested her leanings toward a meaning-oriented curriculum.

I feel that the most successful work comes from something they're engaged in. (Teacher C Interview #1)

Writing is connected with the literature we read in some way, and they reflect each other. (Teacher C Interview #1)

She shared with me an example of a writing assignment that was indicative of these beliefs. At the end of a poetry unit, students were to create a stanza form. They decided on a lyric

...where each verse was kind of symbolic....and it was sort of like a reflection, the first stanza of the quatrain would build and the second would kind of diminish....this came on the tail end of a poetry unit, and it was more or less my devising their form, but they did enjoy [it] and wrote all kinds of imaginable topics. (Teacher C Interview #1)

In journalism, her approach to a meaning-oriented curriculum seemed to have a different focus. Here she attempted to show her students that they could be responsible not only for doing their writing but also for determining what that writing would be.

They have become more accustomed to it. It's much harder for the underclassmen at the beginning. The...seniors adapt pretty well to this, because they've had so much experience. It's been hard with...the ninth grade student --we have just one. He's very talented. But it was a little loose for him. He wasn't comfortable at the beginning. He wanted to sit in his assigned seat and be told what to do and when to do it, which is understandable --that's what we value officially for many reasons, so I can't fault the children. And I don't know really if I

can fault the teachers, because of the numbers and the things we're expected to accomplish and achieve. (Teacher C Interview #2)

She used Sean as an example of the kind of student who chafed under a rule-oriented curriculum.

I think he's very bright. He has a quick wit. He also seems to be kind of...marching to his own drummer. He...does not look like an average high school student, whatever that is. I think his interests are different....He doesn't seem to be one who necessarily does what he's supposed to do unless he sees a good reason for doing it or is engaged in it. (Teacher C Interview #2)

### Teacher-Self and Student-Self Interactions

#### Teacher as Reflective Practitioner

Ms. Frye expressed an appreciation for the teacher who reflects in action. Her experience as the teacher of English, grades two through twelve in a small private school honed this type of reflection-in-action which she described as thinking on her feet.

I learned a lot about thinking on my feet regardless of plans, and I enjoyed it. (Teacher C Interview #2)

She described herself as a veteran erratic journaler and agreed to keep a journal for this study. Several of these journal entries indicated the possibilities inherent in reflective journaling. She took time to reflect on her role in the journalism class and the students' response to that role.

I made it clear when I took over the class the students were responsible for [the newspaper], and the editor was responsible for the students. My role is to suggest and assist....There's been much griping, but students have

become accustomed to more responsibility. The gripping dwindles. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #1)

I enjoy the role of interested observer and, if necessary, facilitator. It's my goal to be a glorified "go-fer"--to follow their ideas, suggest when asked, etc. It may backfire sometimes, but that's the risk. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #2)

I was on the run, but students directed my actions more than I directed theirs. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #4)

Indeed, most of my field note narrative in observation of this class reflected the activities and interactions among students more than Ms. Frye's activities.

#### Teacher as Artist

Ms. Frye's comments, especially as she reflected on her role in the journalism class as the facilitator, indicated a possible approach to teaching as an art. Such an approach has been described as the teacher/artist conducting the performance of her students much as a conductor directs an orchestra. Implicit in her remarks was the desire, if not the total fulfillment of the desire, to play the role of conductor.

I observed an example of this at the beginning of class. A student journalist brought word from another teacher about an award a student had won and a request for newspaper coverage. Ms. Frye asked the student journalist if she felt it was "article material" (directing her to the musical score) and, if so, to handle it as she saw fit (allowing the student the freedom of interpretation).

### Teacher as Writer

While it did not seem that Ms. Frye's relationship with her students was that of writer to writer, she did describe herself as being a writer. One example she gave indicated that her interview for the job of reader-scorer for the North Carolina Competency Exam included a requirement that she write and submit an essay of her own for evaluation. A more direct and on-going example of teacher as writer was in her description of writing book reviews for the local newspaper.

Well, as for writing myself, I do contribute book reviews to the [local newspaper]....I'm an occasional reviewer and do enjoy that. Writing is a very important part of my life. (Teacher C Interview #1)

Perhaps it was because she did not bring this "important" aspect of her life into the classroom, that Sean was unable to trust her handling of his developing voice. Not seeing the evidence that writing was personally valued by Ms. Frye, he did not trust that she knew first hand the struggles of trying to make one's voice heard through writing.

### Student-Self Interactions

Possibly because of the nature of "quick" writing that must be done for student publications, there was not an emphasis in Ms. Frye's comments on reprocessing, on internal and external revision, or on reflective planning. In a round-about way, she encouraged her students to proof-

read and edit (a part of external revision) for their audience. In various staff meetings students did do some reflective planning for future issues. However, there was virtually no indication that provision was made for the students to be introspective about their writing.

Sean recognized the limitations inherent in quick writing for publication, but regretted these limitations since he had experienced such positive growth through the kind of reflective thought he had learned from Ms. Smith.

#### Conditions Conducive to Voice Development

##### Creating Opportunities for Apprenticeships

Neither Ms. Frye's written or oral comments nor her performance in the classroom as I observed it, indicated that the apprentice/mentor relationship was a significant part of her composition classroom environment.

##### Midwife Teachers: Facilitating the Growth of Connected Classes

When Ms. Frye assumed the responsibilities of English teacher mid-year, 1988, her students were already involved with an assignment that required an essay about the written literary criticism about a particular novel. She felt that such an assignment was too abstract, leaving little opportunity for students' own interpretations of the novel. She wanted to help her students make

connections between their own thinking and the literature they read.

I would have preferred to suggest some novels that, or collections of short stories, and have a paper with much more of an interpretive approach: "What did this--did this novel speak to you?" or "What theme connected with you?" with some documentation, a little critical reading. (Teacher C Interview #1)

She also attempted to offer a curriculum that listened to students' needs and made connections between those needs and her approach to curriculum.

As for personal journals (which I do with the sophomores) the seniors seem to be pretty journaled out and thinking about college....I try to follow their interests, which is "What am I going to do next year?" [or] "Let's practice taking notes." And I will defer to their sensitivity on that....They did enough journals in their fifth, ninth, and eleventh grades. (Teacher C Interview #1)

Another way in which a teacher can begin to build connected classes is to share her own enthusiasm with her students. Ms. Frye's reflections on this kind of sharing suggested that when a teacher felt connected to her subject matter, that connection could be expanded to include her students in the connection.

I'd love to teach senior English if I could...that's my...principal interest, and I know a lot about English literature...and...you can't help letting your own enthusiasm carry over. (Teacher C Interview #2)

As much as Ms. Frye emphasized her belief in student agency, she did not neglect the necessity of teacher autonomy in the planning and implementation of that which is taught. She listed teacher empowerment as a conducive condition to both teacher and student development.

I think the hardest thing about being a teacher is that you have all of the responsibility and none of the power right now. I don't mind being responsible, but I'd like to be empowered to a much greater degree...and the students are the direct beneficiaries of that on-site control which we need to have. (Teacher C Interview #2)

At no time did Ms. Frye use the term "midwife teacher." Yet, as she described her relationship with some of her earlier students--those she taught in the small private school--the notion of a nurturant midwife was, at least, suggested.

I taught...either eight or nine classes, all different levels. And I could not blame the previous year's English teacher for not teaching something, since I was [the previous year's English teacher]! That's probably what I enjoyed most--seeing these, seeing my children grow up. I've got my first batch from second grade, are seniors in college this year. And one of them just got Phi Beta Kappa at Washington and Lee where he's on a scholarship--which makes me feel very good. And just seeing them grow up. It was like a family, a small town in a way. So that was a unique experience. (Teacher C Interview #2)

#### Responding to "The Teachable Moment"

Ms. Frye's comments and reflections did not include reference to seizing "the teachable moment" with students. Yet, because of her comments about learning to "think on her feet" or to "reflect-in-action," responding to such a moment did not seem likely to be foreign to her experience.

#### Encouraging the Emerging Student Voice

Ms. Frye recognized the need for independence and experimentation in composition courses if students'

voices were to be nurtured and enhanced. In fact, she referred to the journalism class as a laboratory for experimentation.

It's also the only kind of English course that seems to be...an experimental lab right now. We used to have things like writing labs and writing workshops, but still that was very much a teacher-driven kind of lab as I recall. This is where they come to experiment with writing. (Teacher C Interview #2)

She reflected on her role in this laboratory experience.

I go back and edit...each story that appears in each issue. I try to maintain the student's voice as much as possible, unless it's just so totally awkward or inappropriate it needs a lot of revision. But I try to keep the spirit, if not the letter, of what they do. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Sean, however, did not believe that this was the case at all.

Although Sean was angry with what he perceived as Ms. Frye's willful interference with his voice as expressed in some of his writing, he nevertheless experienced a degree of freedom in her journalism class. He was able, as a feature writer, to determine the majority of his topics. He was able to assume some leadership positions through which his voice could be expressed both orally and in written form.

Ms. Frye described Sean's voice as she saw it expressed through his writing.

I think he has a wonderful--wonderfully dry sort of humor. In fact, I think that's the kind of writing he enjoys most. He has a mature voice, I feel....And it's

detached. Sometimes almost behind the irony, kind of a sardonic guise....I think it's very mature...kind of remote in a way, but funny. (Teacher C Interview #2)

Sean, on the other hand, had no idea that Ms. Frye had any positive reactions to his writing. He surmised from her "editing" of his articles, that she did not "like" what he wrote and did not respect his voice as expressed through his writing.

While Sean did not experience with Ms. Frye the same nurturant care that he had experienced with Ms. Smith, a good deal of what he had learned from Ms. Smith carried over into his writing for the student newspaper. This was due in part to the nature of the journalism class itself; writing for a publication offered Sean a freer vehicle for expression than he found in Ms. Lucas's more traditional English class. But, perhaps, because of Ms. Frye's underlying belief--though not fully realized--in student ownership of their own work, Sean found himself in an environment somewhat conducive to his making some connections on his own.

Ms. Frye expressed a desire to help her students begin to make connections between their experiences and their writing and saw the journalism class as a place where this could occur naturally. She expressed also her belief in the positive influence of teacher enthusiasm and teacher empowerment on students' learning and writing.

Yet, Ms. Frye spoke little of voice as such. Sean's understanding of what was happening in his writing had much to do with his own voice being expressed and heard. Therefore, when he perceived Ms. Frye's actions as an attempt to silence the voice that he had just recently discovered, his response was hostile.

When Ms. Frye spoke of conditions conducive to voice development, she spoke of both teachers' and students' need for an environment which encouraged individual creativity.

Independence requires a lot of responsibility. Our current system of "control and accountability" doesn't really promote an atmosphere that helps creative or individual effort. (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #4)

Her final reflection suggested both that voice development is dependent on a student's self-reliance and that such development carries with it implications for growth beyond the composition classroom.

I do hope, and have seen, that students are becoming more self-reliant. Perhaps this can translate into other areas of their lives and work. That's the "plan." (Reflective Journal, Teacher C, Entry #5)

#### Chapter Summary

Through their words, Sean and his teachers have described for us their perceptions of the high school writing experience and the development of voice. Arranged thematically according to the emphasis in the literature on interactions and conditions conducive to

student voice development, their perceptions suggested ways in which theoretical understandings of voice development are actualized in practice. The implications of these perceptions, as interpreted through the literature, are included in Chapter VI.

## CHAPTER VI

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is our inward journey that leads us through time--forward or back, seldom in a straight line, most often spiraling. Each of us is moving, changing, with respect to others. As we discover, we remember; remembering, we discover; and most intensely do we experience this when our separate journeys converge. Our living experience at those meeting points is one of the charged dramatic fields....

--Welty, 1984, p. 102

## Overview of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the various dimensions of writing as a way of knowing. Writing as a way of knowing was specifically addressed through an indepth focus on an individual high school student's emerging voice and his perceptions of the ways in which classroom composition experiences nurtured his voice development.

Two research questions shaped the study:

**Research Question 1:** What are the student's perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that have contributed to his voice development?

**Research Question 2:** What are his writing teachers' perceptions of the interactions and conditions within the classroom writing experience that contribute to students' writing and voice development?

The subjects were selected because of their ability to comment directly to the issue of voice development within the classroom composition experience. Because writing as a way of knowing is such an individual process, I chose to design this research as a case study, looking indepth at one student's voice as it came to be expressed through his writing over the course of two years.

Through interviews, reflective journals, autobiographical writing, the student's compositions, and classroom observations, I gathered data from the student and three of his teachers concerning their perceptions of voice development within the composition classroom setting.

I analyzed and interpreted this data through a thematic and theoretical framework developed from the literature. The first component of this framework outlined classroom interactions conducive to voice development: student-teacher, student-peer, student-curriculum, teacher-curriculum, student-self, and teacher-self interactions. The second component consisted of classroom conditions conducive to voice development: apprenticeships, connected classes and midwife teachers,

"the teachable moment," and the emerging student voice. Insights into voice development from the professional writer reaffirmed the importance of these theoretical categories derived from the literature.

The results of this analysis illustrated how one student grew in his understanding of his own voice and the possibilities for its expression through his writing. There are implications here for possible ways in which we, as teachers of writing, can nurture that creative process of voice development.

#### Conclusions from the Study

The data of the study support the conclusions that certain interactions within the composition classroom are critical for student voice development; that midwife teaching can establish an atmosphere within the composition classroom conducive to student voice development; that there are effective and exciting ways teachers of writing can approach their task so that student voice development is enhanced and nurtured; that there is little chance for student voice development within the composition classroom without a strong commitment from the teacher to writing as a way of knowing; and that once a student has experienced this discovery of voice, that voice will seek ways of expression no matter what the barriers to it.

Table 3 presents a summary of factors within the composition classroom identified by Sean as nurturing to his voice. These themes, as I state them, are based on Sean's perceptions and echo the themes from the literature presented in Table 1 (p. 70) and Table 2 (p. 110). Table 3 is a summary which also indicates which of those factors were addressed by Sean's teachers, by the professional writer, and in the literature as having value in the nurturing of student voice. (See Table 3.)

A narrative explanation of Sean's perceptions follows the summary table. I have focused the narrative on Sean's perceptions (Research Question 1) of factors conducive to his voice development and factors that subdued his voice development. The teachers' perceptions (Research Question 2) emerge naturally in the narrative.

Because there was such a consistency between the literature emphasis on the importance of the midwife teacher and the research findings of Ms. Smith's interactions with Sean, this section of the discussion concludes with a portrait of the midwife teacher.

Table 3

Student-Identified Factors Influencing Voice Development

Nurturant Factors Identified By Student	...Factors Addressed By Teachers			...Factors Addressed By Writer <sup>3</sup>	...Factors Addressed in Literature <sup>4</sup>
	A	B <sup>1</sup>	C <sup>2</sup>		
Teacher as Writer	X			X	Dellinger, 1982 Carroll, 1984 John-Steiner, 1985 Macrorie, 1989
Specific Teacher Comments	X	X		X	Moffett, 1968 Hillocks, 1986 Sullivan, 1986
Questions for Extended Thinking	X				Hillocks, 1986
Inter-active Journaling	X			(X)	Kantor, 1984 Ziv, 1984 Healey, 1985
Student Ownership	X		(X)	X	Freedman, 1984 Hillocks, 1986 Zemelman & Daniels, 1986
Teacher as Co-learner	X				Freire, 1985 Belenky et al., 1986
Student-Teacher Trust	X			X	Elbow, 1973 Feinberg, 1985 Hillocks, 1986

...Student	...Teachers			...Writer	...Literature
	A	B	C		
Student-Peer Trust	X		(X)	X	Johnson & Johnson, 1975 Kantor, 1984 Healey, 1985 Lunsford, 1985 Beale, 1986 Belenky et al., 1986 Greene, 1986
Open Class Discussion	X			X	Feinberg, 1985 Trimbur, 1985
Thought Provoking Assignments	X				Feinberg, 1985 Hillocks, 1986
Meaning-Oriented Curriculum	X			X	Polanyi, 1969 Healey, 1985 Hillocks, 1986
Emphasis on Content (over form)	X			X	John-Steiner, 1985 Hillocks, 1986
Emphasis on Process (over product)	X			X	Kroll, 1980 Healey, 1985
Grades Down-Played	X		X	X	Freedman, 1984 Healey, 1985 Hillocks, 1986
Multiple Drafts	X			X	Healey, 1985 Knoblauch, 1985 Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986 Shah, 1986

...Students	...Teachers			...Writer	...Literature
	A	B	C		
Internal Editing	X			X	Healey, 1985 Hillocks, 1986
Freedom for Reflection & Revision	X			X	John-Steiner, 1985 Knoblauch, 1985 Greene, 1986
Midwife Teachers	X			X	Belenky et al., 1986
Freedom to Choose Own Topics	X		X		Pianko, 1979 Freedman, 1984 Feinberg, 1985 Grumet, 1988
Space to be Heard	X		X	X	Feinberg, 1985 John-Steiner, 1985 Greene, 1986
Wider Audience	X	(X)	X	X	John-Steiner, 1985
Emphasis on Voice Development	X			X	Polanyi, 1969 Ricouer, 1976 John-Steiner, 1985 Beale, 1986 Greene, 1986
*Teacher as Reflective Practitioner	X			X	Schon, 1983 & 1987

...Student	...Teachers			...Writer	...Literature
	A	B	C		
*"The Teachable Moment"	X			X	Vygotsky, 1962

\*Nurturant factors influencing student's voice development but not identified specifically by student.

1(X), Teacher B recognized this as a nurturant factor but saw no way to incorporate it into her teaching.

2(X), Teacher C emphasized these factors in interviews but was not perceived by student as acting on these beliefs.

3(X), The professional writer used journals as a tool for reflection and urged her students to do so, but it was not interactive journaling in the sense of "conversations on paper."

<sup>4</sup>A sampling of the theoretical support.

## Factors Conducive to Sean's Voice Development

### Student-Teacher Interactions

According to the literature (Brophy & Good, 1986; Simpson & Galbo, 1986) the interactions between student and teacher are the most important interactions in the classroom situation. Certainly for Sean, the student and primary focus for this case study, student-teacher interactions were the most influential in his own discovery of and development of voice--particularly his interactions with one teacher, Ms. Smith.

Sean, self-described as a student who moved through his school experience hating writing, discovered through various interactions with Ms. Smith (Teacher A) during his junior year of high school English that he had a voice and that he could express that voice in a way that could be heard and responded to by others. That this way was through writing, a "subject" Sean "hated," can be attributed primarily to his interactions with Ms. Smith.

One of the most important interactions Sean experienced with Ms. Smith was that of writer to writer. This type of interaction between student and teacher is a recurring theme in the literature (Macrorie, 1980; Dellinger, 1982; Carroll, 1984). Ms. Smith was a writer; she valued writing as a way of knowing; and she believed that powerful writing, writing with voice, was a possibility for all students. Because of these beliefs,

Ms. Smith was able to convey to Sean the possibilities available to him through his own writing. And, because she "practiced what she taught" by writing with her students, Sean was able to trust her assumptions that indeed he could write and, moreover, write with voice.

Almost as important in Sean's discovery of and development of voice through his writing was the student-teacher interaction identified through the literature as teacher comments. As his trust in Ms. Smith's respect for his voice grew, he enjoyed talking with her about his writing, perhaps because he felt for the first time that his thoughts were being taken seriously by a teacher. Her "what if...?" questions about Sean's writing gave impetus to his extended thinking. Hillocks (1986) called this kind of student-teacher interaction "procedural facilitation"--teaching that helps a student think for himself. Because Ms. Smith listened to his answers to her questions, Sean was able to see the "power of possibilities" (Solomon in Greene, 1986) in his writing.

Responsive, interactive journaling was a method Ms. Smith used for interacting with students about their ideas for writing. Sean referred positively to this journaling--a technique he had disliked and tried to avoid in the past--as "conversations on paper." When there was not time for Ms. Smith to conference one-on-one with Sean, there was the option of continuing their conversations through responsive journaling.

Ziv (1984) supported the notion of reciprocal interactions in which there is opportunity for a mutual sharing of ideas between student and teacher. Kantor (1984) and Healey (1985) suggested that an on-going dialogue between student and teacher--much like Ms. Smith's and Sean's "conversations on paper"--would help move a student toward an awareness of audience, those persons who will "hear" the student's voice.

Again, Ms. Smith's comments helped Sean to extend his thinking about whatever the subject addressed in the journal. He responded positively to her suggestions that he look at a particular topic or idea from a different angle. It was also important to Sean that her comments were specific to what he had written. The literature speaks to the importance of teacher comments, oral or written, becoming specific in order to enhance a student's writing and voice development (Moffett, 1968; Hillocks, 1986; and Sullivan, 1986).

Perhaps another reason that Sean trusted Ms. Smith's approach to writing was due to her belief, both stated and demonstrated, that a student's writing belonged to the student. Student ownership became a vital part of Sean's development of voice. Such research as that of Freedman (1984) and Zemelman and Daniels (1986) emphasized the importance of teachers encouraging students' ownership of their writing as an essential prelude to possibilities for

voice development. After a period of time with Ms. Smith, Sean began to develop the attitude that what he wrote was his and that only he knew what he wanted or needed to say.

Furthermore, as Ms. Smith interacted with her students as a "co-learner," Sean began to realize that he could teach as well as be taught. Ms. Smith allowed her students to see the "imperfect processes" of teacher thinking (Belenky et al., 1986) as she worked through ideas with her students.

As Sean moved from being a purely passive recipient of knowledge to the role of an active creator of knowledge, he began to hear his own voice--and, he began to like it. The concept of "privileged knowledge" (Schon in Greene, 1986) was replaced for Sean with the concept of his own "constructed knowledge" (Belenky et al., 1986). Ms. Smith made it clear to Sean that she did not have final answers to ways students should think, nor did she try to impose on them what they should or should not write. Her position is one advocated by Freire (1985).

Trust plays a part as well in the concept of connected teaching. The literature refers to this type of teaching as that which trusts students to make connections between their experiences and the written expression of their thoughts about those experiences (Elbow, 1973). The role of the teacher is to facilitate these connections, to help the student ask questions and discover answers about the experiences.

Sean described such connective interactions as those which indicate that teachers "care about" what a student has to say. According to Sean, Ms. Smith "genuinely cares about what you write, and how you write, and what you think."

Because Ms. Smith was willing to struggle with Sean as he began to construct his own knowledge and discover his own voice, he recognized and responded to her interest and caring. She demonstrated a "being present" (Feinberg, 1985) with him in his struggles toward knowing.

#### Student-Peer Interactions

A second type of interaction suggested by the literature to be important in student's voice development is that of student and peer (Lunsford, 1985). While the interactions between Sean and his peers came to have some significance in his writing and voice development, these did not assume the importance for Sean that the literature indicates sometimes occurs for students. Nevertheless, it is significant that these student-peer interactions had any influence at all considering Sean's own description of himself as a "loner."

Sean had to learn how to interact with his peers. This was a kind of interaction with which he was neither familiar nor comfortable. That Ms. Smith modeled the trust required for effective interactions was an important part of Sean's learning. In the course of his junior and

senior years of high school, Sean was able to learn about trusting his own thoughts and about trusting that he could give voice to those thoughts in a community that would listen and attempt to understand. Both Kantor (1984) and Healey (1985) stressed the importance of a student writer learning that he or she was not alone in the struggle.

Classroom discussions with Ms. Smith were opportunities for open-ended dialogue. Trimbur (1985) advocated such open-ended discussions as a way to encourage the development of students' ideas. Just as Ms. Smith helped Sean extend his thinking with her "what if...?" questions, she also generated opportunities for Sean's "word flow" as she encouraged class discussion on many topics. Such collaborative learning, described in detail by Johnson and Johnson (1975), became an important method for Sean's voice development.

His experiences with peer feedback on his writing were somewhat helpful to Sean. He liked having someone else's opinions about what he was writing because it gave him another way to sort out his ideas.

The key to Sean's positive interactions with peers was, as it is emphasized in the literature (Belenky et al., 1986), mutual respect and trust. When the trust was present, Sean responded well to peer feedback. He looked for honest responses to his writing, and, in turn, he attempted to express his voice openly and honestly through

his writing. Greene (1986) spoke of such honest sharing as the building of connections between "authentic individuals."

Sean began to discover that peer interactions, specifically open discussions in class, could help him make his own meaning. In other words, as his thoughts came to be expressed first orally then in writing, his discussions with peers helped him find sense in the experiences he described--whether in accounts of personal incidents in his life or as personal responses to literature the class read together. He described this kind of interaction with peers as a help to him in sorting out some of the nonsense in his writing. Beale (1986) referred to the need that communities of trust have for clear communication.

An extension of this meaning making came for Sean in the tests Ms. Smith gave. Tests became for Sean a continuation of the discussions begun with peers. Ms. Smith asked for "thoughtful answers" rather than for mere repetition of "facts" that could be memorized from a text or a teacher handout, a kind of exercise that Sean deplored.

#### Student-Curriculum Interactions

Sean experienced with Ms. Smith a new freedom to "speak out," to explore his own interests and ideas. This experience occurred within a "dynamic curriculum" as it is

defined by the literature (Feinberg, 1985; Grumet, 1988). This freedom allowed Sean some much appreciated relief from the traditional question-answer discussion format, a format that is highly teacher-orchestrated, to which he had been accustomed. Freire (1985) believed that the attitude that there were only right and wrong answers denies the student the freedom to begin to think for himself. Sean found this to be true.

At Ms. Smith's urging, Sean moved into the journalism class his senior year and discovered another curricular outlet for the expression of his voice. The school newspaper offered Sean a vehicle for addressing issues that were of importance to him. He recognized the value of this outlet, stating that "writing reaches more people." It answered his need to communicate to a broader audience, a need described in the literature by John-Steiner (1985). When he began to receive feedback from both students and adults who read his articles, realizing that others heard what he had to say, Sean indicated that he was encouraged to continue writing.

Sean commented articulately on the value to his own voice development of a meaning-oriented curriculum. Having experienced for most of his formal schooling a rule-oriented curriculum, his exposure to the curriculum as presented by Ms. Smith was a welcomed relief. He moved from memorizing and parroting rules, to an experience with

writing that changed his entire attitude about what he could do, how he could do it, and why it was important. His discovery of "the writing process" as presented by Ms. Smith helped him to eliminate some of his dread of writing.

Writing the memory pieces for Ms. Smith, engaging in dialogue with her and with his peers about his ideas and how they could be expressed with the most "power," gave Sean a new way to interact with the curriculum, a way that opened spaces in his learning for his own voice to grow. Grumet (1988) advocated a curriculum that "leaves space" for a student's responses.

Perhaps his description of his earlier frustration with the diagramming of sentences illustrates best his negative responses to a rule-oriented curriculum: "In ninth grade I just hit the brick wall and said 'No more!'" Such a rule-oriented approach was filled with factors described by Polanyi (1969) and Hillocks (1986) as constraints that hamper students' voice development. With Ms. Smith he was able to see where the words fit within the meaning of his own compositions, a situation far more conducive to meaning making for Sean than trying --and failing--to put the words "on the right stick."

#### Student-Self Interactions

In Ms. Smith's class Sean learned the value of multiple drafts (Healey, 1985; Shah, 1986), of setting

aside a piece he had written then returning to it a week --or a month--later (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1986), of using time as a way to clear his mind so that he could read his own drafts and evaluate whether or not he had written with voice (Knoblauch, 1985). He began to relax when he dealt with the superficial aspect of external revision--spelling, punctuation, and the like--knowing that this kind of editing process came only at the end of a long process of working with the content and meaning of his writing (Healey, 1985).

The times for class discussion and individual conferencing with Ms. Smith offered Sean time for reflection before writing, time that had not been valued in his prior composition classes. His involvement with Ms. Smith's reflective journals--those "conversations on paper"--gave Sean yet another opportunity for interacting with his own thoughts.

While this might not have been the first time Sean engaged in self-reflection, it certainly seemed to be the first time such self-reflection was encouraged and facilitated within the classroom composition experience for him. He responded with enthusiasm. He began to talk about his own voice and how he could revise his papers in a way that would powerfully convey his feelings and his thoughts to others.

Sean began to realize as his writing became more personal that his words could express the power of his

feelings--of his perceptions of his life experiences. He moved toward an appreciation of what Feinberg (1985) called the real "I" in the process. Such insight from a student who had dreaded even picking up a pencil to write and who had silently screamed "No more!" in his ninth grade English class, is testimony to the importance of self-reflection in Sean's development of voice.

Ms. Smith used her reflective journal as a tool to help her evaluate the different lessons she taught, to discover why a certain strategy had worked well, to project ways in which she could begin to reach certain students. As Ms. Smith used writing as a way to know herself as a person and as a teacher, she modeled for her students the value of self-reflection. Sean said that she "practiced what she taught."

### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships as such were not a part of any of Sean's formal composition experiences. The literature strongly advocated this kind of apprentice/mentor relationship as a crucial part of a student's voice development. Yet, Sean's respect for Ms. Smith--a teacher who wrote with her students, who indicated by her comments that she was interested in what they had to say, who encouraged them to write with voice so that others could hear what they had to say--paralleled that of apprentice to mentor. Had that relationship been encouraged and

explored in full, the possibilities that Sean's writing would have become even more a way of knowing for him are great. John-Steiner (1985) referred to teachers as models for and collaborators with their students. Sean responded positively and enthusiastically to Ms. Smith's assessment of his writing primarily because of her modeling of the writing process and her demonstrated belief that she learned from her students.

#### Connected Classes and Midwife Teachers

Sean learned in Ms. Smith's classroom that every student's ideas were of value and that his own ideas could become clearer through class discussion and student-teacher dialogue. The openness and honesty with which Ms. Smith approached her students and her subject helped to create an atmosphere of trust in which her students could find ways of making all sorts of connections. Ms. Smith became for Sean what John-Steiner (1985) defined as a "cherished audience."

#### "The Teachable Moment"

Ms. Smith's "Wonderful Wednesday Lesson," an example of her response to a teachable moment, was the lesson that gave Sean opportunity to reflect further on the memory piece that was pivotal in his appraisal of his own voice development. Because Ms. Smith was alert to this "moment," Sean's voice was nurtured.

### The Emerging Student Voice

Just how was Sean's emerging voice nurtured? First of all Ms. Smith created an atmosphere within her classroom that encouraged collaboration. She did this in part by sharing with her students her own struggles to write, giving visibility to her assertion that writing was a way of learning that she valued for herself and for her students. She did this in part by showing her students that their own ideas--and the voice they gave to those thoughts--could grow as they learned from and with each other. Sean responded to this open, honest atmosphere.

A second way in which Ms. Smith nurtured student voice was in her ability to "let go" of the students' writing and allow it to belong to them. Sean noted that while Ms. Smith might make numerous suggestions for possible revisions in his writing in both English and journalism classes, she left the final decisions up to him.

Thirdly, Ms. Smith showed Sean the value of reflection. As she worked with him through various guidelines for reprocessing and revision, Sean learned that being more in touch with his own thoughts and feelings helped his writing have the power that only true voice can give it. John-Steiner (1985) emphasized the significant impact that dialogues with self can have on the developing voice. Ms. Smith's insistence that "there are no final

drafts" was further encouragement to Sean to keep trying, keep revising. Having opportunity to experiment, to risk saying something that might not work without the fear of being prematurely graded or evaluated, was a nurturing aspect of voice development advocated by Healey (1985), Freedman (1984), and others.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Sean's developing voice was the opportunity he was given to write about those issues and ideas that were of personal interest to him. He asked that at every opportunity I tell English teachers to let their students find and develop their own topics. His words echoed Pianko's (1979) emphasis on writing that evolves from within the student as writing which encourages the development of authentic voice.

#### Factors That Subdued Sean's Voice

Although this study was designed to attend to those factors that nurtured Sean's voice, it is appropriate to discuss the factors that subdued or silenced his voice.

When Ms. Smith retired at the end of the first semester of Sean's senior year, it marked the end of one of the most positive school experiences Sean could remember. He had been with her for three semesters in English classes--discovering his voice through her writing instruction. He had studied with her for one semester in journalism--discovering an outlet for his voice.

Sean, by his own description, was looking forward to spending his senior year with a teacher he had come to trust. Then, so abruptly it seemed to Sean, this teacher retired. Sean was dismayed.

Ms. Lucas, an English teacher relatively new to the profession, assumed responsibility for Ms. Smith's English classes--and Sean quit trying. He continued to attend classes, but almost immediately began to "fade back into the crowd." That he consciously chose this course of action and that he could talk with me about his very clear reasons for doing so are significant points in our considerations of Sean's voice development. These reasons indicated that his "quitting" was of far more consequence than the mere petulance of a student being deprived of a teacher he liked. It seemed to Sean that all those factors that had changed his attitude about writing were now reversed.

One of the keys that had helped to unlock Sean's voice was the way in which he was able to interact with Ms. Smith as writer to writer. Her personal commitment to writing was clearly in evidence as she wrote with her students. Ms. Lucas did not write with her students. For Sean this was a signal that she did not personally value the activities she asked the students to attempt. Sean recognized that she worked hard grading papers, preparing study questions, and the like. But she did not write with

her students. To Sean this made an important--and negative--statement about voice.

Sean's responses to Ms. Smith's comments--whether in class discussions, individual conferences, or the "conversations on paper"--were positive, primarily because they gave him ways to extend his thinking without denigrating the thoughts he had already expressed. Suggestions, very specific suggestions, were made by Ms. Smith concerning ways in which Sean might consider revising his papers; but the final decisions about revision were left up to Sean.

Not surprisingly, Sean responded negatively to the comments Ms. Lucas made on his essays. These comments dealt primarily with issues of editing or external revision, and there were few "what if...?" questions. Furthermore, Sean had no idea what Ms. Lucas thought of his writing ability. There were no individual conferences. When he chose to do his work he made adequate grades; when he chose not to do his work he failed. But the grades made no comment to Sean about Ms. Lucas's assessment of whether his writing had "voice."

Sean discovered with Ms. Smith that his writing truly belonged to him; he owned it. Yet, Ms. Lucas believed--and regretted what she perceived as the necessity of that belief--that her students were not capable of assuming control, or ownership, of their writing. Her assignments were made accordingly. Students

were to use her format for essays; they discussed the points to include in the essays based on right/wrong answers to her study sheets; and, according to Sean, they set about to "prove her point." This approach did not offer Sean the kind of agency which he desired.

While Ms. Lucas believed that it was important for students to see connections between their own experiences and the literature they read and the writing they did, her belief that students were not ready to "think on their own" did little to facilitate students making their own connections. Sean saw this as a double message, realizing that his ability to think on his own and make some of his own connections was neither recognized nor valued by Ms. Lucas.

Although Sean had not embraced student-peer interactions with the enthusiasm that characterized other factors in his voice development, when opportunities for such collaborative learning as open class discussions had offered were no longer present Sean was frustrated. The prewriting oral discussions in Ms. Lucas's class were characterized by Sean as a return to the-teacher-asks-a-question, the-teacher-has-the-right answer, discussions so typical of the concept of "privileged knowledge."

Opportunities for peer feedback were few in Ms. Lucas's class; and when they did occur, the procedures were highly structured and asked the students to focus on

form over content feedback. Sean believed that such structure did nothing to engage him or his peers in quality discussions. Underlying Ms. Lucas's approach to structured peer feedback was her belief that students do not want to criticize their friends, that there is not the element of trust that is needed for true and honest interactions.

Sean found that situations designed to nurture his own meaning making had disappeared. He did not participate any longer in class discussions, although this had been a vital part of his meaning making in Ms. Smith's classes. According to Sean, there was "nothing to discuss" in a format of the-teacher-gives-you-the-notes-and-you-take-the-tests. Where was there room for discovering his own meaning?

Sean missed the freedom that Ms. Smith's dynamic approach to the curriculum had offered him. He was not comfortable with the more structured, specified approach that Ms. Lucas preferred. He regarded this approach as a return to the typical approaches to writing in his first eleven years of school. In a structure where the product rather than the process was valued and emphasized, Sean found little relevance to his continued voice development.

After coming to appreciate a broader view of revision and reflection under Ms. Smith's guidance, Sean was distressed with what he termed as a "change-for-change-

sake" approach to revision in Ms. Lucas's class. Clarifying meaning through multiple drafts was not a part of Ms. Lucas's approach. While he had begun to feel comfortable with choosing to take or reject Ms. Smith's suggestions for revision, he found himself having to decide to make the changes Ms. Lucas requested, whether or not he understood or agreed with them, because it was easier than "fighting the system."

Ms. Lucas, because of her belief that students were not ready to nor did they want to think for themselves, offered few opportunities for reflective thinking and planning. There was no reflective journaling; writing assignments were highly structured; and revisions were made by students based on Ms. Lucas's own reflections on students' work.

Sean had experienced a midwife teacher. Ms. Smith had encouraged him to move to a higher level English class and to enroll in the journalism class. Ms. Lucas, on the other hand, did not see Sean as particularly motivated. While she acknowledged that his boredom might indicate that he belonged in a more advanced English class, she had not observed in his performance qualities that would be predictors of his success in a higher level class. What she had not recognized, and what Sean had not shared with her, was his lack of interest in a class designed to help him learn to prove someone else's point.

He was capable--and, more importantly, he recognized his capability--of choosing his own topics within the framework of a unit of study and of discovering his own meaning in the process of reflection, writing, and revision.

Ms. Lucas approached the teaching of writing as if it were a process that could be learned if only the students would follow a carefully crafted set of instructions. She devoted much time and energy to the crafting of these instructions. Her comments on students' first drafts of papers clearly took time and thought for her to make. But, she did not regard her students as capable constructors of their own meaning; therefore, her instruction emphasized form (or correctness) over content (or meaning).

Within this kind of belief structure, Sean's voice retreated to a position of safety. He was not engaged in process of developing his voice; he was not using writing as a way in which he could come to know himself or the world around him. He was "biding his time," waiting for other opportunities that might offer him ways to continue developing the voice he discovered with Ms. Smith.

Those opportunities were present in his journalism class--not because he experienced another midwife teacher relationship with Ms. Frye, but because he now seized the opportunities available to him to exercise his voice.

Here he chose to "fight the system" in order to be heard rather than choosing to "fade back into the crowd."

Ms. Frye, already teaching at Sean's high school when Ms. Smith retired, was eager to accept the challenge of teaching journalism when asked to fill this position. She talked about some of her own struggles to allow the students to assume responsibility for the production of their school newspaper and about her belief that students had to be engaged in a topic that was important to them before their writing could achieve a level of meaning making. However, her interactions with Sean were perceived by him to be deliberate attempts on her part to usurp his ownership of his writing and to silence his voice.

What Ms. Frye described as constructive criticism, Sean experienced as attacks on his voice. He was not sure how Ms. Lucas assessed his writing; but he was certain that Ms. Frye did not like the way he wrote. "She takes my stuff and puts it in her own words," stated Sean. Such tampering he interpreted as her failure to honor the concept of student ownership and voice. He interpreted it further as indication of her lack of caring and interest in the motivations that drive him to write.

Yet, even after Ms. Smith retired, it was in the journalism class that Sean was able to put into practice much of what he had learned from her. His interactions

with peers, though limited to a very select few, were positive and did contribute to his voice development. With Rick, for example, Sean was able to trust that each of them would respond to the other's writing with respect.

Such interactions are not likely to have occurred had Ms. Frye not seen the journalism class as a place for peer interactions to occur naturally as the students worked together to produce their newspaper. She also recognized that students will often respond better to peer criticism than to teacher criticism. Certainly Rick, the associate editor and Sean's friend, did not experience the hostility from Sean that Ms. Frye did when he made suggestions about Sean's writing.

Sean remained very careful about how much of himself he would reveal through his writing, and some things remained private. However, he had reached a point in his voice development when one of his teachers died, that he trusted his voice enough to risk writing about his relationship with and respect for this teacher. Because he "didn't hold that much back," he was incensed at the insensitivity demonstrated by Ms. Frye in her editing of that article. This, more than any other incident, caused Sean to distrust Ms. Frye's motives.

It is interesting, however, that in this same journalism class Sean was able to pursue topics of interest to him. This is a point that he emphasized over and

over as necessary to a student's voice development. As a feature writer, Sean did have a good bit of freedom within the class structure to explore his own interests. He learned, he grew, and his voice continued to develop.

One of the ways he learned was in the area of revision and reprocessing. Because of the imposed deadlines inherent in publications, Sean did not have the luxury of the multiple drafts approach on which he had come to rely. He had to write fast; and therefore, he had to learn to do quite a bit of reflection-in-action as he wrote. His voice was continuing to develop.

Neither Ms. Lucas nor Ms. Frye "practiced what they taught" as Sean experienced Ms. Smith doing. Ms. Lucas simply did not see herself as a writer. Ms. Frye saw writing as a major part of her life, but not a part that was important to share with her students. Both attitudes conveyed to Sean that these teachers did not value writing nor recognize its potential impact on their own learning. He thus did not see these teachers as being "co-learners" with him, a factor that had great impact on his trust in Ms. Smith's beliefs about writing.

Sean learned through his work with the student newspaper the joy of his voice being heard by a wider audience. Ms. Smith had planted the seed; his continued work in school journalism offered him a kind of nurturant ground in which that seed could come to fruition. He

shared a number of examples of ways in which this wider audience expressed to him their "hearing." It was with this wider audience, as well as with his friend Rick, that Sean was able to begin to experience the connections that he had been missing since Ms. Smith's retirement. His need to communicate was the motivating factor; his belief that indeed he could communicate propelled him onward in his quest to make his voice heard, to make connections with this wider audience.

At one point Ms. Frye described herself as taking a position of "benign neglect" with the production of the student newspaper. Perhaps, for Sean, this was a fortunate stance and one that assumed, in the end, more influence on his writing and his voice development than did her "tampering" with his voice. Sean continued to put into practice those aspects of writing as a way of knowing that he had learned with Ms. Smith; and, thus, his voice, not discovered until the majority of his formal schooling was almost at an end, continued to grow. Once discovered, then, it seemed that even adverse and non-nurturant conditions could not silence the power of that voice.

#### Ms. Smith: A Profile of the Midwife Teacher

It is in Sean's own words that we find the strong confirmation of the literature that speaks to the importance of the midwife teacher (Belénky et al., 1986).

For Sean Ms. Smith "was the best thing to happen to me as far as writing....Words come out much easier. I can really say what I want now." She was the embodiment of the midwife teacher, helping Sean to deliver his words to the world.

One of the primary ways Ms. Smith attempted to demonstrate to her students that indeed they could write was her beginning instruction in writing which emphasized the importance of writing with voice. She was able to help Sean deliver his words to the world because she knew from the outset where she was headed.

I want them to leave this class knowing they can write, not thinking that it's something they can't do....I want them to be able to learn about themselves...through writing...because it works.... (Teacher A Interview #1)

Not only did Ms. Smith help Sean deliver his words to the world, she was also there to nurture those words and Sean's developing voice during three semesters of English and journalism classes. A look at how this delivery and nurturing took place gives us a profile of the midwife teacher.

Ms. Smith wrote with her students--not sporadically and briefly, but often for 30 to 40 minutes at a time. She thus demonstrated graphically her commitment to writing, making a statement to Sean that she truly valued writing.

Ms. Smith's comments to her students--whether oral or written, whether brief or lengthy--were characterized by

her desire to understand the motivations that were the foundations of the students' writing efforts. Her comments were further designed to extend her students' thinking. Her "what if...?" questions certainly helped Sean discover much more than he was aware he knew. Her comments were specific to the individual students and to their individual writing. Grades--a form of teacher comment--were downplayed by Ms. Smith. She saw grades as often causing premature closure to students' thinking as expressed through their writing. As she emphasized process over product, Sean was able to relax knowing that with his multiple drafts there was room both for making mistakes and for learning from those mistakes.

Ms. Smith did more than state a belief in student ownership of student writing. She worked consciously and conscientiously at "letting go" of her control of their writing. Sean grasped this concept of student agency so firmly that even after his time with Ms. Smith, he held on to this idea in the face of perceived assaults on his ownership. Ms. Smith had certainly convinced Sean that his writing belonged to him.

Seeing her role as a facilitator to students constructing their own knowledge, Ms. Smith attempted to create situations in which students could make connections --connections between their own knowledge and that of "distant teachers," connections between their own

experiences and their writing, connections between their ideas and those of their peers. She believed that it was her responsibility to help students discover all sorts of relationships in their world. Sean responded quite positively to Ms. Smith's attempts to show him that what he already knew could be enhanced by what she might teach him. This was especially true for Sean when he realized that she was affirming who he was, not attempting to change who he was, as he was learning to express that self through his writing.

Ms. Smith believed in healthy student-peer interactions. She also believed that such interactions did not occur spontaneously all the time. Therefore, she spent a good bit of her time in planning for effective group work, in implementing and monitoring group work, and in evaluating and leading her students in evaluating group work. At one point she reflected that her students were becoming more confident in their various collaborative learning activities because they were beginning to assume more ownership of their work.

She pushed her students, especially the reluctant ones such as Sean, to learn to use peer feedback as a tool for their individual voice development and for their efforts at making sense of their experiences. She tried to help her students respond to each other's work with caring and honesty--modeling this kind of response as she

interacted with her students, listening for their emerging voices.

Ms. Smith believed in a dynamic, meaning-oriented curriculum--one that would address students' innate need to communicate. She constantly evaluated what was happening in her classes and with individuals in her classes. Her question of "where do I go next?" was the question that guided her approach to curriculum, that gave Sean the freedom to think and to communicate those thoughts.

She believed that when she focused on students lack of formal control in their writing rather than on the meaning inherent in their communication that she was responsible for "squelching"--or silencing--the emerging voices. For the first time in Sean's experience with composition in the school setting, Sean was able to relegate the "rules" for "proper writing" to a secondary position, focusing instead on his meaning. When he was ready to polish that meaning into an articulate voice for others to hear, he used the rules.

Ms. Smith looked for creative ways around the printed curriculum, believing that she and her students could become "too bogged down into trivial things" such as the traditional drill and practice of grammar and usage. Rather, she determined to help her students focus on the "big things" such as the discovery that they had something

of worth to say and that they could say it in writing. For her the "big things" were students' discovery and development of their voices.

A part of Ms. Smith's self-reflection occurred through freewriting and reflective journaling in which she discovered her own questions and answers. By keeping herself in a reflective mode (reflecting on practice and reflecting in practice), she opened the doors in her mind to creativity. She referred to her "creative time"--a time between sleeping and waking when all kinds of answers can flood her mind. During her awake time she can then choose to act on these creative ideas.

Another part of her self-reflection occurred in interactions with colleagues. She learned in collaboration with her peers, just as she urged her students to learn in collaboration with each other. For Sean, a young man who valued honesty in relationships, this was confirmation just as surely as her writing with her students, that she "practiced what she taught."

Ms. Smith worked actively to help her students understand that self-reflection is a vital component of their own effective reprocessing and revision. Sometimes she used criterion guidelines to help students work through the reprocessing of their own work. Sometimes she wrote lengthy notes to her students on their composition drafts asking them to look at their topics from different angles.

At other times she engaged her students in "conversations on paper," making very specific, direct, and individual comments about their ideas. She helped her students differentiate between editing activities and true revision activities--a differentiation that was most beneficial to Sean's voice development. And all the while she was helping the students become more self-reflective about their writing, she was reflecting on the effectiveness of the processes she was suggesting.

A great deal of Ms. Smith's time in the writing classroom can be characterized by describing her efforts as attempts to put her students "in touch"--in touch with their own thoughts, in touch with her, in touch with their peers, in touch with distant teachers who reflected on their own voice development through writing. Many of her journal entries reflected her concern for putting her students "in touch" in some manner. She wanted what she did in class to have some significance for her students.

Her description of her "Wonderful Wednesday Lesson" reflected the joy with which she embraced teachable moments. She was aware that a change in plans was needed, and she was willing to make the necessary change so that the needs of the students would be met. When a student such as Sean can talk articulately about how he wants to revise his memory piece so that his writing will have "power," it becomes evident that the lesson on that particular Wednesday was truly "wonderful."

Ms. Smith believed that all writing instruction should begin with an emphasis on voice; she believed that all students should have the opportunities to discover and develop their individual voices; she believed that her role is that of facilitator for that discovery and development. Underlying these beliefs was her conviction that students, especially in adolescence, can have their personhood validated, their self-images enhanced, through their discovery of their own unique voices. She saw her role further evolving as that of the affirmer of those developing voices.

Her teaching was an attempt to move students toward writing that expresses their honest, human voices and away from writing that she described as "voiceless, emasculated" writing that might look good but say nothing. Her teaching emphasized that voice development is individual with no set timetable for this development. However, when the time was right for an individual's voice to emerge, Ms. Smith wanted to have paved the way for a smooth delivery of that individual's words.

During adolescence there is always the problem with students' loss of voice as they attempt to find their identities. But, she believed as Master (1983) that writing offers a way for students to discover themselves in the process of revising and rewriting themselves.

This is the midwife teacher--the one who seeks ways to foster each individual student's voice development and who sees the "webs of possibilities" within each of her students. This is the midwife teacher--the one who promises her students that those possibilities are present and that she will help them in their own discoveries of the possibilities. This is the midwife teacher--the one who embraces those possibilities for herself as well as for her students and who is willing to share the exploration of the possibilities with her students. This is the midwife teacher--the one who was able to show the young man, Sean, ways to "bottle the fizz" of ideas within his being that were neither painful to him nor destructive to the power of that fizz.

#### Reflections of the Researcher

While this effort has been an indepth study of one student, there are broader implications. Sean helped us see some of the possibilities for the teaching of writing in ways that can be conducive to student voice development.

The following reflections are based on Sean's insights and the other data I have examined in this study. They are based as well on the synthesis of the literature concerning voice and its development through writing.

I submit that if we, as teachers of writing, wish to encourage student voice development, then we will

- (1) seek to gain a firm grounding in the literature that speaks directly to the issue of voice development (Vygotsky, 1962; Polanyi, 1966, 1969; Ricouer, 1976; John-Steiner, 1985; Belenky et al., 1986) and to the special aspects of language development in adolescents (Vygotsky, 1962; Erikson, 1968; Gardner, 1983; Van Hoose & Strahan, 1988);
- (2) take the time necessary to listen to our students so that we can begin to understand the underlying motivations of our students' thought (Vygotsky, 1962; Healey, 1985);
- (3) interact responsively, individually, and specifically with students' thoughts as expressed in discussions and conferences as well as in writing (Moffett, 1968; Ziv, 1984; Hillocks, 1986; Sullivan, 1986);
- (4) recognize the absolute right of students to own their own work (Freire, 1985; Belenky et al., 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1986);
- (5) risk the explorations of our own voice development through writing with students and reflecting on the writing (Larson, 1978; Macrorie, 1980; Dellinger, 1982; Carroll, 1984; Belenky et al., 1986; Grumet, 1988);
- (6) set about the task of building trusting communities within the composition classroom by responding honestly and with sensitivity to students' writing and by creating

many opportunities for peer interactions and collaborative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1975; Trimbur, 1985; Beale, 1986; Belenky et al., 1986; Greene, 1986; Zemelman & Daniels, 1986);

(7) encourage risk-taking among our students (Healey, 1985; Belenky et al., 1986; Shah, 1986)

(8) move constantly toward a meaning-oriented curriculum, one that is dynamic and which addresses students' need to communicate (Pianko, 1979; Kantor, 1984; Shah, 1986; Grumet, 1988);

(9) offer students many ways to approach their own reflection and revision (Moffett, 1968; Perl, 1983; John-Steiner, 1985; Knoblauch, 1985; Greene, 1986);

(10) be alert to "the teachable moments" as they occur so that students' voice development can be maximized (Vygotsky, 1962; Feinberg, 1985; Greene, 1986);

(11) approach the teaching of writing as an art (Applebee et al., 1981; Hillocks, 1986; Grumet, 1988);

(12) come to see ourselves not as holders of "privileged knowledge" but as co-learners with our students as their knowledge is constructed (Schon, 1983; Freedman, 1984; Freire, 1985; Healey, 1985; Greene, 1986; Hillocks, 1986);

(13) define our roles as facilitators in helping students construct their own knowledge (Feinberg, 1985; Freire, 1985; Belenky et al., 1986);

(14) recognize that writing is a way of knowing and that voice is one manifestation of that knowing (Vygotsky, 1962; Ricouer, 1976; John-Steiner, 1985).

Perhaps the most important consideration I can suggest has to do with our becoming midwife teachers. If we wish to encourage student voice development, then we will

(15) embrace the concept of midwife teacher (Belenky et al., 1986) and, through our careful and caring interactions with students help them deliver their words to the world (Vygotsky, 1962; John-Steiner, 1985).

#### Implications for Further Study

For a number of years research has indicated that the teaching of writing needs to be approached with less emphasis on form (rules for correctness) and more emphasis on content (meaning), especially for beginning writers and for young adolescents whose meaning is rushing ahead of their immediate grasp of proper form. The implications of such research are that form will follow content when these young writers want to make sure that their meaning is communicated in the most effective way possible. Research has also called for teachers of writing to explore the possibilities of rich and dynamic voice development within their composition classrooms. These indications and implications of research require further investigation.

This study of how one student's voice emerged and was nurtured in the composition classroom shows how the theoretical understandings of voice development can be actualized in practice. While some general conclusions were drawn from the study and some specific implications and recommendations based on these conclusions were made, questions to be investigated remain.

Further study is needed with other students and their teachers. The student involved in this case study responded to certain interactions and conditions in his composition classroom environments in ways that are unique to him. While there will be similarities in other students' responses to these recommended interactions and conditions, there will always be those unique aspects of individual voice development to which teachers must respond. More explorations of individual students' voice development will add to a growing body of knowledge of writing as a way of knowing and of voice development as an expression of that knowing.

The concept of apprentice/mentor relationships in the process of voice development is highly recommended in the literature. It is also advocated strongly by the professional writer of this study. However, this concept was only a minor influence in Sean's voice development. How such relationships can become a natural part of students' writing experiences needs further exploration.

My synthesis of the literature on voice and language development and the interactions and conditions conducive to voice development in the composition classroom did not address an issue which emerged during interviews with two of Sean's writing teachers. Both Ms. Smith (Teacher A) and Ms. Lucas (Teacher B) indicated the importance of teacher-peer interactions in their approaches to teaching. Ms. Lucas regretted the lack of a structured time in the daily teaching schedule for common teacher planning time. Having experienced this kind of collaborative planning before, she remembered its value to her. Ms. Smith revealed situations in which she shared her frustrations or insights with two specific colleagues whose own insights helped her move forward in her writing instruction. She liked this sharing of ideas, this collaborative reflection. Although there is a growing body of research on teacher collegiality and its influence on classroom practice, further studies could indicate the importance specifically to writing instruction and student voice development of such teacher-peer interactions as collaborative planning and collaborative reflection.

The data of this study revealed some differences in the beliefs and practices between the more experienced teacher (Ms. Smith, 30+ years) and the less experienced teachers (Ms. Lucas, 3 years; Ms. Frye, 6 years.) Further investigation could explore those differences and their

implications for writing instruction and student voice development.

A final area for further study is that of teacher education programs and their influence and impact on the teaching of writing. If teacher education programs respond to the research that points toward writing as a way of knowing and voice as an expression of that knowing, significant differences should be observed in the ways in which writing will be taught in our schools. A longitudinal study of teacher training and subsequent teacher practice in this area would merit investigation especially as it was researched alongside the voice development of these teachers' students.

As the research on writing as a way of knowing continues, other implications for further study will arise. Many of the questions raised and addressed by this study will be answered more fully as other students become a part of the investigations. Many other questions will emerge in the process. As teachers of writing we can and should take the lead in this kind of research.

#### Summary

This study has been an examination of student voice development in the classroom composition experience against a theoretical background of thought and language. It was designed to move beyond a surface understanding of voice as self-expression and personal writing style toward

deeper perceptions of voice as an expression of passionate knowing.

Writing is one way we discover and claim voice. If one's writing has voice, there is the assumption that one can be heard. This emphasizes the inherent need for human relationship and interaction in voice development.

With this deeper understanding of voice and its developing expression, teachers of composition can approach the teaching of writing in ways that enhance and nurture the process of student voice development. Goldberg (1986) suggested that such teaching be based on the premise that the writing teacher's primary task is that of helping students to discover and trust their own voices:

Everything I say as a teacher is ultimately aimed at people trusting their own voice and writing from it. I try different angles and tricks. Once they do break through, all I teach is dressing on a turkey. The turkey is already roasting. (Goldberg, p. 155).

Let us now return to the original metaphor of this study--that of "bottling the fizz." It is important that we, as teachers of writing, help students experience writing as "the act of burning through the fog" in their minds (Goldberg, p. 86). The fog--or "fizz"--is present in every student's mind. It is our task as midwife teachers to help students find those forms which will allow that fizz to be understood and articulated. The form in which that fizz is contained is important; but,

Goldberg cautions that "we should also remember to fill form with life"--an activity that "takes practice" (Goldberg, 1986, p. 126).

We can make space in our classes for our students to engage in risk-free practice so that they can discover the forms that are most appropriate for their own fizz--so that the writing itself can help them "burn through the fog" and find meaning.

Welty, too, speaks to the necessity of form for the powerful and passionate explosion of meaning that comes from the interior fizz:

...any work of art, I think, has to be confined by something. If not by region, by some intention, or something like that. It has to be confined in order to--squirt up! (Welty in Prenshaw, p. 6)

Sean discovered this power; and, through claiming his voice he was transformed. That this transformation occurred because a teacher helped him to trust his voice is the ultimate challenge to all of us.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Agendas

Interview #1 (Student)  
November 30, 1987

Agenda (General Areas for Discussion)

- \*Highlights from "Autobiography"
- \*journaling
- \*peer review
- \*multiple drafts
- \*teacher comments (written and oral)
- \*reflection on first and second drafts
- \*grades and writing
- \*interest/motivation for writing
- \*teacher writing with class
- \*specific points for revision on memory piece
- \*Why is it important to you that you "feel the power coming from the words off the paper" as you say in your revision plans?
- \*voice

Interview #2 (Student)  
April 4, 1989

Agenda (General Areas for Discussion)

- \*Where have you been in regards to your writing since we last met during the first semester of your junior year?
- \*Talk some about your involvement in the journalism class. How did that come about? How's it going?

Interview #3 (Student)  
April 18, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*Personal Data (name, schooling, family, work, friends, leisure activities)

\*Describe yourself (eg., What do you look like? What do you like about yourself? What aspect about yourself would you change if you could?)

\*Refer to marked passages on transcript from 4/4/89 interview. Ask Sean to discuss especially the types of responses to his writing he receives from all three writing teachers? His responses to them?

\*Journalism class, relationship with other staff members

\*Talk more about Sean's writing (What kind is he doing now? How does writing for the paper work for him? etc.)

Interview #4 (Student)  
May 9, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*Elaboration on Autobiographical Writings #1 and #2 (See marked passages.)

\*Comment on your use of the newspaper as a vehicle to let others know about Mr. S.

\*"I never did feel really good about taking over the Senior Issue editor's spot." Elaborate.

\*Elaboration on 4/4/89 interview (See marked passages on transcript.)

\*Question: "Why do you write?" Elaborate.

\*Elaboration on 11/30/87 interview (See marked passages on transcript.) (eg., Did you continue to enjoy English your junior year? Why? How was it different from past years? present year? What are some reasons you "dreaded" it in the past? now?)

\*Elaboration on 11/87 Composition Autobiography (See marked passages on autobiography.)

\*Elaboration on 4/18 autobiographical comments (eg., How do you think you can write? Whose evaluation of your writing is most important to you? Why?)

\*Elaborate on your understanding of "revision."

\*Elaborate on the concepts of freewriting, open class discussion, types of writing (eg., memory pieces, standard 5-paragraph essays).

\*Talk a bit more about what Ms. Smith's writing in class meant to you.

\*What did you mean by getting "wholly...emotional" into your reading? How does this relate to your writing? How does it relate to your understanding of voice?

Talk to me a little more about how you understand voice. Do you think your own voice has developed as you write? Is it important to you that your voice be heard? What lets you know you've been heard?

Interview #5 (Student)  
May 12, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*Continue discussion from 4/4/89 interview transcript.

(learning together--class and teachers; conversations on paper; learning to think from different angles--how did teacher comments help; why don't you participate in class discussion anymore, especially since it was so important to you last year; honesty--how is this a part of your writing and your relationships)

\*Continue discussion from 4/18/89 interview transcript.

(diagramming sentences; teachers who care; where will you go from here; how does it feel to have "faded into the crowd"; what role have you enjoyed most on the newspaper staff--writer, editor, publisher--why? how?)

\*Clarification/Elaboration from Classroom Observations. (See field notes.) Discuss the difference in Sean's approach to class in Ms. Smith's English class and in Ms. Lucas's English class as I observed it. Discuss Sean's participation and interactions in journalism class.

\*Review Sean's Lord of the Flies essay (draft and revision) with him.

\*Review each of Sean's newspaper articles--Why did you write this article? What did you like most about this article? Why? What did you like least about his article? Why?

Interview #1 (Smith-Teacher A)  
November 30, 1987

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*See marked passages in reflective journal (esp. 11/18, 11/20, and 11/24)

\*"Where do I go next?"

\*wider audience

\*student-peer interactions

\*ownership

\*comments/conferences

\*grades

\*memory pieces/curriculum

\*journaling (for students and for self)

\*self-reflection

\*voice

\*writing with your students (classroom observation)

\*students' revision (and the Wonderful Wednesday lesson)

Interview #2 (Smith - Teacher A)  
February 10, 1989

Agenda (General Area for Discussion)

\*Ask Ms. Smith to comment/question/critique the first formal presentation of the literature and of my interpretation of Sean work and her work with him and her other students.

Interview #1 (Lucas - Teacher B)  
April 20, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

- \*Teaching experience
- \*Education experience
- \*Approach to teaching writing
- \*Assessment of Sean's performance in your class
- \*Assessment of your response to Sean and to his writing

Interview #2 (Lucas - Teacher B)  
May 2, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

- \*Elaboration on marked passages from 4/20 interview, from journal entries, from classroom observation
- \*Sean: his grades; his interactions in class (with you, with peers); his Lord of the Flies essay
- \*peer editing/peer review
- \*your comments on students' papers/to students individually
- \*individualized teaching?
- \*writing curriculum--your approach

\*5-paragraph themes; grammar instruction; "creative type writing"; writing with your students

\*your interactions with other teachers

\*"connections" between reading, writing, and students' lives

\*journaling (self-reflection for both you and your students)

Interview #1 (Frye - Teacher C)  
March 6, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*Teaching Experience

\*Writing Experience

\*Educational Experience

\*Approach to writing in general/in journalism

\*Assessment of Sean's writing/of his interactions with peers/with you

Interview #2 (Frye Teacher C)  
April 20, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*Follow up Interview - see marked passages on interview #1, on 5-day journal, on classroom observation notes

\*student agency/student ability

\*teacher as facilitator

\*connections between writing and students' life experiences

\*interactions: student-peer; student- and teacher-curriculum

\*Sean - "Adopt a Student"?

\*Assessment of Sean's writing/performance

\*voice

Interview #1 (Maynor - Assistant Principal)  
May 2, 1989

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*demographics of the school

\*curriculum emphases

\*Sean

Interview #1 (Gingher - Professional Writer)  
April 8, 1987

Agenda (Areas for Discussion)

\*Reflect on your general composition experiences in high school.

\*Reflect on the evaluations of your composition efforts.

\*Reflect on your decision to make writing your profession.

\*Why did/do you write?

APPENDIX B

Requests for Student Autobiographical Writing

Request #1 for Student Autobiographical Writing:

Suggested Guidelines

As a part of my research I am interested in how you feel about your high school composition experience. The following suggestions might be helpful to you as you begin to reflect on your writing experiences. Consider also the influence of various classroom interactions on your development as a writer (student-teacher; student-peer; student-curriculum; student-self reflection).

\*How do you feel when you write? Why?

\*What kind of writing do you like to do? How does it compare with the kind of writing you are assigned to do? (Is there any difference? Explain.)

\*What composition courses have you had? Consider the primary focus of the various courses (eg., types of writing involved, required or elective courses, etc.)

\*What kinds of writing experiences have you had outside the school curriculum that have been enjoyable for you? Explain.

\*What kinds of writing experiences have you not had in school but would like to have? Explain.

\*Do you keep a journal/diary? If so, is it a school assignment or is it your own personal endeavor? If you keep a journal/diary, in what way(s) does this influence your writing--both for school and for personal writing?

\*Do you think about writing professionally? In what way(s) has/have your high school composition experience influenced your aspirations?

\*Do interactions with your peers have any influence on your writing? Are these interactions structured within the composition class (eg., peer-editing) or are they more informal?

\*What do your peers think about your writing? How does sharing your writing with them make you feel?

\*Describe the influence of specific teachers on your writing. What kinds of student-teacher interactions do you find most helpful? (eg., conferencing, written comment, journal dialogue, grades)

\*How much freedom does the composition curriculum of this particular course give you to explore different ways of writing?

\*Would you say that your composition experience in general has focused more on process or on product? Explain.

\*What does "student voice" mean to you within the context of the composition experience?

\*Respond to the following statement as it applies to you personally:

Through writing students "...discover where they stand and what they believe and how they propose to act....They look at themselves there, perhaps crossing themselves out, revising and rewriting themselves...." (Master, 1983)

Use these suggestions only as they help you reflect on your own writing/composition experiences. After I have had a chance to read your comments, we will arrange a time to discuss your perceptions and my interpretations.

Requests #2 and #3 and for Student's Autobiographical Reflections

#2: Write about the confidence you have in your abilities, as a leader and as a writer.

(For example, when you volunteered to be in charge of the Senior Issue of the school paper and when you were asked to take over the faltering project of the Senior Issue, how did you feel? What gave you the confidence that you could do the job? Was there some doubt or is there even now some uncertainty about how you can carry out the task?

How do you feel about yourself as a student? As a writer? How is this different from a year ago when you first entered Ms. Smith's junior English class -- and even before that?

#3: Why do you write?

APPENDIX C

Request for Teachers' Topical, Time-Framed Journals

Suggested Guidelines for Teacher Journal:

During the next week, please keep a daily journal of your reflections on the composition experiences you and your students are having. The following items might be helpful to you. Consider especially your interactions with students concerning their writing and their responses to those interactions.

\*What are the types of interactions between you and your students concerning their writing that you can note? (eg., grades, written comments on papers, individual conferences--formal or informal), journal dialogue, class discussions--formal or informal), other)

\*With which of these interactions do you feel most comfortable? Why?

\*Which interactions seem to elicit the most positive responses and/or results from students and their writing?

\*Do you use peer-response groups? If so, how is this type of interaction working with your students?

\*In what ways do various student-teacher and student-peer interactions influence your planning, your interpretation of curriculum or course content?

\*Do you regularly use personal journaling (or some other method) for reflection on the teaching of composition?

\*How free are you within the curriculum structure to attend to individual student needs, to experimenting with various types of writing or with different teaching methods? How free do you want to be?

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At the end of your daily entries for the week, please reflect on your role as a teacher of composition. How do you feel about teaching composition? What are your desires for these students concerning their writing? What does "student voice" mean to you within the context of the composition experience?

Finally, respond to the following statement as it applies to you personally:

Through writing students "...discover where they stand and what they believe and how they propose to act....They look at themselves there, perhaps crossing themselves out, revising and rewriting themselves...." (Master, 1983)

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Use these suggestions only as they help you reflect on the students and their composition experience in your classroom. After I have had a chance to read your journal entries, we will arrange to meet for a follow-up interview in order for me to clarify my understandings of your reflections.

## APPENDIX D

## Teachers' Guidelines for Student Writing

(Ms. Smith - Teacher A)

Plans for introduction of Memory Piece

(This is a brief summary of what I say during the "Show--Don't Tell" lesson.)

1. First I try to get students to look back in their notes to see what they learned in the first lecture I gave on "how to improve your writing 100 percent."

Usually students will list the following things that we have learned about improving our writing:

a. Consider the audience you are writing to. You can't know what to write until you know to whom you are writing. (Of course, we know that our audience for this memory piece is this class.)

b. Write like you talk. Now, there will come a time when I may say: "You mustn't write so much like you talk," but for now most of you need to loosen up and not write such dead, dull stuff that you think teachers want.

What teachers want is for you to find your "voice." When we speak of voice in writing we mean we want to hear real people (the writers) talking to other real people (the readers). One-fifth of your grade on this first memory piece will be for voice. Does your paper sound like you?

c. Vary your sentence length. Don't let all your sentences be medium-length. Some of them should be short and some of them should be long in addition to those that are medium.

You remember we completed this lesson by rewriting that terrible paragraph about the class picnic. Then I read you a re-write that a former student had done. (Remember with all the descriptions of food?) And for homework you had to rewrite the equally bad Uncle Henry paragraph.

I have read your papers, given you a check for doing them, and have placed them in the wire basket on the bookcase under the pencil sharpener.

2. After we have reviewed that first writing lesson, then I tell everyone that the title of this lesson is SHOW, DON'T TELL. And I say such things as the following:

Your readers are intelligent and they want you to give them the facts and then let them draw conclusions. Don't make judgments for them. Show them, and let them make their own judgments. In your story, tell them that your alarm clock didn't go off, that you couldn't find your best pair of shoes, that you missed the bus which made you late to the interview, so the employer thought you were a tardy person so you didn't get the job. Then when you got to your afternoon classes, you failed an algebra test and forget to go to a meeting with your counselor after school. Show them all those things. You don't need to tell them: "It was the worst day of my life." They can see that.

Give them specifics. Give them details. Let them see the scene. Let them hear the sounds, taste the flavors, touch the textures, smell the aromas.

Look at the first paragraphs of the Dung Nguyen article. The first line is

I spent most of my childhood in an army bood camp...

When I read that, I see some place like Fort Bragg. But then he writes

The camp was a dark, swampy place.

And I begin to change my mental picture. Then he makes the picture even clearer when he writes

Confined inside the rusty barbed wire that surrounded the camp were seven dark, huge metal buildings.

Consider how much he has shown us in that sentence. He has put barbed wire around the camp. I can feel that. Not just any barbed wire, but rusty barbed wire. And I can now see seven buildings, but not just any seven buildings. They are dark. They are huge. And they are metal. See how Dung is showing the reader this camp.

Now look and listen to the next sentence:

The ground and the walls, the cars, even the people all bore a red dust color from days of dust that had been splashed and run over hundreds of times by the olive-green jeeps that drove through the place at all hours.

Wow! Now we can feel and see and maybe even smell this fine red dust. And we can hear the jeeps all day and all night long.

Now, Dung's next sentence is not a showing sentence; it is a telling sentence. Because a writer doesn't show all the time; sometimes he has to tell.

The air was terrible.

3. I usually read the class at least one other good example of showing. On 9-13 I read an excerpt from one of the poverty stories that appeared in the local paper last week.

4. Then, if we have time, I ask students to write a paragraph that shows an absentee what went on in class this day. Then, after we have looked over these, I have everyone

5. jump right into the first draft of his memory piece. While the full impact of this lesson is still with you, begin showing your audience this memory that means so much to you.

(Ms. Smith - Teacher A)

Reflection and Revision  
(Writing the Second Draft)

1. Read the first draft of your memory piece. (It's 10 days later; you're now a different person.)
2. Then put #2 on one of the sheets of paper I have given you and write your response to what you have read. Follow these directions to write your response: Respond to your first draft as you have responded to any other piece of writing you have read. Begin with these words, "I like this piece because..." and keep on writing until you have put down all you can write." (freewriting)
3. Skip a line and put #3 on your paper. If what you wrote beside #2 caused you to want to revise any part of your memory piece, write that revision now. Use as much time and as much paper as you need. (revision)
4. When you have finished, put #4 on your paper. Then write "I disliked this piece because..." and keep writing until you don't have anything else to put down. (freewriting)
5. Skip a line and put down #5. If what you just wrote in #4 has caused you to want to rewrite any part of your memory piece, then write that revision now. Use as much time and paper space as you need. (revision)
6. Skip a line and put down #6 on your paper. Then write "I wrote about this event in my life because..." and keep on writing until you don't have anything else to put down. (freewriting)
7. Skip a line and put #7 on your paper. If what you just wrote has caused you to want to rewrite any part of your memory piece, then do that revision now. Spend as much time and as much paper space as you need. (revision)
8. Skip a line and write #8 on your paper. Then write "Since I started writing about this event in my life, I realize that..." and keep writing until you don't have anything else to put down. (freewriting)
9. Skip a line and put down #9 on your paper. If what you just wrote has caused you to want to rewrite any part of your memory piece, then do that revision now. Take as much time and paper space as you need. (revision)

10. At the end of forty minutes, I will tell you to stop, staple all pages together so that the last thing you wrote is on top. Tomorrow, after I have skimmed through what you have written, I will return writings so that you can put together a draft that you will read to a partner on Friday. (peer review)

(Ms. Lucas - Teacher B)

Directions for Lord of the Flies essay:

Choose one of the following topics and write a well-developed 3-5 paragraph essay. Make sure you include an introduction and a conclusion. You may use this sheet for your rough draft.

1. Discuss Simon as a Christ figure in the novel.
2. Discuss the deterioration of civilization as presented in the novel.
3. Discuss the "beast" as a symbol throughout the novel.

(Ms. Lucas - Teacher B)

Peer Grading Evaluation Sheet

You will grade the paper based on 25 possible points.

5 points Thesis Statement

Paper includes a well written thesis statement in the first paragraph. Underline it!

5 points Structure

Paper includes an introduction (one paragraph), a body (1-3 paragraphs), and a summary conclusion (1 paragraph). Put a check in the left margin next to each paragraph.

5 points Grammar

Circle any grammatical errors including spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure errors. Put brackets [] around fragments. Label run-ons in margin-- underline run-on sentence.

5 points Support

The writer uses support such as examples, quotations, and explanations in body paragraphs. Number each 1, 2, 3 in each body paragraph.

5 points Content

Does the writer prove what he or she sets out to do (thesis statement)?