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Manifestations of students' voices: Examining shifts, academic demands, and identity work in how students make themselves understood.

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MANIFESTATIONS OF STUDENTS' VOICES: EXAMINING SHIFTS, ACADEMIC

DEMANDS, AND IDENTITY WORK IN HOW STUDENTS MAKE THEMSELVES

UNDERSTOOD

By

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B.S., Keene State College, 2010

M.A., Endicott College, 2013

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A Dissertation Approved on

October 20, 2021

by the following Dissertation Committee:

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Dr. Kathryn F. Whitmore

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Dr. Andrea Olinger

DEDICATION

For my husband who inspires, and always believes in.

To my daughter who radiates curiosity, love, and hope.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No one accomplishes anything in this life on his or her own. Even when we stare in awe at what might appear to be a solitary feat - like climbing to the top of a mountain alone - there is invisible support. There are loved ones at home who cherish the adventure. A mentor to teach. A colleague with whom the experience can be shared. And unseen magic too.

Allan Hamilton

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ABSTRACT

MANIFESTATIONS OF STUDENTS' VOICES: EXAMINING SHIFTS, ACADEMIC
DEMANDS, AND IDENTITY WORK IN HOW STUDENTS MAKE THEMSELVES
UNDERSTOOD

Lauren Fletcher

October 20, 2021

Voice is a concept that is both highly sought after and elusive in education. While
schools aim to foster students' voices, many academic structures inadvertently conceal
their voices and in turn their identities. Definitions of voice have been assumed, vague, or
looked at as a writing trait, with little consideration of voices' dynamic and mediated
structures. Drawing on scholarship grounded in sociocultural theories and dialogism (e.g.,
Bakhtin, 1986; Engeström; 1987, Leont'ev, 1981; Rosenblatt, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978), I
contribute a new, tangible definition of voice, in which voice is a dynamic happening,
continually negotiated and constructed. This dissertation explores students' voices,
advancing theoretical and empirical approaches to studying voice. Specifically, this study
examines how undergraduates manifest their voices and how their voices shift in a
children's literature course. Through qualitative analyses of students' academic writing,
discussions, and reflections I illuminate various resources and structures students
employed when manifesting their voice. I describe how students' voice shifts due to
disruptions—events that create instability to students' predominant way of thinking in a
given context. Additionally, I illustrate factors that both conceal and contribute to

students' voices in academic settings, such as students' racial and gendered identities, group dynamics, and students' desire to be seen as knowledgeable. This dissertation argues for classrooms to engage students in routine dialogic interaction to expand students' voices, and to consider the implications students' racial and gendered identities have on the production of their voices.

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

> Citizenship is the exercise of voice as well as vote. Citizens use their
> voices to argue for what they believe is right and against what they believe
> is wrong. Voice is where democracy starts, and voice is what autocracy
> seeks to stifle.
>
> (Alexander, 2019, p.8)

2020 was a contentious year within the United States. Issues surrounding politics, a global health pandemic, systemic racism, and climate change have triggered the nation into country-wide debates. A common thread among these debates is the need for change and innovation. Change comes from the manifestation and the deliberation of citizens' voices. As noted above, Robin Alexander (2019) considers voice to be the cornerstone of citizenship in a democratic society. With their voices, citizens contend, reason with, question, or present cases and ideas for the betterment of society (Alexander, 2008). When citizens exercise their voices, they have the potential to influence laws, policies, and election results. For instance, nationwide protests in response to George Floyd's murder and systemic racism influenced policies across cities nationwide; from Minneapolis dismantling and rebuilding their law enforcement to New York passing a police reform bill making police disciplinary records transparent, banning chokeholds, and classifying false race-based 911 reports as hate crimes. Grassroots climate change organizations, like Protect Our Winters and GreenRoots, petitioned and wrote letters to legislators advocating for policy change to protect the environment, such as getting a House Bill passed in Colorado to reduce carbon pollution by 90%. Also, individual voices like those of the late John Lewis and Greta Thunberg command attention from

political leaders for change. The expression of individual and collective voices stimulates growth and innovation within a community.

Dell Hymes (1996) argued that society should foster both the "freedom to have one's voice heard" and the "freedom to develop a voice worth hearing" (p. 64). Through dialogue and disagreements, protests, letter writing, and other forms of expression, voices are cultivated and a "rational, articulate, and critical citizenry" (Segal et al., 2017, p. 7) leads to a vision of democracy and the betterment of society. Yet, developing one's voice is no easy feat (Gurevich, 2000), for voice is more than adopting uncritical partisan beliefs and engaging in social media echo-chambers repeating a singular – often authoritarian – voice, such as liking an article on social media, or reposting another's tweet. Individuals' voices are not developed in isolation; rather they are influenced from a young age by family and friends, and further shaped though institutions and affiliations (e.g., schools, religion, culture, and politics). Moreover, voice is having the opportunity to express one's own ideas, in one's own terms, in a manner in which one's words are considered by others (Segal & Lefstein, 2016).

American democracy positions citizen participation and voice as fundamental rights of citizenship, and yet America is the only country not to include any formal educational policies or curriculum to cultivate student voices (Mirta, 2018; Morgan, 2001). If voice is regarded as the foundation of citizenship, students' voices from kindergarten through higher education need to be fostered and heeded. This requires that students, as democratic citizens, not only have the opportunity but also the right to manifest their ideas, concerns, and opinions – in short, express their voices – and for their voices to be heard and treated with respect by their peers and teachers (Alexander, 2020).

It is crucial for our educational systems to be vigilant towards and provide space for students' voices to achieve democratic ideals and foster invested 21st century citizens.

This desire or aim to cultivate citizen participation and students' voices was not one I witnessed in my elementary teaching career. Rather, I observed students' voices consistently being overwritten by the voices of the teacher or curriculum due to pressures from the standardized tests. Story ideas, research topics, inferences, predictions, and scientific theories put forth by students that did not match pre-determined answers or a lesson's prescribed outcomes were quickly ignored or listened to but not heeded. Furthermore, student responses that altered from the sentence stems or five sentence paragraph models, taught in writer's workshops, were frequently dismissed or corrected. Similar to Clarke's (2015) study investigating low verbal participation, I, too, felt in my own teaching that students perceived only having the right to speak when their voices mimicked that of the curriculum or teacher. Additional scholarship in the field of education (Cook-Sather et al., 2015; Mitra, 2018, Morgan, 2011) presents similar stories in which students, primarily adolescents, express the feeling of having no voice and describe school as an "anonymous place" (Mitra, 2018, p. 473) in which they are not fully recognized. This is perhaps linked to findings from numerous studies which show that the voice of "the test" – an authoritative voice —is taking precedence over students' voices (Alexander, 2008; Nystrand et al., 2003; Smith et al., 2004). For many teachers and students, the voice of the test is predictable and linked to "success" (Rymes, 2016). While potentially effective for improving test scores and increasing school funding, the same cannot be argued for raising democratic citizens. To ensure that students' voices are valued in our educational system and have a prominent role in their development as

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effective citizens, additional research needs to investigate how students express their voices in academic settings and factors that influence their production of voice.

The purpose of this study was to examine manifestations of undergraduate voices. Defined by Meyer and Whitmore (2020), manifestations are "the 'stuff' we gather and garner from learners as meaning makers… they are signifiers of learners' understandings at a point in time and in a specific context" (p. 2). Furthermore, manifestations are more than just collected artifacts, such as written reflections or discussion transcripts, as they involve and are informed by collective thinking between and among students and teachers. How students manifest their voices and how responses are received is also critical to the process of understanding voice. Specifically, I investigated how students make themselves understood in a university course on children's literature. Key to the concept of voice, described further below, is that it is dynamic. Kress (1997) and Wortham (2006) attest that as students learn, they expand ways of thinking and acting, shaping their identities and methods they can express themselves. Therefore, this study considered how students' voices were mediated and changed over the semester.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- How do undergraduates manifest their voices in a children's literature course?
    - What cultural resources, tools and voices do students appropriate?
    - In what ways do they appropriate the voices of others and/or various (D)iscourses?
    - What ideologies surface in the manifestation of students' voices?

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- How do undergraduates' voices shift over the course of the semester?

    - How do these shifts manifest themselves?

    - What mediates shifts in students' voices?

    - How do these shifts influence students' actions?

    - How do students perceive these shifts?

In order to answer these questions, I analyzed data from a semester-long, qualitative study of eight focal students in a class of 48 undergraduates, from two sections of a course on children's literature at a metropolitan research university. The study's objective was to understand students' voices by providing space for students to routinely express their own ideas, on their own terms, and amongst their peers. This research documented participants' processes of cultivating and sharing their voices while examining factors that mediated student voices.

Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. In this chapter, I outlined the study objectives in relation to current work in the field and laid out research questions that guide this study. In addition, I define the key concept of voice and present the theoretical framework for the study. Chapter two showcases findings from a literature review on students' voices and identifies gaps in the research literature that lead me this my study. Chapter three details my research methods, describing my research design, study site, participants, and researcher role and positionality. Additionally, it outlines my methods for data collection and data analysis. The subsequent two chapters offer study findings. In chapter four, I present findings on how students manifested their voices and detail how

students' voices shifted over the semester. In chapter five, I investigate factors that contributed to and concealed students' voices. Finally, chapter six offers a discussion on the impact of examining students' voices and presents implications for future research and teaching.

Key Concept: Voice

I define voice as the dynamic co-construction of semiotic self-expressions (i.e., representations of one's self, stances, views, values, and beliefs). Voice responds to and addresses future utterances and situations, is heeded by others, and influences and is influenced by an individual's social context. The components of this definition are each explained below.

Semiotic

While voice is commonly viewed as how one controls their vocal cords to express their intentions, needs, wants, and ideas, it is fundamentally a means to represent and position oneself through discursive and non-discursive features. Voices are mediated through signs and sign systems, which are not only auditory or aural. Through various modes (e.g., oral or written language, gestures, images, sounds), individuals use signs to communicate self-expressions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). What a sign signifies is not pre-given (Hodge & Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2005), so it is through these signs that others infer what an individual is trying to express. However, most schools emphasize spoken or written voice. Ashby (2011), in her study on voices of individuals with (dis)abilities, claims that a spoken notion of voice limits and further marginalizes those who can't speak, often rendering those individuals voiceless. She argues that voices need

to be conceptualized more broadly and include all forms of communication (i.e., signs) to create a "more expansive conceptualization of participation and engagement" (p. 14). When voice is understood to be mediated through spoken, written, pictorial, or physical signs, it cultivates an opportunity for richer understandings of students' expressions and fosters a more inclusive and equitable environment in the classroom.

Self-expressions That Respond To and Address Future Utterances and Situations

Voice is how individuals represent themselves, positions, perceptions, beliefs, and values to a specific audience at a given place and time, using signs. To use Dong and Dong's (2013) definition, voice is how an individual "makes oneself understood" (p. 174). This definition closely aligns with Ivanič's (1998) notion of a discoursal self - "the self that is inscribed in the text" - but expanded to include the self-inscribed more broadly in the signs portrayed. Voice is not a transparent portrait of an individual's identity. Voice conveys how an individual wants to be portrayed based on her anticipation of what the reader/ listener expects. Burgess and Ivanič (2010) write that voice "has both an "'autobiographical' and a 'relational' dimension" (p. 240). This means that the individual draws from available repertoires of possibilities of self-hood (e.g., what they believe and perceive) and from the social content by responding to what is said or done and anticipating how others will understand them (Ivanič). For example, Amicucci's (2017) study of an undergraduate's voices on Facebook showed that the participant tailored her voices to garner more likes or comments in the content she shared. She did this by avoiding overtly personal or opinionated posts. Before posting, the participant even commented that she often read the mood of her Facebook audience to determine what to

share. In another study by Amicucci and Neely (2020), they showed undergraduates writing for a college course constructed their voices in anticipation of what they perceived their professor would like to hear. Like the participants in the studies described above, students may change the signs they would typically use in expressing themselves to generate voices that they believe will be well received.

Dynamic Co-Construction… That Influences and is Influenced by the Social Context

Akin to Olinger's (2016) sociocultural approach to style, I specifically define voice as not only the product of self-expression but as the process in which one co-constructs self-expressions, or, in other words, the dynamic co-construction of self-expressions. Olinger views style as a "fluid act" (p. 126), describing it as a process instead of a product. She attests that the writer/speaker/ artist and the reader/listener/onlooker negotiate meanings attached to one's style or voices. These meanings are not something that say a reader and writer agree upon but can differ. For instance, an individual's connection to a text may seem enlightening to one reader while it may be viewed as hearsay for another, an exaggerated account of the "truth." Therefore, like Olinger's account of style, voice is dynamic and can take on different meanings across contexts and between various individuals.

This positions voice as dynamic and fluid, as opposed to being fixed or concrete. Traditional notions of voice have looked at it as the product of self-expression. This depiction positions voice as finalized or frozen and ignores how voice develops across time and situations (Lensmire, 1998). However, my definition does not view voice as a

product but as a "circular process of integration and expansion" (Bryant, 2005, p. 88). Lensmire (1998) argues that we need to view students' voices as in-process and embedded with the immediate social context. He claims that voice is a project involving: appropriation, social struggle, and becoming that reaffirms an individual's agency in the co-construction of their voices.

The dynamic process of co-constructing an individual's voice mediates and is mediated by the social context. As Werstch (1991) claims, "voice always exists in a social milieu; there is no such thing as a voice that exists in total isolation from other voices" (pp. 51- 52). Bakhtin (1981) further supports this, claiming "the word in language is half someone else's. It becomes one's own only when the speaker populates it with his own intentions, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic expressive intention" (p. 293). Voice is mediated by both the individual and the social context. As an individual's voice becomes socialized, it also becomes personalized. In this sense, voice is a process of assimilating the words of others and imbuing them with one's intentions and will (Prior, 2001). For instance, Jwa's (2018) study on voice construction of novice L2 writers found that while a participant assimilated the discursive practices of the teacher using a set format to write their paragraph, she imbued that structure with her intentions of being direct and explicit throughout her argument (more so than her teacher had wanted). In this instance, the participants' voices were socialized by the teacher while also personalized by the student. Here, voice is being dynamically co-constructed by the self and others.

Heeded by Others

An individual's voice must be recognized and considered by others. This does not mean that others must agree or further elaborate on what was expressed. In short, a voice being considered entails that others view the individual manifesting their voice as someone who has something to say, process what was expressed, and provide a semiotic response (Rossetti et al., 2008). Since voice is a dynamic co-construction that responds to and anticipates the social context, voices must also be defined by their recognition from others. According to Segal and Lefstein (2016), "voice is relational: we express our voices in order to be heard and attended to in order to participate in the conversation" (p. 6). Ashby (2011) claims that voice is also concerned with "the right and the ability to make oneself heard" (p. 2). If voices are not heeded by others, then according to Burgess & Ivanič (2010), it "cannot contribute to the organic process whereby the pool of discoursal resources for the construction of identity gradually change" (p. 251). In other words, when an individual's voices are not considered, it does not aid in the development of an individual's voice in which it negotiates and internalizes the responses of others. Bakhtin (1981) claims that "if an answer does not give rise to a new question from itself, then it falls out of dialogue" (p. 168). Voice is about staying in dialogue, and as a result, requires a response. Ashby (2011) poses a question that sums this up well; she asks, "If you do not believe you will be heard, why bother? (p. 10)

When an individual's voice is recognized and attended to, it further propels this dynamic process. Recognition from others informs the individual of how to manifest future voices based on others' responses. And, at the same time, it expands the listener/reader's resources they can pull from in expressing their voices, perhaps even assimilating the individual's voice. To return to Dong and Dong's (2013) definition, voice

is how an individual "makes oneself understood." As a result, voice requires the attention of others to fulfill an individual's stance, perceptions, beliefs, and values that are understood by others.

The term voice cannot be interchanged with the concept of thinking or ideas, as there are key differences. As stated above, voice is always semiotic and leaves a visible residue for others to observe. Through sign systems, like language, one explicitly brings awareness to what they had a sense of in their mind, bringing that matter into fuller consciousness (Taylor, 1985, as cited in Smagorinsky & Lee, 2000). In contrast, one's thinking or ideas can remain internal and abstract in the mind. Additionally, voices always anticipate and respond to other voices. One's voice is not a direct link to what an individual is thinking or an idea they pose; instead, it is an expression that, in a sense, reads the room and responds accordingly. For instance, in Amicucci's (2017) study of an undergraduate's voices on Facebook, the undergraduate was not just sharing their ideas but sharing a response in light of what she thought would garner more likes or comments. Furthermore, voices require a response from others; it is an integral part of voice as a process. Conversely, one's thinking or ideas are not always privy to others' reactions. A key component of voice is that they are self-expressions made visible to others through sign systems that warrant a response.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in several theoretical perspectives influenced by the work of Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and other scholars who complemented and expanded his views on learning (e.g., Bakhtin, 1986; Engeström; 1987, Leont'ev, 1981; Rosenblatt, 1978;

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Wertsch, 1985). These theories include: 1) sociocultural perspective on learning and development; 2) reader response theory; 3) dialogism; 4) theories on identities. These theories provide a foundation for understanding how students manifest their voice in an undergraduate children's literature course. In the following sections, I outline each theory and describe how the theory guides the assumptions that underlie this research.

Sociocultural Perspective on Learning and Development

Sociocultural theory illustrates the interwoven relationship between learning and development and how individuals collectively construct and, over time, transform knowledge. Sociocultural theorists study human events and social activities in contrast to traditional approaches that examine the individual in isolation (Rogoff et al., 2005). Furthermore, it explains how voice is a social construct that must be examined in relation to social activities. Much of this work can be traced back to Lev Vygotsky in the 1920s, a revolutionary psychologist who entered the field following the Russian Revolution. Vygotsky's work overcame Cartesian dualism between the subject and object, and body and mind. He stood in opposition to Piaget's notion that development comes before learning. In contrast, Vygotsky (1978) argued that "learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function" (p. 90), such as the production of voice. Vygotsky defined development as what an individual can do independently, while learning is social and is in advance of development. Learning is where individuals generate understandings with others to act on their own eventually. When constructing knowledge, he saw individuals as both influencing and being influenced by mediating components of their environment,

such as tools and social structures. As a result, Vygotsky emphasized understanding the material, social, and cultural contexts in which learning and learners are situated.

Though many of Vygotsky's theories were written over 90 years ago, it is only in the past four decades that western practices in diverse fields have drawn on his work to answer questions on the process of thinking, interacting, and learning. Many who use his theories (i.e., Cole 1996; Engeström, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Moll, 1990; Wertsch, 1991) have adjusted and appropriated it to frame diverse current social challenges. While Vygotsky's chief assertions remain present, he is joined by several others who further expand and problematize the potential of sociocultural theories. Sociocultural theorists see learning as a.) a social construct, b.) dependent upon the cooperation of others or the assistance of a more knowledgeable other, c.) occurring within one's zone of proximal development, d.) leading to the internalization and transformation of social practices and e.) mediated by speech and language. I examine each tenet below, pulling from various scholars in the field who have contributed to and expanded these notions.

The Social Nature of Learning

Learning is inherently social. Individual development cannot be understood apart from interpersonal and community activities. Vygotsky (1978) states, "every function in a child's [or adults] cultural development appears twice; first, on a social level and later on an individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) then inside the child [or adult] (intrapsychological)" (p. 57). What we do, what we know, and how we see the world is rooted in our social interactions. Learning is not an isolated or independent activity, but an essential facet in any "community of practice" (Lave and Wenger,

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1991). Therefore, manifestations of voices, the ways in which an individual makes themselves understood, are innately social, shaped by social interactions.

Rogoff et al. (2005) argue that "development is a process of participation in sociocultural activities" (p. 45). Who a person becomes — their identity, knowledgeable skills, and self-expressions — is closely linked to the activity systems they are a part of (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wells, 2000). The context in which a learner is situated influences how an individual constructs, displays, and uses knowledge. Therefore, the given context mediates how individuals exhibit their voices.

Although sociocultural theorists view learning as inherently social, they are specific about the types of social interaction, mainly with whom individuals interact. Vygotsky outlined that learning occurs with the assistance or cooperation of others.

The Cooperation of Others and the Assistance of a More Knowledgeable Other

Another key tenet of sociocultural theory is that learning is dependent upon the assistance of others in a social situation, namely individuals with whom one can collaborate with or individuals with more expertise. In a similar vein, manifestations of and shifts in individuals' voices are dependent on the cooperation and assistance of others. In Vygotsky's (1978) writing about assistance from others, he names explicitly "*adult guidance"* and "*collaboration with more knowledgeable peers"* (p. 86). However, Wertsch (1991) points out that Vygotsky never fully described what constituted a "more knowledgeable other," leaving much to be interpreted by scholars today. Yet, Vygotsky emphasized that assistance should be relevant to the learner's purpose, meaning that the assistance should be perceived by the learner as meaningful and meet their intrinsic needs

(Wells, 1999). Therefore, when envisioning a more knowledgeable other, it is not their competence that is key, but the kind of assistance they offer (Chaiklin, 2003).

Ball (2000) extends the notion of a more knowledgeable other to include theoretical or advanced reading in which individuals interact with more complex thoughts or ideas. In conjunction with reading, Ball stressed the importance of peers collaboratively discussing these texts to expand their understandings, furthering ways they can make themselves understood. Since no interpretations of a text (e.g., written words, diagrams, or speech) are ever identical, individuals can offer varying perspectives and enrich one another's understanding (Rosenblatt, 2013; Iser, 1978). John-Steiner and Meehan (2000) stress the importance of multiple interpretations or sources in the learning process to boost an individual's creativity.

Forman and Cazden (2013) also advocate that peer collaboration, in which neither individual is deemed more knowledgeable, leads to learning and shifts to individual voices. When peers engage in a shared activity, they work together to create an outcome neither could achieve independently. In line with theorists like Bakhtin (1981), they believe peer collaboration "enhances the development of logical reasoning through a process of active cognitive reorganization induced by cognitive conflict" (p. 189). When peers come together, they engage in dialogic interaction in which knowledge is reconstructed and co-constructed, often through semiotic self-expressions. John-Steiner and Meehan (2000) reveal several instances in which sustained peer collaboration led to all types of development, from the creation of quantum mechanics to Einstein's theory of relativity. In these instances, individuals engaged in sustained collaboration, disrupting

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the vision of a "lonely creative genius" (p. 40). This implies that individual voices are not an independent product but are fashioned by the assistance or collaboration of others.

To summarize, receiving the assistance of a more knowledgeable other, reading advanced texts, and collaborating with peers are essential to learning and development; and are therefore crucial to manifestations of and shift to individuals' voices. Learning with the cooperation and assistance of others is most optimal in what Vygotsky termed the zone of proximal development.

Zone of Proximal Development

The relationship between development and learning is dynamic. Vygotsky best explains the nature of the relationship with his concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). He defined ZPD as "the *distance between the actual developmental level* as determined by independent problem solving and *the level of potential development* as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86, emphasis edited). This concept illustrates how what an individual can do on their own – their *actual development* – is expanded, with the guidance of a more knowledgeable other or in cooperation with peers – through joint activity.

The relationship between learning and development, one's ZPD, is dynamic. An individual's capacity to learn is not fixed or bound; instead, it depends on the social situation and activity the individual is involved in. The possibilities to learn and manifest voices are constantly shifting based on the context of one's interactions with others (Smagorinsky & Lee, 2000). The assistance and tools provided to an individual can radically change their actual development and learning, and therefore the nature of their

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voices (E. Berg, 1970 cited in Vygotsky, 1987). For instance, introducing a new tool

from a person with more expertise, like a protocol, can transform how an individual

engages in an activity and makes themselves understood. Furthermore, ZPD is not

viewed as an individual attribute, as attributes imply a static and biological relationship.

Rather, ZPD is an individual's *potential* for internal development, continually expanding

through interactions with others in a joint activity.

Vygotsky's notion of ZPD is a general developmental law that applies to children

and adults (Wells, 1999). Unfortunately, as Chaiklin (2003) noted, ZPD is the "most used

and least understood" term in education (p. 41). Many in the field of education view ZPD

as a concept to shape students' actions and voices towards a defined task (Schvartz &

Bakker, 2019). When learning is considered a checklist of skills or an object to attain, the

integral relationship between social interaction and knowledge is lost (Wells, 2000). This

view of learning as task-specific contradicts the open and dynamic nature of ZPD.

Chaiklin (2003) reminds us that Vygotsky's use of the term development refers to an

individual's potential, not the mastering of finite skills.

With the guidance of others, there is a transfer of responsibility in which an individual

reconstructs internal mechanisms to regulate and use on their own. Therefore, learning

takes on this dual process in which individuals are expanding what they know and can do

while also creating their own voices and transforming what is known (John-Steiner &

Meehan, 2000). This leads to discussion on the following fundamental tenet of

sociocultural theory, internalization.

Internalization

A Vygotskian perspective on learning assumes individuals internalize and, as a result, reconstruct knowledge. This is often externalized through manifestations of individuals' voices. Defined by Vygotsky (1978) as "the internal reconstruction of an external operation" (p. 56), internalization explains how social practices transform an individual's way of knowing. External operations, also termed interpersonal processes, refer to ways of thinking and doing that are valued and fostered in social settings (Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 2000). These operations first occur externally between individuals. Vygotsky stressed that "[a]ll the higher functions [valued ways of thinking] originate as actual relations between human individuals" (p. 57). That is, over time, and as a "result of a long series of developmental events," interpersonal processes turn inward and transform into intrapersonal processes – an individual's way of thinking and acting (p. 57). This suggests that individuals can internalize the voices of others, adopting self-expressions through interactions with others. However, Vygotsky shares that many processes will remain external for individuals and never become internalized. To understand internalization, three key concepts must be further described: an individual's internal operation is transformed, not rewritten; internalized processes are reproduced and transformed by the individual; and internalization is visible through an individual's actions and discourse over time, such as manifestations of their voice.

Internalization is partly a process of inner transformation. Leont'ev (1981) stated "the process of internalization is not the *transferal* of an external activity to a preexisting internal 'plane of consciousness'; it is the process in which this plane is *formed*" (p. 57; emphasis in original). In other words, internalization is the process in which one's 'plane of consciousness' (i.e., their actual development) is continually restructured and

developed. Wertsch (1991) described this reconstruction as a tension between the individual and the social activity resulting in constructing a new plane. Vygotsky rejects the notion that an individual's way of thinking is identical to the external process. Knowledge is not transferred to an individual, nor is it inserted into one's schema. The *transformation* of knowledge is always based on what an individual already knows and believes. This implies that knowledge, first constructed socially, is appropriated. Leont'ev (1981) uses the term appropriation to describe the process of taking something that belongs to another and making it one's own. This does not mean that an individual needs to reinvent a process. Appropriation is how an individual applies an object and/or process to novel situations in their own life (Leont'ev, 1981). Concerning voice, it explains how an individual incorporates the voices of others to make themselves understood in novel situations. As a result, the external process being internalized then becomes transformed itself as the individual appropriates it. As individuals interact with their peers or a more knowledgeable other, they engage in this process of inner transformation.

Internalized processes and functions are reproduced and transformed by individuals. As a result, internalization is an essential part of creativity. It is not a unitary process or an acceptance of knowledge but a transformation of knowledge (John-Steiner & Meehan, 2000; Wells, 1999). Vygotsky (1981) states, "[i]nternalization transforms the process itself and changes its structure and function" (p. 162). As individuals appropriate ways of thinking, practice, and perspective, they inevitably change it as they make it their own and interact in social settings through revealing their voices. Mikhail Bakhtin (1984) echoes this sentiment in his theory of dialogism, sharing that no two thoughts, actions, or

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utterances, even if they are verbally identical, are ever the same. As an individual appropriates others' words and/or actions, they place them in a new context and often amongst new people, transforming their prior meaning.

The transformation of internalized external practices is made visible through an individual's actions and discourse over time. The transformation of one's internal plane is implicit, often to both onlookers and the individual themselves. However, the process of internalization does not end there. Wells (2000) argues that Vygotsky's concept of internalization is two-fold. As previously discussed, first, one's internal plane is transformed. However, the significance of this transformation is seen next when an individual gradually externalizes the process they appropriated into meaningful new actions, behaviors, or manifestations of voice. Namely, the individual does not parrot back what was done by others (a form of memorization, or what Bakhtin (1984) would refer to as single-voiced words), but instead acts and/or speaks in a manner that reflects their transformation of mental processes. Ball (2000) adds on to this idea, claiming that understandings transform from interpersonal to intrapersonal, then "become catalysts for generative, meaningful activity" (p. 230). Both stress that changes in an individual's actions and discourse are gradual and become observable when a person's discourse practice or actions are examined over time.

To summarize, internalization is a *process of transforming* one's "actual development," initiated by social interactions, and a transformation of the social practice itself. The internalization of behaviors and ways of thinking involves a reconstruction of an individual's interpersonal process that, Vygotsky maintains, is the basis of sign operations - language and speech. Vygotsky claims commutative speech between

individuals "turns 'inwards' to become the basis of inner speech" (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 57). Accordingly, to fully understand the sociocultural perspective of learning and development, the role of speech and language must be further explored.

The Role of Language and Speech

Language is a primary mediator for learning and the construction of knowledge. Vygotsky (1978) believed language - a system of signs - makes higher-order thinking possible and humans unique in relation to other creatures. Voloshinov (1973) put forward that a sign is a material reality, like a word or algebraic problem, that "reflects and refracts another reality" (p. 9). For Voloshinov, meaning does not reside within a sign but is relational. He claims "meaning is a function of the sign and is therefore inconceivable outside the sign as some particular, independently existing thing… A sign is a particular material thing, but meaning is not a thing and cannot be isolated from the sign as if it were a piece of reality existing on its own apart from the sign" (p. 28). Therefore, as humans view/read the world, they use signs, such as language and speech, to convey meaning.

Luria further recognizes the importance of language and speech, calling it the "tool of tools" (cited in Cole, 1996, p. 108). Language operates as a psychological tool that organizes, modifies, and reflects upon an individual's or group's thoughts and actions. Additionally, Vygotsky (1978) maintains that language allows individuals to perceive events or ideas from the viewpoint of the future or the past or the viewpoint of others. As a result, the use of signs through language, and by extension manifestations of voices, are essential to learning and development.

Charles Taylor (1985, as cited in Smagorinsky and Lee, 2000) adds to the conversation. He claimed, "through language, we can bring to explicit awareness what we formally had only an implicit sense of. Through formulating some matter, we bring it to fuller and clearer consciousness." (p. 257). Thought, or what Vygotsky (1987) referred to as inner-speech, is highly dynamic and provides an implicit abbreviated sense of meaning. Through language, like speech or written words (i.e., voice), one's sense of meaning becomes more stabilized as it is brought into explicit awareness (Taylor, 1986; Wertsch, 2000). In other terms, individuals use speech to systematically grasp and organize their thoughts and create meaning by putting them into words. As a result, language - speech or written words - generates meaning and, in turn, shapes our thinking (Wells, 2000). Often, it is not until an individual speaks that they become aware of possible perceptions, which, in turn, inform future actions and thought. Or to use Vygotsky's (1978) words, "speech creates greater possibilities… greater flexibility" (p. 26). It illuminates the potential for development.

Key Assertions of Sociocultural Theory That Guide This Study

Based on the core tenets of sociocultural theory, the following assumptions shape my research:

1. Individuals collaboratively construct meaning in joint activities with the cooperation of others or the assistance of a more knowledgeable other, therefore manifestations of and shifts to individuals' voices are innately social, shaped by social interactions.

2. Meaning is transformed by, not transferred to, an individual and as a result, is highly dynamic. This implies that others' voices are not something carbon copied but are instead appropriated. Each manifestation of an individual's voice is unique and dynamic as they transform self-expressions to respond to the current context.

3. Language mediates meaning-making. The signs individuals have available and use influence how an individual understands the world, and as result, how they make themselves understood.

Reader Response Perspective

Second, I draw on reader response perspectives. Consistent with sociocultural views of learning and development, this theory views meaning-making as a mediated event, a "transaction," to use Louise Rosenblatt's phrasing, between a reader and a text. Rosenblatt (1978/1994) first articulated this belief in her transactional theory and was further supported by Wolfgang Iser (1978) in his theory of text-reader interaction. To illuminate the nuances of reader response perspectives, I describe: the text-reader relationship, the notion that no two readings are the same, the stances a reader can take, and the importance of discussion to readers' responses.

Text-Reader Relationship

Rosenblatt and Iser both claimed that meaning does not solely reside in the text or within the reader and, as a result, cannot be presupposed. Furthermore, meaning is not seen as an object or a definable entity; it is viewed as a "dynamic happening" (Iser, 1978) and "an event at a particular time and place" (Rosenblatt, 1994). Put simply, it is a

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temporal synthesis of what the text presents and what the reader brings to the text. While Rosenblatt (1982) specifically speaks to reading in her theory, she claims these concepts apply to spoken and written symbols (i.e., voice). To illuminate this relationship, it is crucial to understand the role of the text, the role of the reader, and how they are intertwined.

The Role of the Text. As alluded to in the previous paragraph, reading is a two-way process in which the text provides a structure for meaning to be made. Rosenblatt (1982) stated the "words in their particular pattern stir up elements of memory activat[ing] areas of consciousness" for the reader (p. 268). Iser adds to this idea, sharing that the text acts as a guide and is a skeleton of "schematized aspects." The text presents the reader with different opportunities and possibilities to be interpreted and synthesized by the reader. I envision the role of the text to be like selected ingredients presented to a chef to create his own unique dish. Therefore, like a list of set ingredients, the text constrains to some degree the kinds of meaning (the meal) that an individual can make but does not exercise complete control of the meaning. Similarly, a text influences how individuals manifest their voices, guiding the reader to exhibit certain beliefs, views, values, etc.

The texts "*brings about* a standpoint from which the reader will be able to view things that would never have come into focus as long as his own habitual dispositions were determining his orientation" (Iser, 1978, p. 35). The text provides cues and "gaps" for the reader to step in and act. Iser described gaps as moments in the text that cause a reader confusion, for instance, when two back-to-back sentences seem disjointed. As a result, the role of the text is to engage the reader's imagination and creativity to be an

active participant. To sum up this idea, Iser (1978) shares, "literary texts initiate 'performances' of meaning rather than actually formulating meanings themselves. Their aesthetic quality lies in this 'performing' structure, which clearly cannot be identical to the final product, because without the participation of the individual reader there can be no performance" (p. 27). He later goes on to say "the real reader is always offered a particular role to play" (p. 34). In other words, the text sets the stage for meaning to be made by providing cues to the reader. Consequently, it is of equal importance to understand the role of the reader.

The Role of the Reader. While the text provides a structure, the reader brings that structure to life by selecting and synthesizing visual cues, filling in the inevitable gaps, and responding to the text with feelings, memories, and personal connections. Rosenblatt (1994) claims, "literacy creation is, after all, basically the making of choices [by the reader]" (p. 51). The reader is constantly making decisions about synthesizing the multiple possibilities offered by the text into an organized meaning. These choices are frequently made visible by individuals' voices. Individuals combine certain textual aspects to create a whole, or what Iser refers to as the gestalt. This doesn't mean that other parts of the texts are erased; instead, they sit on the fringes of memory. As a result, the reader engages in an active synthesis process, in which they must select, synthesize, and interpret the visual cues presented in the text. Rosenblatt (1982) defined interpretation as the act of a reader describing the nature of their evocation- their "sense of the work" (p. 268). Iser further explains this as a process of continual adjustment. Based on prior experiences and memories of the text, a reader forms expectations; however, these expectations are continually transformed as they go through the entire text. In this sense,

reading is seen as a series of continuously changing views. Furthermore, based on a reader's expectations for a text, they are engaged with filling in the gaps within the text. These gaps provide the reader an opportunity to bring into play their own experiences and connections. Though it may be easier to analyze the text and reader separately, to truly understand the reading and meaning-making process (i.e., one's voice), the text and the reader need to be examined together as a transaction, a temporal event, in which the text and reader are intertwined.

The Transactions Between the Reader and the Text

The convergence of a text and a reader brings literary works into existence. The text serves as a guide, offering cues and gaps for the reader to respond to and act upon to create meaning. Therefore, meaning exists as a result of the interaction between a reader and a text. Iser explains that while a text does not imprint ideas into a reader, readers do not dream up their own private work. Each impacts the other and transforms meaning. This concept relates to Vygotsky's notion of internalization. Namely, when an individual's interpersonal plane interacts with a text, it transforms the reader's intrapersonal plane. Similar to internalization, the construction of a literary work is highly dynamic. How a text impacts a reader or how a reader impacts a text in a given space and time can never be foreseen.

Each reading of a text ushers a different meaning, whether it's amongst various individuals or within the same individual at another time and place. Iser shares there is no such thing as a generic reader or "correct" interpretation (i.e., there is not one voice). Reading is an unparalleled and individual occurrence involving a unique reader's

emotions, mind, and memory. Rosenblatt claims that though two people may read the same text, they will have varying reading responses, or what she calls two different reading transactions. Meaning is often accompanied by a reaction, such as acceptance, doubt, or pleasure, which in turn shapes a reader's transaction with the text. No two individuals will have the same reaction and, as a result, interpretation.

Furthermore, Iser explains how the same reader will have different interpretations of a text over time. He claims "a second reading of the text will never have the same effect as the first, for the simple reason that the originally assembled meaning is bound to influence the second reading" (p. 149). In reading a text for the second time, a reader's expectations of what is to come changes and verbal cues that a reader once pushed to the fringes are revisited. Once again, consistent with sociocultural views on knowledge, meaning has a temporal and dynamic character. Put by Iser (1978), "the meaning of a literary text is not a definable entity but, if anything, a dynamic happening" (p. 22). Though no two readings are the same, the various meanings drawn from a text are often influenced by the reader's stance.

A Reader's Stance

Rosenblatt presents a continuum of reader responses to a text. At one end is an efferent stance, and on the other, an aesthetic stance. Efferent responses aim to obtain information or directions which can be carried away, such as reading a nutrition label to see the ingredients. Aesthetic responses are personal and aimed inward on what the reader is living through while reading, such as what they feel, see or hear as they interact with the text. A reader's response often has traces of both efferent and aesthetic

intentions. Rosenblatt (1982) believes that the predominant stance a reader takes is the most important choice they make, as it delineates the type of meaning to be created and the character of individuals' voices. She claims it "is basically an expression of purpose" (p. 275). Efferent responses encourage readers to paraphrase what they read. For instance, this might entail naming the character, setting, problem, and resolution in a novel. In contrast, aesthetic responses encourage unique creations, which others cannot duplicate— for instance, describing a personal connection to a character or how the words on the page make them feel. Rosenblatt stresses that one response need not come before another.

While specific texts may lend themselves to a more efferent or aesthetic response, a text can elicit both. This same concept can be applied to listeners as it is for the reader. When listening to a lecture or engaging in a discussion, a participant may narrow their attention on what they can take away or may focus their attention on what they are experiencing at that moment. Since each listener and reader construct their own meaning and literary work, both Iser and Rosenblatt stress the importance of discussion amongst readers of a text

Speech Is A Vital Ingredient to Reader Responses

Dialogue among readers is a vital component of reader response theories. It fosters an expansion of readers' insights concerning transactions with a text as well as metalinguistic understandings. Rosenblatt (2013) claims that "when students share responses to transactions with the same text, they can learn how their evocations from the same sign differ, can return to the text to discover their own habits of selection and

synthesis, and can become aware of, and critical of, their own processes as readers" (p. 949). Discussions then become the foundation of understanding "criteria of sound interpretation and evaluation" for various reader response stances (i.e., efferent and aesthetic) concerning a text and an individual's development (p. 950). Furthermore, discovering another's "gestalt" and evocation of a text increases one's relationship with that text. Not only are interpretations being shared, but readers are sharing their experience with a text, which brings about aspects of the text others may have pushed to the fringes of their memory. This often results in shifts to individuals' voices. Rosenblatt found that readers have a strong desire to talk with others who a text has impacted to crystalize their own experience further. Iser supports Rosenblatt's claims, stating that to understand the "gestalt" truly, readers are compelled to talk about the books they have read. In the reading process, readers are entangled in a meaning-making, expectation forming, and revising process. Iser maintains that while reading, it is frequently unclear to the reader what is happening to them and that it is only through discussion that they come to understand the meaning made and reading process fully.

Key Assertions of Reader Response Theory That Guide This Study

Reader responses and transactions are the fabric of discussions and learning in classrooms today. This study builds on the assumptions that:

1. interpretations and manifestations of voices are mediated events between a reader and a text;

2. no two readings of a text are the same, eliciting varying self-expressions;

3. the stance readers take in approaching a text delineates their response (i.e., voices).

Dialogism

To deepen my understanding of voice, I integrate Bakhtin's (1981, 1984, 1986) theory of dialogism with sociocultural perspectives. Bakhtin would describe dialogism as a "sense of theory" (1984, p. 294) that explains how meaning is context-specific and evolves from interactions among speakers, authors, listeners, and readers. Furthermore, it supports the notion of unfinalizability, stating that knowledge is never concrete but is engaged in constant open dialogue (Morson & Emerson, 1990). Bakhtin's theory augments sociocultural perspective by contributing specifics to how individuals internalize practices and beliefs so as to construct and reconstruct their own ideologies through languages**.** Key to this study are Bakhtinian notions of dialogue, ideological becoming, and heteroglossia.

Dialogue

Individuals shape ideas and utterances in response to and anticipation of others (what Bakhtin calls addressivity). For example, a student writing a journal reflection following a discussion will craft their response based on personal experiences, what they read, and in response to past conversations with their classmates. Additionally, they may consider an anticipated reaction from peers and/or the instructor in composing their reflection. Bakhtin (1981) shares, "every word is directed towards an *answer* and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates" (p. 280). This supports the notion that individuals' voices are constantly responding to and addressing

future utterances and situations. An individual's self-expression, according to Bakhtin, is always directed towards a response.

Bakhtin illuminates the fact that we can no longer solely look at the stimuli - what caused the response - we must also consider the intention and the context of that utterance. Bakhtin's claim supports Vygotsky's (1978) desire to reproach ideas of stimuli- response; furthermore, it draws our attention to the mediating factors of an utterance and extends notions of reader-response perspectives. Additionally, the belief that each utterance correlates to a previous and upcoming utterance is essential for Bakhtin in that it both implies and requires social interaction and imposes an active stance for those involved (Bakhtin, 198; Mahiri, 2004).

Understanding is an active and social process, dependent upon a response. Bakhtin (1981) argues, "[u]nderstanding comes to fruition only in the response. Understanding and response are dialectically merged and mutually condition each other; one is impossible without the other" (p. 282). An individual's understanding stems from a verbal or oral response and vice versa. As the Akan proverb contends, "one head does not hold a discussion" (Kwame, 1995, p. xxxi). This process is active, reoccurring, and, for Bakhtin, never-ending.

To understand how this relates to voice, let's first examine an individual's self-expression. An individual's self-expression emanates from their own "conceptual system" -- their worldview -- and thus populates the words spoken with both intention and their perspectives of the world. The addressee is active in interpreting what the individual said in light of their worldviews. The addressee then offers a response of their

own, inserting their views with what was presented. This creates a new opening for another response.

Martin Nystrand (1997) refers to this as "chains of understanding," which he defines as *"a sequence of dynamically co-constructed understandings*, each building on a previous one while anticipating the next" (p. 90). As students engage in discussions, manifesting their voices, they form a chain of understanding in which meaning is constantly evolving in these active transactions. Key to this dynamic and social process is the notion of unfinalizability, in which chains of understanding are unpredictable and ongoing. Bakhtin (1986) warns us that the aim of dialogue is not to "reduce everything to one single consciousness" (p. 141) in which responses are opposed or subsumed to a singular truth. Instead, the aim is for multiple ideas to occupy the same space and for each to become enriched and expanded. Nystrand (1997) adds that chains of understanding should "reflect a unique history of dynamic interactions of a particular conversant" and, as a result, cannot be reproduced or copied (p. 91). This implies that a lively discussion in one group does not guarantee a lively conversation in another and that understandings constructed between groups may not resemble one another.

Bakhtin (1986) further argues that if a response "does not give rise to a new question [or response] from itself, it falls out of the dialogue" (p. 168). This means that once an idea no longer bears a response, the chain of understanding comes to an end, and the idea is no longer expanded. Bakhtin goes as far as to say that the idea is dead. As a result, in dialogic interaction, it is essential to guide students to ask questions and form interpretations in response to other's utterances (Matusov, 2015) to keep the conversation and idea alive. Bakhtin believed this is best achieved in tension-filled environments.

Social interactions filled with tension and conflict are most influential to learning. Bakhtin (1981) believed new understandings and shifts to individuals' voices come from struggles. He wrote, "the importance of struggling with another's discourse, its influence in the history of an individual's coming to ideological consciousness, is enormous" (p. 348). Nystrand (1997) argues that discourse is not dialogic as a result of ample turn-taking; it is only dialogic when it is "continually structured by tension, even conflict, between the conversant, between self and others, as one voice refracts another" (p. 8). It is then necessary to identify what Bakhtinian theorists and researchers mean by tension. Wegerif (2015) suggests that tension is not a result of all members agreeing, what he calls "cumulative talk" and Bakhtin refers to as "unidirectionality." Nor is it a consequence of members trying to prove others wrong and themselves right, what Wegerif terms "disputational talk," and what Bakhtin calls "varidirectional." Tension rises from a juxtaposition of relative voices competing for autonomy within the individual (Bakhtin, 1981; Nystrand, 1997).

Bakhtin (1981) describes two categories of discourse in a constant struggle for autonomy: authoritative and internally persuasive discourse. The first category is "authoritative discourse." It is the traditional and official language that is "organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher" (p. 342). These discourses are often linked to institutions, such as religious or political affiliations, and, within schools, including the instructor's words or the textbook. They represent dominant ideologies that individuals are often born into (Pace, 2006).

In contrast, the second category is made up of "internally persuasive discourse." It arises from past experiences and is "tightly interwoven with one's own word." Furthermore, to

add to this tension, the "internally persuasive discourse" of others, what Bakhtin sometimes refers to as "alien voices," enter into this struggle for influence within the individual's consciousness as well. The confluence of these various discourses, authoritative and internally persuasive, within and between individuals create what Bakhtin termed the "zone of contact" or what Wertsch refers to as the "dialogic space." Both these terms offer an alternative metaphor to a harmonious sense of community, often seen as conflict-free (Thesen, 2009).

Within a school setting, discussion groups can be a rich "contact zone" in which students struggle to make sense of the words from a textbook (authoritative), their own beliefs (internally persuasive), and that of their peers ("alien voices"). What Bakhtin terms "double-voiced utterances" are then born in this atmosphere (p. 348). They are utterances that represent the voices of two speakers/ authors and simultaneously express two ideas. An example of this is a student retelling, in their own words, what they thought was the key idea from an article. While they express the words of another, an "authoritative discourse," they also populate it with their intentions and voice, "internally persuasive discourse". Double-voiced utterances work to juxtapose and make sense of the multiple internally persuasive and authoritative discourses presented to them. Bakhtin believed double-voiced utterances are an essential element of negotiation because it extends dialogue to incorporate the views and words of others into one's own. Within the "contact zone," individuals strive for a fixed singular understanding as they seek assurance of their ideas. However, as individuals enter dialogue with others, they are bombarded with numerous views and always in a state of flux or what I would call expansion. It is this kind of tension that leads to ideological becoming.

Ideological Becoming

An individual's dialogue with various discourses shapes "ideological becoming" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 385) -- an individual's nonlinear process of developing idea systems and worldviews. As an individual encounters others -- through discussions, reading a text, or listening to a podcast -- they gain access to more words, ideas, and processes. In addition to assimilating the "authoritative" discourse, individuals find the internally persuasive discourse of others meaningful and, as a result, "assimilate"-- or to use Leont'ev's term, "appropriate" -- "the words of others" (p. 341). Yet, amidst the various views surrounding them, individuals struggle to find a central line of reasoning in their ideological development. At first, early in the stages of development, individuals can find alignment between the "authoritative" and "internally persuasive" discourses. Yet, as individuals continue to develop, they begin to define their own voices, often in opposition to the authoritative one. An example of this "messy" process is when a student new to a topic, like psychology, will at first agree and assimilate the voices of the "authoritative discourse" -- the teacher and/or textbook. Yet, as the student encounters more "internally persuasive" discourses of others, "entirely different possibilities open up" (Bakhtin, p. 345). No longer does the student primarily view the world from a more traditional stance. Therefore, tensions between discourses ultimately heighten. As a result, the student often pulls further away from the original authoritative discourse and eventually forms their own independent and discriminative thinking. Though they may reject the authoritative discourse, it is not something that an individual can ignore. Instead, the individual carves out their position, their ideological becoming, in relation to the authoritative word (Morson, 2004).

Similarities can easily be drawn between Vygotsky's (1978) concept of internalization and Bakhtin's concept of "ideological becoming." Both are interested in the transformation of an individual's voices. However, Bakhtin extends Vygotsky's concept to show how one's "actual potential"/ "ideology" takes on a life of its own over an extended period. Additionally, it highlights the importance of tension and the need for the "zone of contact" for students to "liberate themselves from the authority of the other's discourse" (p. 348). In seeking to create opportunities for students to expand their voices, it becomes essential to provide opportunities for students to test, question, and problematize the authoritative discourse. Languages crystallize ideological becomings. Since one's "ideological becoming" is acquired through and marked with various voices and contexts, language is heteroglossic (Mahiri, 2004).

Heteroglossia

Language is dynamic; individuals employ numerous variations of languages, and within each of those languages, there are various ideas. Heteroglossia, a Bakhtinian term, describes individuals' simultaneous use of variations of speech (languages) and the tension that arises between them. Bakhtin never regarded language as a unitary system and instead viewed it as constantly evolving in response to the complexities of daily life (Morson & Emerson, 1990). Two key concepts are essential to understanding heteroglossia. First, there is no one language; different age, social, regional, and occupational groups adopt their own language, similar to Gee's (1996) concept of (D)iscourse, with a capital D. For instance, how a student manifests their voice to their instructor will vary from how they exhibit their voice to their friends outside of class. This results from how people learn language from interacting with others in similar

situations (Dyson, 1993). Mahiri (2004) stated, "[t]he idea that every utterance is related to previous utterances is key to Bakhtin's dialogism… Meanings, therefore, are not neutral or derived independently; they are heteroglossic in that they are acquired through and marked with multiple prior voices and contexts" (p. 223). Individuals do not learn language from dictionaries; they learn it from responding to utterances that came before them and assimilating others' language that is laden with prior ideologies.

Second, within these diverse languages exists a variation of ideas. Bakhtin (1981) states, "[n]o living word relates to its object in a singular way" (p. 279). He compares language to a ray of light, casting various shadows depending on an individual's orientation. Language, this ray of light, pushes through an "elastic environment" in which it may be viewed and intercepted from different angles and perspectives. The concept of double-voicing is of importance once more as it constitutes heteroglossia. It is an individual using "another's *speech in another language*," intercepting a previous utterance "in a refracted way" (p. 324). As students engage in illustrating their voices, they will be involved in this process of assimilating and refracting the words of others, both "authoritative" and "internally persuasive" discourse, which can ultimately impact their response to a text and their overall understanding.

Assumptions Guiding Study

Dialogism is essential to this study's theoretical framework because it provides insight into how languages, particularly dialogue, influence and transform students' voices. As a result, the following assumptions guide this study:

1) languages and ideologies are socially and actively constructed;

2) students' speech and practice are shaped in response to and in anticipation of others;

3) tension fuels students' understanding and ways they manifest their voices.

Theories on Identity

Finally, I utilize theories on identities rooted in sociocultural ideologies to ground my research on students' voices. These theories highlight how discourse (i.e., semiotic interactions) and social practices intertwine to define identities and, by extension, help explain the intricacies of individuals' voices. Gee (1996, 2000, & 2001) uses the term the (D)iscourse, with a capital D, to depict identities, further describing who an individual is and what they do to be recognizable to others and themselves within specific contexts. He defines (D)iscourse as:

> A socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions, and 'artifacts,' of thinking, feeling, behaving, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful role (1996, p. 131).

In short, Gee's theory of (D)iscourse states that individuals combine ways of being, thinking, and speaking to enact and recognize numerous socially significant identities. For instance, an individual may perform the (D)iscourse of a doctor, patient, teacher, engineer, undergraduate, gardener, mom, etc. Individuals can belong to several (D)iscourses; for instance, someone could perform the (D)iscourses of a dad, engineer, climber, and Trekkie. These (D)iscourses are not prescriptive or deterministic but are dynamic models of being recognized as a "certain kind of person" (Gee, 2000). An individual's manifestation of voice is one way they can exhibit said (D)iscourses.

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(D)iscourse, with a capital D, has a distinct meaning from sociolinguists' use of the term discourse, referring to verbal interactions between speakers and listeners. Gee's theory of Discourse, denoted with a capital D, goes beyond just talk or language and emphasizes an interrelation between social identity, social relations, context, and specific language use.

(D)iscourses both inform and are informed by individuals' often tacit or taken-for-granted theories about the world, informing individuals of what is typical from the perspective of that (D)iscourse (Gee, 2000). As stated above, they describe more than just talk or language but illuminate beliefs, values, and attitudes tied to that identity. In this manner, (D)iscourses serve as identity kits (Gee, 1996). Therefore, how individuals make themselves understood (i.e., their voices) are informed by various (D)iscourses.

Within each Discourse, there are common beliefs, ways of knowing, thinking, and feeling that individuals recognize as appropriate and define membership for that group. For instance, a rock climber will use specific vocabulary such as "send" or "crag," they will dress in a particular manner that defines them as a climber, and they will likely also hold perspectives of valuing nature or resilience. These all make up the (D)iscourse of a rock climber. Therefore, an individual performs these actions to be recognized as part of the climbing community.

Similar to Bakhtin's notion of an authoritative voice, Gee (1996) distinguishes a dominant Discourse, one associated with status and privilege often accompanied with benefits. For most, the dominant (D)iscourse is not a primary discourse, one an individual is socialized through in their home, but, is a secondary (D)iscourse learned through participation in various institutions and social groups. For instance, academia could be

considered a dominant (D)iscourse. Individuals display various ways of knowing, being, and thinking to be regarded as academic. This (D)iscourse holds prestige over say the (D)iscourse individuals use with friends who may use slang and is linked to good grades and being recognized as "intelligent."

Other sociocultural theorists (e.g., Holland et al., 1998, Wortham, 2006) use similar concepts to depict identities. Together these theorists maintain a) identities are performances, b) must be recognized by others, c) are never finalized, but dynamic, and d) change due to learning. I explore each principle in fuller detail below.

Identities are Performances

Identities are not an attribute or innate quality; they are performances that convey who an individual is at a particular point in time and place. Individuals have multiple identities associated with "performances in society" instead of possessing internal states of being (Gee, 2000). By employing specific (D)iscourses – combining ways of speech, writing, acting, dressing, etc. – individuals "bid" to be recognized in particular ways (Gee, 2000; Latour, 1999). For instance, how a student dresses, the tools they use, and their responses are bids to be seen as a certain kind of student. Manifestations of voice are a crucial component of said performances, as they convey to others how they want to be understood. Holland and colleagues (1998) further this notion stating, "[p]eople tell others who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as though they are who they say they are" (p. 3). In this sense, these performances are not just for others but also for the individual enacting them. These identity performances

encourage individuals to feel rooted in certain (D)iscourses and inform their future actions (Gee, 1996; Wortham, 2006).

An integral element to identity performances being "bids" and roots to specific (D)iscourses is the use of semiotics – signs, such as language (Gee, 1996). How individuals choose to fashion, and present semiotic self-expressions illuminates invisible aspects of identity such as beliefs and values (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007). Additionally, language is never neutral but instead conveys perspectives and ideologies linked to personal experiences and various (D)iscourses (Gee, 2000). The signs an individual uses conveys how they want to be regarded. Similarly, the voices individuals manifest communicate how they want to be understood.

The use of language and other signs utilized in identity performances is not acquired on one's own but learned from others. Gee (2000) argues individuals do not achieve (D)iscourses through overt or direct instruction. Instead, similar to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of internalization, individuals adopt language through socialization and apprenticeship into the social practices of a particular Discourse. This is in line with Bakhtin's (1981) belief that "[t]he word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention" (p. 293). In this sense, no identity can indeed come from within; it requires interaction. Taylor (1992) explains how a key feature of human life is its dialogical nature. Individuals form an understanding of self through the acquisition of languages from others' expressions. He claimed, "we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others. People do not acquire languages needed for self-definition on their own" (p. 32). Therefore, when individuals perform various (D)iscourses, they utilize signs and language they've

appropriated from said (D)iscourses through dialogic interactions. In a similar vein, the voices individuals use to be understood as a "certain kind of person" stem from interactions with others.

A final key aspect in thinking about identity performances is that they are improvised. Holland and Leander (2004) state that there is an improvisational character to performances. Performances are "opportunistic, partaking of the peculiarities of the situation" (p. 136). An individual's performance often responds to and anticipates the (D)iscourse of others. Furthermore, it responds to the context in which people perform. This implies there is no set or fixed notion of identity; instead, identity is fluid and dynamic, engaged in an ongoing process for formation.

Identities are Dynamic

Individuals are continually engaged in forming identities, as such identities are fluid and dynamic. Identity performances are ongoing, they are never complete or finalized; there is not a finished script. As individuals interact with others and their current surroundings, they appropriate and/or improvise new ways to enact being a "certain kind of person" (Gee, 2000). The same can be said about voice; individuals continually engage in making themselves – their beliefs, values, views, etc.— understood.

In this sense, an educator can never fully establish a teacher (D)iscourse, nor can a doctor "perfect" a medical (D)iscourse. They are not something attained or concrete, as they are always in motion changing moment by moment within and across interactions (Gee, 2000). Brockmire (2001) described identity as an "ongoing cultural construction

that takes place simultaneously in several discursive orders, and its outcome is an always emergent, temporary gestalt" (p. 218). In this vein, one's sense of self is brief since others' (D)iscourses and the immediate environment constantly mediate it.

Holland and Leander (2004) described this ongoing identity performance as a process of lamination. The use of the term process does not denote progressive movement towards a particular result associated with growth, but instead conveys a continuing natural activity. As individuals use semiotics to perform various (D)iscourses, they leave behind various multimodal texts that act as a residue or artifact of that "temporary gestalt" Brockmire (2001) spoke of (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007). Manifestations of voices are one way individuals mark these "temporary gestalts" (Brockmire, 2001). Over time, these artifacts form layers and accumulate, in which these gestalts don't lose their original shape but are juxtaposed and repositioned in different configurations. Accordingly, previous conceptions of self don't disappear but can shine through more recent layers, fostering multivoicedness and mediating future actions (Brockmire, 2001; Holland & Leander, 2004). At times layers may conflict; previous conceptions of self and (D)iscourses can contend with new (D)iscourses (Brockmire, 2001; Gee, 2000). For instance, the (D)iscourse associated with a student's home life may conflict with the (D)iscourse of school. One (D)iscourse does not replace the other but instead creates tensions and fuels this dynamic process. Furthermore, these layers/ texts become artifacts of previous identities, illuminating shifts to an individual's identity, just like the walls of the Grand Canyon tell about our geological past (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007).

When thinking about identity as a lamination process, one must consider what is strengthened and stabilized by these laminations. When subsequent similar performances

repeatedly occur, layers begin to congeal, stabilizing perceptions of self and others, making it difficult to imagine an individual outside that congealed identity (Holland and Leander, 2004). Similarly, suppose individuals make themselves understood in a repeated fashion. In that case, others and themselves become accustomed to certain types of voices—for instance, an engineer who routinely makes himself understood by discussing measurable outcomes. In line with other theorists, this image is never complete but becomes more robust. Take, for example, the identity of someone who is viewed as charismatic or a cynic; their identities are less fleeting. Due to repeated performances, individuals come to form enduring understandings of a person embodying those qualities. Holland and Leander (2004) share "durable laminations... emerge over periods that are difficult to establish and study in the short-term" (pg. 136). These durable laminations and more stable senses of self formulate over long periods and cannot be changed or altered quickly (Wortham, 2006). Key to this process of durable laminations is that others recognize these layers or, in other words, these patterns of identity performances.

The Recognition of Others

While individuals perform identities in an ongoing process, it is essential to consider how and by whom a particular identity (i.e., (D)iscourse) is recognized (Gee, 2000). For an individual to be a certain "kind of person" or convey (D)iscourses, others must realize them as that "kind of person" or exhibiting that Discourse. Taylor (1992) views recognition and identity as two concepts that are inevitably linked. Taylor writes, "discovering my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I negotiate it through dialogue, partly overt, partly internal, with others.... My own identity

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crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others" (p. 34). How others respond to and recognize an individual's identity performances mediates the "kind of person" an individual identifies themselves as. Identity's dependency upon the recognition of others correlates with Segal and Leftstein's (2016) assertion that others must heed voices. If (D)iscourses are not heeded, the dynamic identification process is cut short. According to Taylor, if individuals find themselves in a spot of isolation, they cannot figure out their identity, and as a consequence, their voice.

Therefore, the signs and languages individuals utilize to make "bids" for (D)iscourse in identification performances will only take on meaning within recognized (D)iscourse models (Agha, 2004; Gee, 2000; Wortham, 2006). Individual performances can only be understood in relation to other recognizable (D)iscourses. Take, for example, a student who routinely states her beliefs in course discussions. Her actions could be perceived in various ways, such as being a good student, overly assertive, or arrogant. The interpretation of her performance depends on the (D)iscourse model she, her peers, and teachers use to make sense of her actions. Wortham (2006) attests that "for any sign of identity to make sense, the sign must point not directly to an identity for the focal individual, but to a metapragmatic model [i.e., Discourse] that construes the sign in that way" (p. 32). Therefore, (D)iscourses make available the kinds of people an individual can be in specific contexts, as they give meaning to signs in identification performances that allow them to be recognized (Gee, 2001; Holland and Lave, 2001). By extension, (D)iscourses make available the voices students can exhibit to make themselves understood.

Learning Mediates Changes to Identities

The construction of knowledge and identity performances are intertwined processes that influence and are influenced by the other (Wortham, 2006). Wenger (1998) claims, "learning transforms who we are and what we can do. It is an experience of identity" (p. 215). Learning fosters new ways of participating or being involved in activities and performing new functions or tasks (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In this vein, it "provides access to and control of [various] (D)iscourses" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 16). For instance, teachers attending a professional development workshop on reading will engage in activities, discussions, and presentations that share ways of being a certain kind of reading teacher. In this workshop, they may acquire new languages, perspectives, props, and methods of acting that will mediate them being recognized as a certain kind of a reading teacher. Their participation implies they become a "different person with respect to possibilities enabled" (Lave & Wenger, p. 53). Moje and Luke (2007) further describe this stating, "one learns to take on new identities along with new forms of knowledge and participation... learning involves learning not only the stuff of the discipline—science content, for example – but also how to think and act something like a scientist" (Moje & Luke, 2007, p. 19). In short, the construction of knowledge permits access to ways of being connected to these content areas. As Wortham (2006) succinctly put it, "learning changes who we are" (p. 25) and accordingly, the voices we manifest.

Though learning mediates people's identities, (D)iscourses also influence learning. Various (D)iscourses can constrain or promote learning. With (D)iscourses come ways of valuing and viewing the world. This, in turn, shapes how individuals learn and construct knowledge (Wortham, 2006). Wortham (2006) further attests that when school

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curriculum involves language, such as social studies, or literature, teachers and students use (D)iscourses to understand the curriculum. Furthermore, textbooks, articles, lectures, and lessons will always derive from a specific (D)iscourse – for instance, depicting individuals in history as loyalists, traitors, or innovators. In line with Reader Response Theories, an individual's transaction with a text is mediated by the (D)iscourses they perform and are recognized as. By extension, the voices an individual enacts mediates how they perceive a text. Therefore, learning and (D)iscourse cannot be extricated from the other; they must be considered together (Wortham).

Key Assertions from Theories on Identity That Guide This Study

Based on the chief principles of theories surrounding identity previously described, the following assumption mediate this research:

1. Identities are performances, not something attained. Manifestations of voices are a crucial component to individuals enacting these performances.

2. Identities are dynamic. Therefore, individuals do not exhibit a set voice but constantly negotiate and form self-expressions to be understood.

3. For an individual to be a "certain kind of person," they must be recognized as such by others. This implies that individual voices must be heeded by others and are informed through interactions with others.

4. Learning and identities mediate one another. By extension, this entails that the voices students exhibit influence and are influenced by learning. While their self-expressions are guided by what they learn, how they understand the world or course content is shaped by how they make themselves understood.

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This theoretical framework, grounded in sociocultural beliefs, afforded me the language and constructs necessary to investigate the manifestations of students' voices in a dialogic children's literature class. These theories anchored my thinking as I strove to understand how students exhibited their voices and how their voices shifted over the semester. They provide a foundation and lens for me to analyze the dynamic nature of students' voices and guided me in exploring literature that also investigates voice, detailed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to understand undergraduates' voices in an undergraduate children's literature course. Mainly, I was interested in how they manifested their voices and how their voices shifted over the semester. In this study, I define voice as the dynamic co-construction of semiotic self-expressions (i.e., representations of oneself, positions, views, values, and beliefs). Each self-expression responds to and addresses future utterances and situations, is heeded by others, and influences and is influenced by an individual's social context. In this chapter, I evaluate contemporary trends from research literature regarding students' voices and responses to literature to identify ways researchers and educators have examined and created opportunities for students to manifest their voices.

More specifically, the scholarship I reviewed is grounded in sociocultural theories of learning (e.g., view learning as a social construct) and implemented in a K-12 or higher education setting. The rationale for looking at studies conducted in formal education settings was to examine how academic contexts influence manifestations of students' voices, given the social and political conditions at school. Meyer and Whitmore (2020) define manifestations as "the 'stuff' we gather and garner from learners as meaning makers, including their meaning-making strategies and reflections" (p. 2). From a sociocultural lens, manifestations are regarded as situated in and a part of the cultural and social context.

Based on this study's focus, I reviewed studies in the following areas:

1.   Conceptualizations of Voice in Contemporary Research

2.   Mediating Factors that Shape Students' Voices

3.   Students' Perceptions of Their Voices

4.   Readers' Responses to Literature

In the subsequent sections, I present key findings from this body of research and illuminate how they were used to inform future practice. Additionally, I provide descriptions from representative studies, and discuss gaps and limitations in the literature. I conclude by outlining implications for this study based on the current literature.

Conceptualizations of Voice

Voice remains an elusive concept in the research scholarship (Alexander, 2019; Canning, 2017; McLeod, 2011; Seale, 2010). Though it has become a buzzword within education, voice's meaning is often assumed or remains an abstract entity. In research the unit of analysis and methods used to understand voice vary considerably. For instance, some studies conceptualize voice as a social practice and examine the resources individuals use in constructing their voices (Dyson, 2001; Freemen, Delp & Crawford, 2005; Maybin, 2006). For instance, Freemen and colleagues (2005) depict voice as a social construct. In examining an eighth-grade classroom, they found student meaning-making to be heavily influenced by the voices of their peers. Students in their study listened and incorporated the voice of others as their own. An additional study from Maybin (2006) demonstrated how elementary school students appropriated the voices of their parents, pop culture, peers and teachers in varying degrees throughout the school day as their own.

In contrast, other scholars conceptualize voice as an individual accomplishment and an entity students must acquire (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Morgan & Streb, 2001; Zhao & Llosa, 2008). Students' stylistic and aesthetic choices in these studies become the unit of analysis. With this perspective, voice is seen as something that individuals can measure. For instance, Helms-Park & Stapleton (2003) depicts voices as an acquired attribute. Their study specifically looked at the relationship between the presence of voice and writing quality. They developed a Voice Intensity Rating Scale to measure student voice among undergraduate English language learners. Their study found no correlation between the acquisition of voice and writing quality and, consequently, questioned voice's value as a pedagogical focus.

Much of the current literature on students' voices pays particular attention to educational reform and policy. This is especially apparent in higher education in which voice is narrowly conceptualized to describe students completing course evaluations and feedback for "quality enhancement and assurance" and "staff or professional development" (Seale, 2010 p. 996; Campbell et al., 2007; Canning, 2017; William & Capuccimo-Ansfield, 2007). In these studies, researchers use content analysis on students' varying opinions. For example, Canning (2017) describes how England's proposed Teaching Excellence Framework relies on the National Student Survey (NSS) to quantify and measure students' voices concerning their school experiences. Canning argues that the use of NSS will further define voice in educational policy as a marker of quality teaching.

Segal and Lefstein's scholarship (Lefstein et al., 2018; Segal & Lefstein, 2016; Segal et al., 2016) presents the most theoretically sound and precise depiction of voice.

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Building off the theoretical assertions of dialogism and sociocultural theories of learning and in review of previous studies of dialogic interactions (e.g., Resnick et al., 2015), Segal and Lefstein claim that voice is a combination of four actions. It is (1) the opportunity to express (oral, written, or in other modes), (2) expressing one's intentions and ideas, (3) making oneself understood in their own terms, and (4) being attended to and heard by others. Their research focuses on how voice is illuminated in a whole class or small group setting where the teacher is present and among elementary school children. For instance, Segal et al. (2017) analyzed a thirty-minute small group discussion on equity and discrimination between five males and their teacher in a sixth-grade English class. In their study, they depict how the students and the teacher made their voice visible, describing those four actions.

While their studies are illuminating, more research is needed to expand this definition and examine the dynamic nature of voices, specifically how they shift over time and across contexts. Furthermore, while Segal and colleagues (2017) recommend conditions for cultivating voices, they conclude by sharing that more research is needed to investigate how voice can be prioritized and mediated in the classroom. My study aims to extend current conceptualizations of voice and contribute to this gap in the literature.

Many studies that examine voice specifically investigate how it manifests in writing, and discussions, with studies examining voice in writing to be the most prolific. Additionally, much research has been conducted on how educators and researchers alike can measure or record students' voices. I examine contemporary trends from this literature below.

Investigating Voices in Writing

A number of research studies have looked to students' academic writing to examine the concept of voice. Specifically, studies identify discursive features and textual functions as evidence of the manifestation of voice; this includes appraisals (Hood, 2012; Martin, 2000, Martin & White, 2005), evaluations (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), judgements (Coffin, 2002), stances (Gray & Biber, 2012, Hyland, 2008; 2012; Lancaster, 2016), engagement (Hyland, 2008), intensity (Labov, 1984), and intentionality (Jeffery, 2011). These studies seem to imply that voice is an entity to be attained and displayed in students' writing. As an example, Hyland (2008) examined grammatical devices used to convey voice in 240 research articles from a cross-section of academic disciplines. He broke these devices into two main categories: *stance* "how writers convey their attitudes and credibility" and *engagement* "ways the [the writer] bring their reader into the discourse" (p. 5). Hyland identified four key grammatical elements that portrayed *stance* and five grammatical elements that cultivated engagement. These are summarized in Table 2.1.

Stance		Engagement	
Hedge	Express hesitancy to show a claim is rooted in plausible reasoning as opposed to fact *There are numerous possible reasons…*	Reader Pronoun	Through using the inclusive *we*, the writer brings the reader into the discussion.
Booster	Convey certainty and demonstrate writer's conviction. *Of course, there should be….*	Directives	Signal the reader to engage in a textual act (read another text), physical act (engage in a real-work action), or cognitive act (asking the reader to consider or note).
Attitude Marker	Show affective attitude to an argument of proposition *It is interesting…. The worry I have is…*	Personal Asides	Disrupt argument or statement to address the reader by offering a remark on what was said.
Self-Mention	Utilize possessive adjective or first-person pronouns to share information *Our findings suggest…*	Appeals to shared knowledge	An explicit sign for the reader to recognize a statement as accepted or familiar
		Questions	Posing question to entice reader curiosity and engagement

Table 2.1: Hyland's (2008) Textual Features of Voice

Hyland (2008) found these grammatical features occurred once for every 28 words, signaling that the expression of stance and engagement were key features of voice in academic writing. Additionally, he noted certain features were more prominent in some disciplines, such as hedges and boosters in the social sciences and humanities. His findings suggest that voices manifested in writing take on different discursive

characteristics depending on the academic discipline and nature of the presented information.

In addition to voices varying across academic disciplines in writing, another study by Hyland (2002) described how demonstrations of authorial identity varied based on an individual's race/ ethnicity. Specifically, Hyland investigated how the use of personal pronouns varied for L2 Asian undergraduate writers compared to Anglo-Americans. Hyland in agreement with other scholars (e.g., Kuo, 1999; Tang & John, 1999) argue that using first person pronouns are powerful way for writer to assert their authority, and establish their presence and relationship with the reader. This is seen as a central feature of academic writing in the US. However, Hyland found that many second language learners feel uncomfortable using personal pronouns due to their connotation of authority.

While several studies point out grammatical features associated with voice, others aim to specify what qualities instructors most value in students' writing as related to voice. For example, Jeffery (2011) examined nineteen secondary teachers' evaluations of voices in their students' writing. Using a think-aloud interview protocol with the teachers, she found that most teachers used terms such as "'choice,' 'control,' 'command,' and 'deliberate'" to denote textual evidence of voices (p. 108). Her findings suggest that teachers associated voice with the intentionality of the writer, similar to Hyland's concept of stance. Additionally, the teachers saw the features of tone, diction, specificity, sentence structure, coherence, and development as markers of voice.

Similarly, Jeffery's (2011) findings correspond with Lancaster's (2016) study, which found that undergraduates course paper graded higher than a B expressed stance – "defined broadly as an expression of attitude, epistemic judgments and interactional

involvement" – more so than papers who received a grade lower than a B (p. 16). In his study, Lancaster examined 92 graded papers from two different semesters in an economics and political science course. Half of the papers received a grade of a B or better, and the other half received a B- or lower. Lancaster sought to identify writing qualities valued within the courses based on their letter grade. Overall, she indicated students demonstrating a stance was linked to receiving a higher grade. Specifically, she found that students' voices and stances were marked by including (a) *disclaim markers,* such as problematizing others views or addressing anticipated questions or challenges from readers, (b) *hedging*, a linguistic devise to mark equanimity or caution in one's remarks, and (c) *discoursal alignment*, subtly conveying uptake of course concepts by using positive attitude markers and boosters. While Lancaster identified these three writing qualities as key to favorably expressing voice within these classes, he noted these traits were not explicitly stated or requested in the courses' assignments. Lancaster notes, "the instructors did not have assessment vocabulary, or meta-language, geared toward addressing these dimensions of language use" (p. 27). This suggests that such discursive features are more implied as opposed to directly expressed as an expectation of students' voices in academic writing. This is corroborated by several other studies that found that while academic discourse is key for student success in academia, it remains a large part of the hidden curriculum (e.g., Gilderseleeve, 2006; Gutiérrez, 1995; Margolis et al., 2001).

These studies collectively made visible discursive and grammatical markers associated with manifestations of voice in academic writing. Moreover, they highlight written markers valued by institutions or professors, in other words, discursive patterns

related to a dominant academic (D)iscourse (Gee, 1996; 2000). However, a downfall of these studies is that they collectively and implicitly frame voice as something needing to be correct based on the presence of these grammatical devices, when indeed there is no such thing as "correct" or better voice. What these studies illuminate are trends in how voice is most often manifested in academic writing.

While these studies highlight written markers of voice valued in academic papers by institutions, few inform us of who is making these moves. For instance, is there variability in the race, gender, ethnicity, or academic disciplines of students who are making these moves in manifesting their voices in writing? A further limitation to these studies is that they solely focus their analysis on academic papers instead of other forms of writing such as reflective or narrative compositions. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see how these grammatical devices shape spoken discourse and how they may reveal themselves in other forms of expression, such as visual arts.

Examining Students' Voices in Discussions

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of research that examines the influences of dialogic discussions on cultivating students' voices (e.g., Alexander, 2020; Clarke, 2015; Lefstein et al., 2018; Segal & Lefstein, 2016). In these studies, researchers focus on students' expressed ideas and perspectives as opposed to linguistic features of their voices. Dialogic discussions are defined as tension-fueled exchanges between individuals, in speech or text, that result in the co-construction of new understandings (Bakhtin, 1981; Nystrand, 1997, Wegerif et al., 1999). Tension, often cast in a negative light and seen as unproductive (Maurino, 2007), is what fuels innovation and meaning-

making between those involved. Tension, in this sense, can result from competing ideas, conflicting opinions, or not-knowing and is regarded as a process of negotiating and exploring various viewpoints, often refracting what has been said (Bakhtin, 1981; Wertsch, 1991). As a result, individuals go back and forth, raising new questions and grouping ideas to co-construct deeper understandings. Without tension, conversations fall flat, or, as Bakhtin (1981) states, responses "fall out of dialogue" (p. 168).

Numerous scholars consider dialogic interactions prime opportunities for individuals to shape and negotiate their voices (e.g., Knoeller, 2004; Segal & Lefstein, 2016; Sperling et al., 2011). This was evident in Knoeller's (2004) ethnographic case study of a twelfth-grade English course. Knoeller closely examined students' discussions and written texts throughout a novel study. He demonstrated how students' ideas, positions, and perspectives (i.e., voice) evolved due to class discussions and how students valued class discussions as places to engage in rethinking and developing their voices. His study emphasized how open and dialogic discussions, in which students represented multiple ways of knowing and thinking, encouraged them to adopt more diverse perspectives and interpret, instead of explicate, the text.

Segal and Lefstein (2016) also investigated students' voices in dialogic discussions. In contrast to Knoeller's (2004) findings, their study of sixth-grade students found students to be engaged in an "exuberant, voiceless participation." Though the discussions appeared dialogic, they wrote, "… at the level of voice, the discussion is mostly univocal, since most students' contributions are aligned with the official voices of the teacher and the curriculum and in the rare instances where they engage, independent student voices fall out of conversation" (p. 1). Their study saw students actively

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participating; however, the ideas expressed were not their own but that of the official curriculums. The teacher and fellow students only considered ideas aligned with the academic (D)iscourse. As a result, Segal and Lefstein rendered the discussion voiceless. However, according to Bakhtin, "there are no voiceless words, no words that come from the dictionary" (Prior, 2001, p. 64). Therefore, I argue that these discussions were not voiceless but instead perpetuated a singular perspective, the dominant (D)iscourse aligned with school (Gee, 1996; 2000). Segal and Lefstein's findings suggest that just because a discussion is seemingly dialogic does not mean that students' voices are dynamically expanding to consider diverse perspectives. They also suggest that studies on dialogic interaction focus on processes of talk rather than the cultivation of voice. They call for future research to deeply examine what mediates and how students manifest voices in the classroom beyond turns of talks, prompts, and discussion structures.

Clarke (2015) takes up the call to understand the cultivation of voice in dialogic classroom interactions. For six consecutive weeks, she observed discussions in a high school biology class. Though nominally dialogic, the discussions featured only a fraction of actively participating students, while the majority remained silent. She found students perceived having "the right to speak or be heard" only when they believed their ideas were correct or, in other words, were in line with the authoritative voice (p. 17). Like Segal and Lefstein (2016), Clarke portrays a vocal but singular narrative conversation among a few students, yet a silent conversation amongst the majority. Juxtaposing Clarke's study with Segal and Lefstein's brings attention to both the mischaracterization of and lack of awareness of students' voices within dialogic discussions. Both studies show how dialogic discussions may appear to promote students' voices; nevertheless,

upon closer examination, students are animating the authoritative voice or not speaking at all in fear of being wrong.

More research is needed to understand what mediates this disconnect and how schools can cultivate students' internally-persuasive voices in dialogic discussions, similar to the findings from Knoeller's study (2004). Gaining students' perspectives on their choices to remain silent or mimic the dominant academic (D)iscourse may be fruitful in further understanding and promoting students' voices. Furthermore, most of the scholarship attending to voice in dialogic interactions occurs in a K-12 setting, in which discussions are between a teacher and their students. Little scholarship addresses the cultivation of voice in peer-led groups or among students in higher education.

Tracking and Evaluating Students' Voices in Writing

Writing assessment rubrics (Jeffrey, 2011; Sperling & Appleman, 2011) and other evaluative criteria (Beck, 2006; DiPardo, et al., 2011) suggest that voice is a significant construct to evaluate and measure. Lancaster's (2016) study, previously mentioned, noted that students' papers with higher frequency of discursive markers that allude to voice received more favorable grades. Other studies (DiPardo et al., 2011; Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Spalding et al., 2009; Yeh, 1998; Yoon, 2017; Zhoa & Llosa, 2008; 2012) focused on the relationship between voice and quality writing through rubrics and scales.

Helms-Park and Stapleton's (2003) study specifically looked at the relationship between voice and writing quality among undergraduate English language learners. They assessed writing quality using an ESL Composition Profile (created by Jacobs et al.,

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1981) and developed a Voice Intensity Rating Scale to measure students' voices individualistically. With this scale, four components assessed participants' voices: "assertiveness; self-identification; reiteration of central point; and authorial presence and autonomy of thought" (p. 245). Their study found no correlation between the acquisition of voice and writing quality and, consequently, questioned voice's value as a pedagogical focus. A significant drawback of Helms-Park and Stapleton's approach is that it did not comprehensively measure voice but instead sought to operationalize the concept of voice narrowly. Years later, Zhao and Losa (2008) adopted similar methodologies as Helms-Park and Stapleton, using their rating scale, to study L1 writers in a New York high school. Contradicting Helms-Park and Stapleton's original findings, Zhao and Losa documented a strong correlation between the presence of voice with a high score for overall writing quality. Zhao and Losa concluded that voice is central to writing success and argued that the ESL Composition Profile used to assess overall student writing in Helms-Park and Staplton's study did not attend to voice.

In further contrast to Helms-Park and Stapleton, Yeh (1998) constructed an analytic rubric to assess manifestations of students' voice in argumentative writing and found that the presence of voice favorably influenced the holistic assessment of writing. The rubric levels were based on immaturity or maturity of voice, "defined as: appropriate, sophisticated, audience-centered, vivid language filled with conviction" (p. 128). Then, at the lowest level on the rubric, a piece of writing had "no voice." The main limitation of this kind of rubric is that it deems some voices as more "correct" than others, using the veil of the term maturity and rendered some students voiceless.

In a more recent study, Yoon (2017) examined the correlation between textual voice elements – such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions – and overall voice strength in 219 argumentative essays written by Greek-speaking English foreign language students at the university level. Yoon used two different instruments, an Authorial Voice Analyzer that calculated frequencies of a priori textual markers of voice (such as those mentioned above) and a holistic voice rubric to assess the holistic voice strength. Yoon found a weak to moderate positive correlation between textual voice elements and holistic voice strength and that using varied textual voice elements is more effective than the mere quantity of textual elements used. While Yoon's study sheds light on patterns of speech and writing associated with manifestations of voice, it fails to capture the function of these textual features in the context of students' writing or to consider how the genre of argumentative writing influenced the results.

Overall, rubrics identified in these studies failed to capture the social and situated nature of voice adequately. Matsuda (2015) argues that all rubrics fail to "account for features such as ideas and argumentative strategies that cannot be identified with the analysis of textual structures and functions" (p. 153). Contrary to these studies, manifestations of voice cannot be observed in text alone, as they exist as interactions between an individual and a reader/ listener that rubrics cannot account for. Such interactions are hard to codify. Furthermore, as Jeffery (2011) maintains, rubrics posit voice as a developmental and measurable construct, creating an opportunity for an individual's expression to be considered voiceless. For instance, a rubric used by Arizona and Oregon denotes that individuals can understand voice as being present or absent in students' work.

This tension between the codification of voice and accounting for interactions between a reader and writer is documented in DiPardo and colleagues' (2011) study of the National Writing project's Analytic Writing Continuum. The National Writing Project sought to create a scoring rubric of student writing that would reflect teachers' priorities and goals in composition. Research teams acknowledged that teachers highly sought the cultivation of voice among their students. However, in trying to create language for the rubric, they found that the concept of voice encouraged the rater to "imagine the writer behind the text and to focus in reader-response fashion on their own subjective reactions" (p. 177). This would make sense as voice is seen as a co-construction between an individual and the receiver of that voice. Therefore, voice does not bode well when wanting to create an objective rubric. To have the rater focus on the writing as opposed to the writer, the National Writing Project changed the category of voice to stance within their rubric, which emphasized aspects of the students' language instead of reader-writer interactions.

Taken together, these studies reveal the difficulty in measuring voice. Voices are situated within a larger context of interactions between individuals and their semiotic expression instead of solely within a text, or speech (Matsuda & Tardy, 2007; Prior, 2001). The results from studies that codify voice must be interpreted with caution because they fail to capture the dynamic and responsive interactions of manifesting voices. Such rubrics can lead to distortions of students' voices. Future research on voice needs to provide a contextualized and qualitative account of students' voices, to understand better how it influences not only students' writing but other forms of semiotic expressions.

Describing Mediating Factors that Shape Student's Voices

A key area of research on students' voices is examining mediating factors that contribute to the manifestations of their voices. As Bakhtin (1981) wrote, "the word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's owns' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention." (p. 293). The question then for many studies is what "word" gets appropriated and how.

Numerous studies reveal how individuals' voices are mediated and sometimes overshadowed by the voices of others. Specifically, studies have observed how individuals' voices often aims to reproduce their cultural and social world, such as the talk they experience in school (e.g., Maybin, 2006, 2103; Chapman, 2006; Segal & Lefstein, 2016) in addition to the voices of others such as family members, friends, or popular culture (e.g., Canagarajah, 2015; Dyson, 2001; Freedman et al., 2005). While not all studies in this section use the term "voice," I applied my definition of voice—a semiotic self-expression that responds to and addresses future utterance—to studies that sought to understand the same phenomenon.

In a study examining 10- and 11- year-old children's voices over a school day, Maybin (2006) found that children often reproduced or appropriated the authoritative voices of their teachers, parents, or popular culture. In the classroom, children often aligned their voices with the teacher or reused the teacher's words as their own and aligned the purpose of their voice with what they interpreted to be important in school (i.e., getting a high grade on a national test). Whereas on the playground, children's talk

often echoed popular culture or individuals from their everyday lives, such as siblings or parents. This study sheds light on how students move back and forth between various (D)iscourses to make themselves understood in an array of contexts, called style shifting (Kutz, 1998) or what other linguist have termed "code switching" (Flowers, 2000; Godley & Minici, 2008; Swords & Wheeler, 2004). While students saw value in appropriating the teacher's word in the classroom setting, the same cannot be said for the playground.

In another study, Freedman and colleagues (2005) examined eighth graders in an untracked English class. These students frequently adopted the voices of their teacher or peers who they perceived as being deeply engaged in class discussions. They appropriated their peers' and teacher's voices in both their writing and speech. Maybin's (2006) and Freedman et al.'s findings, taken together, along with the findings from Segal and Lefstein (2016) and Clarke (2015), suggest that students often emulate voices in the classroom that they perceive as being in line with the authoritative discourse of school and voices in which they will get a favorable response (i.e., being "correct").

These studies' findings led me to seek further literature on how academic (D)iscourse influences students' voices. White and Lowenthal (2011) define academic (D)iscourse as "the specific yet tacit discursive style expected of participants in the academy" (i.e., academia) (p. 284). It is well documented in research that the discursive style of American schools is closely linked to (D)iscourse patterns of White middle-and upper-class Americans (Tyack, 1976). Consequently, numerous studies highlight how minority students' home language frequently conflicts with forms of language expected in school settings (Au, 1991; Corson, 2001; Gutierrez, 1995). In particular, Heath's

(1983) seminal study explored how schools expect underrepresented students to utilize this specific academic (D)iscourse to manifest their voices. However, many underrepresented students have not had the opportunity to learn said (D)iscourse, nor is this (D)iscourse fully explained or taught to students from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Heath, 1983; Delpit, 1988). As a result, many underrepresented students fall silent or feel they must alter their voice in academic settings.

Additional studies have attempted to explain why underrepresented students are hesitant to manifest their voices in class discussions (e.g., Duff, 2002; Dunstan & Jager, 2015; Scott, 2008; White, 2005; White & Ali-Khan, 2013). Several studies have revealed that minority students feel their voices are less accepted by their peers and instructor in the same fashion as their White peers (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Dunstan & Jaeger, 2015; White, 2007; 2011). For example, in Duff's (2002) study, she found many tenth-grade English Language Learners were afraid to speak up in their social studies class discussions in fear that peers would criticize them for their language use. Being silent "protected them from humiliation" (p. 312). However, being quiet was frequently met with resistance from their peers, who saw their lack of participation as a lack of initiative.

Similarly, Dunstan and Jaeger (2015) found that undergraduates with varying dialects were less likely to engage in course discussions due to fears that their dialect would make them sound less intelligent to their peers or instructor. Comparatively, White (2011) examined how four minoritized freshmen consciously decided not to participate throughout their course due to feelings of "academic and linguistic incompetence" (p. 255). Furthermore, these students felt pressure that when they spoke in class discussions, they would be speaking for the entirety of their respective race/ culture. Collectively

these studies provide important insights into how the prevalence of academic (D)iscourse in school settings may influence underrepresented students to suppress self-expressions in academic settings.

Canagarajah's (2015) investigation further complicates the discussion of appropriation by examining how a graduate student pulled on various cultural and academic resources, as she was influenced by the voices of classmates, her instructor, and other scholars. In his study, he followed the writing development of a Japanese graduate student. Over a semester, the student engaged in writing several drafts of a peer-reviewed literary autobiography. Canagarajah found that the student would: revise and write back in her drafts to feedback from her peers and teacher, used previously published autobiographies as scaffolds for her writing, respond to course artifacts in subsequent drafts, and pull on her Japanese heritage in crafting her paper. Canagarajah concluded that it is "difficult to isolate one pedagogical factor as leading to the construction of voice" since multiple factors contribute in both dynamic and subtle ways to the construction of student voice (p. 125). As a result, he recommended that instructors see their role as facilitators of voice and agency instead of "models or authorities" of voice.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate how individuals pull on various cultural resources and highlight how underrepresented students' voices may be at odds with the dominant (D)iscourse of school. Specifically, these studies highlight how academic (D)iscourse mediates underrepresented students' voices in schools setting, namely with many electing to remain silent in class discussions.

Understanding Students' Perceptions of Their Voices

The literature is scant on students' perception of their own voices. When voice is seen as a co-construction between an individual and their audience (i.e., reader), it becomes necessary to examine both perceptions of students' voices (Ivanic, 1998). A small body of literature attempts to understand the voices students wish to project, mainly within their writing (e.g., Amicucci, 2017; Jwa, 2018; Lancaster, 2018; 2019; Lillis, 2001; Petrić, 2010). For example, Petrić (2010) investigated students' conceptions of voice. Petrić (2010) interviewed thirty graduate students in a gender studies program at a university in Central Europe. She found that most students conceptualized voice as individualistic, as opposed to social. In manifesting their voices students focused on "expressions of opinions, use of linguistic markers of authorial presence (e.g., the first-person pronoun) and inclusion of personal experiences in one's text" (p. 325). Petrić found that only a few conceptualized voices as the result of interactions with other voices. Petrić's findings suggest many students view voice as an individual accomplishment, in which one asserts their authorial self.

In another study looking at a student's perception of voices, Jwa (2018) investigated the process of voice construction for a Korean undergraduate. Through the use of interviews and a micro-analysis of the text, Jwa analyzed the student's internal process and aims of constructing a textual analysis essay for her English course, in addition to how two readers perceived her text. Jwa found the student aimed to project her Korean identity in showcasing her personal response while also exhibiting an intended academic identity. While she could describe ways she exhibited her Korean identity, it was difficult for her to specifically name features she used to convey an

academic identity. The student reflected on concepts she learned in past English composition courses, such as using topics statements or thesis statements, and the writing structure PIE (an acronym for Point, Illustration, and Explanation), to sound academic, yet was unsure of the discourse expectations. Readers of the text found the student's writing to be overly direct and hard to read, illuminating a gap between the student's aim and the readers' responses. Jwa noted that the student's "conception of U.S. college writing might have produced unintentional didacticism" (p. 41), as noted by readers. Jwa suggested that the student's voice was "a result of not mere conformity to discursive conventions, but of a negotiation between her personal repertoires and her perceptions of and positioning in regards to the discourse" (p. 43). Jwa's findings support the notion that individuals anticipate what is expected of them, while pulling on their own cultural resources in manifesting their voice, similar to what Canagarajah (2015) found when investigating a Japanese master student's writing.

In a similar study, Amicucci (2017) examined a first-year college student's Facebook activity to understand how she manifested her voice in writing on the social media platform. Akin to Jwa, Amicucci found that the student tailored her posts in anticipation of what would garner the most likes or engagement from the Facebook community. While Facebook is much different from an academic community, the similarities in these studies is how students fashion their voice to the (D)iscourse they feel will be most favorable. Amicucci concluded that the student had a strong desire to be heard and considered by others, and therefore anticipated the responses and values of her audience when manifesting her voice.

These various studies illustrate the influence an audience has on the construction of a student's voice and the effect of anticipating a response. Furthermore, they demonstrate how students' construction of voice is negotiated between the expectations of their audience, and values an individual wants to exhibit. When anticipating a response, students indicated they change the wording they'd naturally include to establish a voice that would be heard by others (Ivanic, 1998; Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Jwa, 2018). More scholarship is needed to understand the processes by which students choose discursive features to display their voice. Additionally, what is lacking in the scholarship is examining students' perceptions of their voices beyond written discourse, so to include a wider range of semiotic expressions, such as discussions.

Reader Responses to Literature

Finally, I review studies that investigated reader's responses to texts since this study examined ways students manifested their voice in response to themes in children's literature. A broad range of studies (e.g. Brett, 2016; Larson, 2009; DeVoogd & McLaughlin, 2018; Ghiso, 2011; Leland & Harste, 2000; Luke, 2019; McCullough, 2013; McEneaney et al., 2009; Morrell, 2008; Soter et al, 2010; Pantaleo, 2013; Vasquez, 2010) emphasize that a reader's stance influences their response (i.e. manifested voice) to a text. While Rosenblatt (1987) outlined stances on a continuum ranging from a more efferent, factual stance to a more aesthetic, emotional stance, many scholars are examining a third stance called a critical stance (e.g. Groenke, 2008; Hall & Piazza, 2008; Lewis, 2000; Morrell, 2008; Richards, 2006; Scherff, 2012; Silvers et al., 2010; Simon, 2007). In short, a critical stance focuses on issues of power and fosters personal reflection and action

(McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2019). It is heavily influenced by the work of Paulo Freire (1970). Literature on critical reading stances suggests that a critical stance encourages readers to push back against an authoritative voice, creates a sense of agency for students, and fosters the manifestation of students' voices that call into question power and the status quo (Fecho, 2004; Lewison et al., 2002, Wood et al., 2006).

Literature on students taking a critical stance (e.g., Comber & Simpson, 2001; Morell, 2002, 2008; Mosely, 2010; Heffernan & Lewison, 2009; Scherff, 2012; Simon, 2007; Skerrett, 2010) illuminates its potential to improve learning, examine power and relationships, and promote equality. For example, Heffernan and Lewison (2009), examined sixth-grade students critical responses to articles that called into question the use of prizes and awards in society. They found that while many students initially struggled to shift their thinking from the dominant perspective—that society needed awards—that "by asking question of themselves and others… [they] opened the door to imagining new ways of being" (p. 27). In short, by posing questions and taking a critical stance their voices shifted and expanded on the topic.

Similarly, scholars such as Simon (2007), Scherff (2012) and Skerrett (2010), approached taking a critical stance with preservice and in-service teachers using inquiry-based projects in university methods courses. Simon (2007) used inquiry projects with in-service teachers to foster a critical stance with multigenre texts. Simon found that inquiry projects encouraged students to question widely held beliefs and assumptions. For instance, students questioned the assumptions about gender and math, specifically noting how women were often absent from various literature, such as posters hanging in their classroom, on the history of mathematics. Students' inquiry projects were used to

identify, address, and challenge inequalities they came to understand. By taking a critical stance in these projects, students experienced what Fecho et al. (2005) refer to as a "wobble"—"a space of uncertainty" (p. 175) in which the construction of new ideas questioned old beliefs.

Skerrett (2010) also asked pre-service teachers to pursue a social justice inquiry project to see whether these projects promoted a critical stance. She found some preservice teachers were challenged to re-think their view on equity, such as one who completed a project on homelessness. Moreover, students felt these projects increased their awareness of inequity in their communities. However, Skerrett (2010) in accordance with Fecho et al. (2005) and Mosely (2012), cautions instructors that students don't establish a long-term critical stance or achieve "equity" through one course. These dispositions can be reshaped by future courses and/or experiences. Collectively, these studies demonstrate how students taking up a critical stance fosters shifts to students' voices, encouraging them to question the status quo.

Another large and growing body of literature (e.g., Chin et al., 2011; Thein et al., 2011; Wilfong, 2009), investigates the effects discussion structures, such as literature circles or collaborative reasoning, have on students' responses to literature. Much of this literature examines particular roles students negotiate, often assigned by a teacher, and the format of whole class or small group discussions. These studies show how discussion structures are instrumental in shaping the nature of students' self-expression regarding literature (Murphy et al., 2008; Wyant & Bowen, 2018). Furthermore, while some applauded the use of roles in discussions (Wilfong, 2009), other problematize their use (Thein, Guise & Sloan, 2011) in fostering generative and critical dialogic discussions.

Wilkinson and colleagues (2015) discerned nine main approaches to conducting a literature discussion. Each approach, based on the role of the teacher and the students, lends itself to a more dominant reader stance in relation to the text (Rosenblatt, 1978). When teachers have more control of the discussions, the approach fosters an efferent stance among students' voices – the focus is on acquiring and retaining facts. These discussion approaches include Instructional Conversations (Goldenberg, 1992/1993), Junior Great Books Shared Inquiry (Great Books Foundation, 1987) and Questioning the Author (Beck & McKeown, 2006). When students have greater control of the conversation, an aesthetic stance is promoted—effort is spent on responding to literature. These approaches include Book Clubs (Raphael & McMahon, 1994), Grand Conversations (Eeds & Wells, 1989), and Literature Circles (Daniels, 2001; Short & Pierce, 1990). When students and teachers share equal control of the conversation, it fosters a critical-analytic stance. This stance seeks to interrogate or question the text to examine underlying arguments, beliefs, and assumptions (Wade, Thompson, & Watkins, 1994). Approaches that foster this stance include Paideia Seminars (Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002), Collaborative Reasoning (Anderson, Chinn, Waggoner, & Nguyen, 1998) and Philosophy for Children (Sharp, 1995). Wilkinson and colleagues illuminate that the nature of a discussion and how students approach and respond to a text is strongly influenced by the structure of the discussion.

Similarly, Thein et al. (2011) found in their study with middle school students, that when students engaged in traditional literature circles with multicultural texts, students generated mainly personal responses. In their study, students took on traditional roles within the discussion such as "discussion director" or "literary luminary." Overall,

the students' discussions had all the markings of a dialogic discussion, many of the students' utterances were interpretive and evaluative. However, Thein and colleagues identified a tension between these traditional roles associated with literature circles and the use of multicultural and political texts. Traditional literature circle roles mediated responses to multicultural texts in which students dismissed main characters' feelings if they couldn't relate, over-identified with characters they had little in common with, or constructed counterarguments to resist the political messages in the book. In short, students were not taking a critical-analytic stance like the teacher had hoped. They argued that the traditional roles within literature circles do not provide sufficient support for students to engage in critical dialogic discussions and suggested new roles such as "problem poser" and "stereotype tracker," to support this kind of stance.

Likewise, VanHorn (2015) found that just providing students with challenging or multicultural texts led to surface level talk unless discussions were structured or prompts were designed to challenge students' prior assumptions and beliefs. Thein et al's., and VanHorn's studies illuminate the influence structures and roles have on students' voices in literature discussions. While discussion roles encourage continual turn taking, the function of the role or discussion set up heavily mediated the nature of students' voices. Though students in their study were engaged in their discussion, traditional literature roles didn't incite what Bakhtin (1981) refers to as a "zone of contact" in which "authoritative discourse" – a dominant discourse that "demands our unconditional allegiance" (p. 343) – coincides with "internally persuasive discourse." In short, just presenting students with multicultural or political texts does not foster a critical stance in which students question the status quo.

Taken together, these studies reveal the influence a reader's stance has on the manifestation of their voices. Discussion formats, roles, and tasks influence how students make meaning of and reveal their voices regarding literature. Scholar advocate for classrooms to foster a critical stance so to encourage students to question the status quo in hopes of creating a more equitable society.

Implications for The Current Study

Although research on voice and its intersection with reader responses is varied, recent research in the field illuminates ways voice can be manifested in the classroom. This study aims to contribute to research that reframes voice as more than just an expression of ideas, but also a matter of being heard on one's own terms (e.g., Segal & Lefstein, 2017; McLeod, 2001). The study focuses on a specific case to examine how voice is cultivated and developed. Additionally, this study departs from previous studies (e.g., Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Clark, 2015; Freemen et al., 2005; Lefstein et al., 2018) that focus solely on teacher-students interactions, or academic papers (e.g., Gray & Biber, 2012; Hood, 2012; Jeffery, 2011; Martin, 2000, Martin & White, 2005) to instead examine voice across engagements such as peer-led interactions and reflective writing in the manifestation of voice. Finally, there has been little research on voice in dialogic spaces in higher education beyond students' expressions in course evaluations (Canning, 2017; Seal, 2010). This study seeks to fill the gap by examining the manifestation of student voice in an undergraduate course in efforts to redefine what it means for students in higher education to make their voice visible in a classroom setting among their peers.

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CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative case study investigates manifestations of undergraduate students' voices throughout a 16-week course on children's literature. Meyer and Whitmore (2020) claim that teachers and researchers can deepen their understanding of learners' experiences by examining what learners manifest — "demonstrations of meaning-making" (p. 1). In this study, I employed thematic analysis to examine undergraduates' reflections and meaning-making strategies for how they construct their voices. Specifically, I investigated their peer-led small group discussion in conjunction with their reflective writing. Each manifestation is rooted in a specific context and time and responds to the social and political climate it is situated in. However, manifestations cannot be discerned by analyzing artifacts in isolation from the participants. According to Whitmore and Meyer (2020), manifestations "can only be understood through collective thinking by both researchers and participants" (p. xxv). Therefore, to construct a deep understanding of voice, I incorporated participants' perspectives on the manifestations of their voices by including interviews and post discussion questionnaires, and course reflections.

A chief axiological assumption embedded within critical sociocultural perspectives of qualitative research is that "research has the potential to generate social change and combat inequalities" (Martinez-Roldan, 2020, p. 492). A key concern of qualitative research is bringing to the forefront perspectives, thoughts, and reactions of individuals who are often absent in research (Erickson, 1987). In this study, I take up this assumption and concern through my commitment to uncover and transform learning

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contexts that stifle student voices. Additionally, I do this by examining interactions, tools, and engagements that support manifestations of student voices and encourage student learning and identity. I designed my research methods to position all students as having something to say and provided ample opportunities for students to demonstrate meaning-making.

This study's objective was to examine manifestations of students' voices over time and across various formats. This research documents participants' processes of demonstrating voices and the products rendered from said processes. I focus on the following research questions:

1. How do undergraduates' manifest their voices in a children's literature course?

    a. What cultural resources, tools and voices do students appropriate?

    b. In what ways do they appropriate the voices of others and/or various (D)iscourses?

    c. What ideologies surface in the manifestation of students' voices?

2. How do undergraduates' voices shift over the course of the semester?

    a. How do these shifts manifest themselves?

    b. What mediates shifts in students' voices?

    c. How do these shifts influence students' actions?

    d. How do students perceive these shifts?

In this chapter, I first provide details about my positionality as a researcher and teacher. Second, I describe my study design, site, participants, and my rationale for this selection. Third, I outline my data sources and methods for data collection. Fourth, I describe the

methods used for data analysis. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the trustworthiness of this study.

Researcher Positionality and Role

My positionality— how I see myself, how others perceive me, and my history— shape how I approach meaning-making, and as such, directly impacts the construction and understanding of this study's findings (Bettaz, 2015). Positionality, much like identity, is not a fixed entity but dynamic, an assemblage of "dispersed but mutually implicated messy networks" (Puar, 2017, p. 211). No fixed or singular identity mediated the study, instead a network of identities and roles was paramount to the study's design and findings. Therefore, to situate myself within the study, I consider my positionality as a cis-white female, teacher-researcher, and course instructor, especially pertinent as the participants' discussions and responses centered around topics on social justice and representation.

Cis White Female

My positionality as a cis, white, middle-class female shaped my experiences in the field, as well as influenced participants' voices and my perceptions of said voices. Throughout this study, topics of social justice, race and equity were frequently discussed. Research shows that faculty of color frequently encounter more negative responses from students ranging from polite indifferences to open hostility when discussing race related topics compared to White faculty (Chesler & Young, 2007; Samuel & Wane, 2005, Turner, 2002). This phenomenon is attributed to White students feeling more comfortable and open to guidance in exploring their White identities from White professors, someone

of similar likeness (Sue, 2003; Torino, 2010). Undoubtedly, being a White professor fostering conversations about race and representation in children's literature mediated how students responded and manifested their voices on said topics. For instance, as I encouraged student to interrogate their assumptions and beliefs about equity, racial discrimination, and diversity in children's literature, I experienced very little resistance from students. White students in particular, were open to questioning their beliefs and welcomed disruptions to their voices on representation in children's literature.

Additionally, my positionality as a cis White female influenced how I perceived student voices. For example, I acknowledged disruptions amongst White students' voices on equity in children's literature quicker than minoritized students, as they were experiences, I was more intimate with due to my racial identity. As a result, it was essential I engaged in frequent peer debriefing and member-checking, to ensure I accurately represented students' voices and factors that mediated their voices (Maxwell, 2013). Engaging in member checking enabled me to solicit feedback from participants on my emerging findings. As Maxwell (2013) suggests "this is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have about what is going on" (p. 126). This process is further explained in the data analysis section of this chapter.

Moreover, my positionality influenced my decisions on selecting focal students and how I set up course instruction. Being a Cis-White female informs my assumptions about teaching and learning. Therefore, I took great care in routinely reflecting on my choices as both a researcher and instructor and employing the help of critical friends to review my choices. This is explained in more detail below.

Teacher-Researcher

The teacher-researcher role is not, as Glenda Bissex (1980) avers, a split personality. Instead, it describes a more complex inquirer, who systematically investigates how their students learn to garner insight and create positive changes in their school environment directly impacting their practice. As a teacher-researcher, I investigate my own teaching methods in addition to student learning that disrupt mainstream educational practices often proceeding from a monologic viewpoint of a dominant culture (Montaño et al., 2002). This study derives from my firm belief in dialogic interactions enhancing student learning and that knowledge is collectively constructed from a confluence of voices. I see knowledge as dynamic and have actively pushed-back as a classroom teacher, student, and an undergraduate instructor against monologic styles of teaching, such as scripted curriculums and standardized tests. Therefore, as a teacher-researcher I prioritize fostering dialogic learning spaces.

Two major paradigms shape my teacher-researcher role, interpretive constructivism and critical research. I consider myself an interpretive constructivist, in that I aim to describe, understand, and interpret the world around me (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In my research my goal is not to study my students, but to learn from them so as to understand their meaning making processes and to uncover their worldviews and beliefs (both explicitly and implicitly). Furthermore, I view myself as a critical researcher, addressing inequities in our society and seeking change and empowerment.

Inherent in the teacher-researcher role, I engaged as a participant-observer within the study. Schensul and Lecompte (2013) describe participant-observer as a "data-collection technique that requires the researcher to be present at, involved in, and actually

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recording the routine daily activities with people in the field setting" (p. 83) while still actively participating. In these interconnected roles, I engaged and observed, enhancing my explicit awareness of the ways students manifested and cultivated their voice in course engagements (Spradley, 1980). For example, as a participant-observer, I used a notebook to record classroom events and conversations pertinent to the study in a bulleted list while simultaneously teaching. Within six hours of each course meeting, I expanded these notes. Since I was actively involved in the course engagements, I relied heavily on recorded discussion, student interviews, and student reflections.

Course Instructor

As the course instructor, I created course norms, expectations, and assignments, while also selecting materials that ultimately influenced how students manifested their voices. I designed the children's literature course with a social learning and critical literacy lens, incorporating a mixture of theories (e.g., sociocultural theory, and critical literacy theory) that stress the central role of social interactions and the importance of social and cultural influences for literacy learning (Tracy & Morrow, 2017). Pulling from the work of Vygotsky (1978), I believe interactions with others and tools – both material, such as books, and conceptual, such as cultural ideologies – shape an individual's ideas, perceptions, attitudes, and values. This view influenced both the content and delivery of the children's literature course from selecting readings (i.e., tools), to planning engagements that fostered dialogic interaction with their classmates and community. Furthermore, Vygotsky stressed that an individual's internalization of actions and concepts occurs over a period of time with multiple chances to engage and experience

said actions and/or concepts in social situations. As a result, I did not teach course concepts in isolation or design many individual learning tasks. Instead, I planned for course concepts to be re-examined throughout the course in a variety of social engagements, such as book clubs, thought collective (explained below), and various arts-based activities. Additionally, I intentionally selected materials for this course, both children's literature and professional texts, that were in line with Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys's (2002) four key dimensions for taking a critical literacy stance: "(1) disrupting the commonplace, (2) interrogating multiple viewpoints, (3) focusing on sociopolitical issues, and (4) taking action and promoting social justice" (p. 382). All these factors mediated how students manifested their voices within this study.

In my role as instructor, there was a power differential between myself and the participants, heavily mediated by grade expectations. In many instances, students perceived me as an "authoritative" voice – an unquestionable voice others should adopt (Bakhtin, 1981). Even though I did not engage in the small-group discussions and distanced myself from the space they took place, the recording devices used to capture students' discussions positioned me as an "unratified participant," (Goffman, 1981) a bystander who could listen in on the conversation at another time. Erving Goffman (1981) indicates that bystanders often influence talk. This was evident in some student interviews, for instance Neil shared "I knew you [the instructor] were recording our discussion, so I felt I needed to make sure that I at least got a few solid points off to get the credit… I needed to get my voice on the recording saying something that sounds smart so that I didn't get a zero" (2.19.21_inteview_Neil). Therefore, it was important for

me to be self-reflexive about my positionality and its effect on the small-group

discussions and in students' reflective writing.

To alleviate the influence of this power differential in student writing, student

reflections were not graded with a rubric. Instead, students received participation credit

for completing their reflections. Yet, as evidenced in some student interviews, how they

made themselves understood was partly mediated by the knowledge that I, the instructor,

would read their work. For instance, Sarah shared "I definitely just put [the reference to]

the chapter there just so you [the instructor] can see I did read the chapter… if you

weren't reading it I probably wouldn't of included that" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah).

Therefore, student-interviews were a powerful means for me to understand the influence

I, as the course instructor, had on students' manifestations of voices.

Study Design, Context, and Participants

Study Design

This qualitative study is rooted in sociocultural theories of learning and

development (Vygotsky, 1978), suggesting that meaning-making and the cultivation of

voice are an active, social, and context-specific phenomenon. Meaning-making is a

mediated process between individuals and cultural tools. The data collected explore how

voices are socially and individually co-constructed. Given that voice is conceptualized as

situated, multiple, and dynamic, the nature of a qualitative study best supports

understanding voices' "contextualized, contested and contingent nature" (Tardy, 2016, p.

353).

Qualitative research places an emphasis on understanding how individuals construct meaning, delineating the process (as opposed to the outcome) of meaning making, and depicting individual's interpretations of their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This best fit my study's purpose as it focused on understanding the process of manifestations of students' voices. Patton (1985) explained qualitative research "is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there… the analysis strives for depth of understanding" (p. 1). As a result, the aim of qualitative research was not to formulate generalizations to a larger population, but to cultivate a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. In line with Patton, this study did not seek to make grand generalizations of all undergraduates, but instead sought to construct an in-depth understanding of student voices within the context of a children's literature course. Though these findings speak to a specific population and time, these findings can be used to interpret, understand, and facilitate the manifestation of student voices in similar contexts.

Furthermore, in qualitative research the primary instrument for data collection and analysis is the researcher. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained that "since understanding is the goal of this research, the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive, and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data" (p. 16). As previously discussed in chapter two, voice is a phenomenon that is not easily captured using purely objective or quantitative instruments, such as intensity scales (e.g., Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003) or an analytical rubric (e.g., Yeh, 1998). Voice is complex and highly situated, responding to and anticipating the responses of others. As a result, I played an active role as the primary instrument for data

collection and analysis by memoing, taking field notes, and conducting interviews to respond to and describe in-depth students' manifestations of voice. Additionally, qualitative research is inductive. Data is collected to build concepts and theories as opposed to deductively testing a hypothesis. In this study, there is no hypothesis to be tested, instead my research aimed to further develop and build the concept of voice and document engagements that support student meaning-making processes.

This study adopted case study techniques (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Case study research involves understanding and constructing interpretations of participants' experiences within a bounded real-world case (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Dyson, & Genishi, 2005). A case may be a community, specific project, individual, or small group that is bounded by time and space (Yin, 2014). For this study, the case was a 16-week children's literature course, that was bounded by time, the duration of the semester, and, by space; it only includes incidents that happen within the classroom context.

Geertz (1973) attested that having a bounded case allows for a "fine-comb study in confined context [in which] the megaconcepts…can be given the sort of sensible actuality that makes it possible to think not only realistically and concretely about them, but, what is more important, creatively, and imaginative with them" (p. 23). In other words, by choosing to focus on the 16-week children's literature course (the bounded case), I drew a more in-depth, concrete and contextualized understanding of voice, what Geertz would consider to be a megaconcept, as opposed to forming a broad understanding of voice.

When voice is broadly conceived, without the parameters of a bounded context, it becomes hard to recognize, follow over time, or fully appreciate. By examining student

voices within a children's literature course, their voices became easier to identify, follow, and analyze over time, supporting more meaningful and powerful interpretations. Furthermore, in line with sociocultural beliefs, studying voice within a bounded case enables a more contextualized understandings of student meaning making.

Moreover, Stake (1995) argues case study design works best when a researcher has "a research question, a puzzlement, a need for general understanding, and feel[s] that [they] may get insight into the question by studying a particular case" (p. 3). In short, when a specific context lends itself to understanding or interpreting a certain phenomenon or question, researchers should turn to case study design. I believe literature courses, in which students draw connections to their own life, learn about the experiences of others, and are often dialogic in nature (Nystrand, 1997), contribute to an increased understanding of manifestations of students' voices. Specifically, the children's literature course, the case for this study, I believe was an insightful case for studying voice in a natural setting, which is described further in the next section.

Case study design afforded me the opportunity to explore the richness of students' voices in the content of a college classroom (Yin, 2009). It allowed me to follow individual participants within a real-life bounded case (i.e., the classroom) over a prolonged period to understand how their voices are constructed and reconstructed (e.g., Casanave, 2002; Orteier-Hooper, 2008). Since the nature of the study was to examine the construct of voice within a finite time, a 16- week one semester course is a suitable case study.

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Context

The concept of voice could be investigated in numerous community, school, or workplace settings, as individuals constantly construct self-expressions mediated by their environment. However, an undergraduate course is a particularly useful context to investigate how young adults construct semiotic representations of views and of themselves. For many undergraduates, they are away from home for the first time navigating their role as citizens within the world. Additionally, during these college years, undergraduates garner and develop more salient ideologies, beliefs, and views that inform their voices and future actions. Unlike workplace or community settings, a school context asks individuals to explicitly manifest their voices in the form of tests, papers, or discussions, making it easier to observe individuals' meaning-making strategies.

Two sections of an undergraduate children's literature course served as the context for this study. The course took place at the University of Louisville, an urban campus serving mainly in-state students, during the 16-week fall 2020 semester. During the fall 2020 semester, 16,074 undergraduates were enrolled at the university, 68% identified as White, 11% identified as Black, and 20% identified as "all other minorities." While the university houses numerous colleges, this particular children's literature course lied within the College of Education and Human Development.

The children's literature course met once per week, for two and half hours. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all courses at the university during the Fall 2020 semester either occurred online or used a hybrid model (some face-to-face sessions, some online). The children's literature course implemented the latter, meeting face-to-face for five sessions, and virtually for the other eleven. During face-to-face sessions, all students and

the instructor wore face masks and maintained six feet of physical distance between one another. These sessions took place within the university's Technology Innovation Learning Lab, a spacious classroom allowing students their own large table, oriented in groups of four as opposed to rows. All online meetings took place synchronously on the University's online learning video conferencing platform Blackboard.

Although located in the College of Education and Human Development, the course drew students from across colleges at the university. For students interested in Early Childhood and Elementary Education, the course served as a prerequisite to enter the teacher education program; as for other students, the class fulfilled their arts and humanities general education requirement. As a result, the course followed two sets of standards: Cardinal Core, created by the University of Louisville, and Kentucky Teacher Performance Standards, designed by the Kentucky Board of Education. Cardinal Core is a set of general education standards designed to emphasize the development of key skills relevant to most career paths, whereas the Kentucky Teacher Performance Standards are used by the state to evaluate teachers for initial and advanced certification.

Course Description

The children's literature course was designed to introduce students to a wide range of children's literature and contemporary literary issues through small group and peer-led discussions. Issues discussed included representation of characters, dangers of a single story (Adichie, 2009), and picturebook design. In engaging with various children's literature and aforementioned topics, the course focused on heightening undergraduates' awareness to the power of stories, inviting them to evaluate how that power impacts their own world views. I placed an emphasis on students forming aesthetic and critical

responses to the literature, as opposed to focusing on story comprehension or recalling key facts.

The semester began with students examining what makes a high-quality picturebook. Multiple course sessions focused on students exploring their personal tastes and responses to picturebooks, in which they first read the book *Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015) with their book club. Additionally, they examined what makes a book well-written, picturebook design, and read alouds. In the middle of the semester, the course focused on students exploring representation in children's literature. In their thought collectives, I introduced them to Bishop's (1990) literary concept of mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. This concept states that children need to see themselves accurately represented in literature to build self-worth and see the lives of those different from them portrayed in books to build empathy. Additionally, with their thought collective, they watched a Ted Talk by Adichie (2009) titled *The Dangers of a Single Story*, which details what happens when individuals are only presented with one story about a group of people. The end of the semester explored various ways students could encourage children to interact and engage with literature through various arts-based activities. Additionally, it introduced students to take on a critical stance when reading in which they read *Lillian's Right to Vote* (Winter, 2015) with their book club. The semester ended with the culminating activity of students curating a collection of 10-15 picturebooks on a topic of their choice.

The overall class structure was highly dialogic and emphasized group-based knowing. Each session began with students checking in and/or getting to know one another in pairs or small groups for about ten minutes. Most sessions included a guided

inquiry, in which I facilitated class activities to expand students' understanding of course readings, as opposed to lectures. An example of a guided inquiry in a face-to-face setting included students examining aspects of picturebook design with a specific book. While I discussed and elaborated on various illustration and design elements, students identified them within their own book and shared their observations with their peers. An example of a guided inquiry from a virtual class, entailed students examining an infographic depicting diversity in children's literature. Using a feature in the virtual classroom that allowed students to be separated into break out rooms, students worked in pairs to identify what they observed, inferred, and wondered from looking at the infographic. Most class sessions ended with book club or thought collective meetings.

I encouraged students to choose five to six pieces of children's literature to read each week. While students had free choice on what to read, resources such as the website www.socialjusticebooks.com and the university's multicultural children's collection were provided to guide students' selection. I used a critical literary lens to select book club titles. Attention to critical literacy requires a shift from popular mainstream texts to texts that focus on social issues and situations that explore systems of power (Leland, Harste, & Huber, 2005). For instance, the picturebook *Lilian's Right to Vote* (Winter, 2015) brings into question equity, power, and social justice around voting rights. Whereas *Sparkle Boy* (Newman, 2017), encouraged discussions around gender norms, stereotypes, and bullying. As a result, these books prompted rich conversation and lent themselves to students constructing their voices around pertinent societal topics.

A key component of the course included two types of discussion groups, book clubs and thought collectives (see table 3.1 for a further description). Based on

information reported on a questionnaire students completed the first week, I assigned

students to these two groups. Each group comprised four students and, to the best of my

ability, included students from diverse disciplines, background, and with varied interests.

However, in designing groups I aimed to avoid isolating individuals (i.e. one minority

student, one student in a STEM discipline, one male, one female etc.), to ensure all

students felt supported and to reduce stereotyping threats (Steele, 2010). Research shows

that forming heterogenous groups increases the likelihood diverse perspectives and ideas

will be shared (Lodge, 2017). Furthermore, keeping thought collectives and book clubs

members constant throughout the semester fostered a sense of community and

encouraged groups to create and adopt group norms (Reichman, 1990).

Discussion Group	Book Club	Thought Collective
Purpose	For students to deepen their understanding and appreciation of a shared piece of children's literature.	For students to discuss and expand their understanding of a concept, topic, or issues introduced in a shared resource (i.e., Ted Talk, article, textbook chapter, podcast, etc.)
Group Size	4 Students	4 Students
Average Duration	10 minutes	10 – 30 minutes
Number of Occurrences	7	5

Table 3.1. Overview of book clubs & thought collectives

Book clubs met seven times over the semester, discussing a total of two young adult novels and five picturebooks. Picturebooks are books in which both written text and illustrations work together to tell a story or present content (Young et al., 2020). The College of Education and Human Development purchased a majority of the picturebooks used for this class, ensuring every student had a physical copy of the book. While the remaining picturebooks used were available for free online using the website EPIC! (www.getepic.com). Students were responsible for acquiring their own copy of the young adult novels, *Refugee* (Gratz, 2017) and *Ghost Boys* (Rhodes, 2017). The books discussed at each book club are listed in table 3.2.

	Book Title	Location
1	*Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015)	Face to Face
2	Picturebook: varied by group	Face to Face
3	Picturebook: varied by group	Virtual
4	*Lillian's Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act* (Winter, 2015)	Virtual
5	*Refugee* (Gratz, 2017)	Virtual
6	*Ghost Boys* (Rhodes, 2017)	Face to Face
7	*Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015)	Virtual

Table 3.2. Book Club Selections

Prior to book club meetings, students read the assigned book and composed a brief reflection in any format of their choice (e.g. letter to themselves, letter to the author, academic paper, concept web, etc.), whereby they could react, critique, and/or question the text. Three book clubs took place face-to-face, while the remaining four took place virtually. In virtual book clubs, students joined a designated video conference room to meet. Most books club meetings lasted 10 minutes.

Thought collectives, all occurring virtually, met five times, and occurred opposite weeks from book clubs. Students discussed topics and issues within the study of children's literature in these thought collectives, as opposed to individual books. Table 3.3 outlines the order of topics discussed. Prior to meeting, all students interacted with the same assigned resource (i.e., article, YouTube video, podcast, or textbook chapter) and composed a brief reflection in response to the topic, including questions or wonderings for their group. During class time, students broke into separate video conferencing rooms with their thought collectives, in which students were highly encouraged to turn on their videos. Thought collectives lasted anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes.

	Discussion Topic	Location
1	Literary Merit	Virtual
2	Picturebook Design	Virtual
3	Representation	Virtual
4	The Dangers of a Single Story	Virtual
5	Open Topic: Collectives choose from the following topics: • representations of grief • representations of (dis)abilities • representations of Muslim protagonist • challenging heteronormativity	Virtual

Table 3.3. Thought collective discussion topic, week by week

Rationale for Site Selection

To examine the manifestation and process of undergraduates' voices, I developed the following criteria for selecting my research site. First, it was a priority for me to select a site in which the course design valued and routinely provided opportunities for students to express their voices and for their voices to be heeded by others. As evidenced by the opening line of the course syllabus reads: "the overarching goal of this course invites you

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[the students] to *develop your own strong and unique voice in the field of children's literature* alongside your peers in frequent discussion groups" — the course on children's literature valued and expected students to interact with one another and to cultivate their own voices. Furthermore, students were presented with ample opportunities to manifest their voices in small group peer-led discussions and through weekly reflections in a format of their choice. The open format for the written reflections was important, as Lefstein and Snell (2014) claim because, in addition to having opportunities to share their voices, students need the freedom to express their voice on their own terms. Furthermore, in course discussions and reflections, students' voices were attended to by others – a key aspect to my definition of voice. Within discussions students commonly received verbal responses from their peers, whereas their reflections received written responses from the instructor or their peers. Responses from others were important because when an individual's voice is recognized and attended to, it further propels this dynamic process.

Second, it was important to select a site in which the course context would lend itself to the possibility of rich and tension-filled discussion that, as a result, would cultivate student voices. While there is no guarantee that discussions would be dialogic, resources and tools (i.e., captivating children's literature, intriguing articles, and thought-provoking discussion prompts) greatly increased the likelihood. Leland et al. (2018) in their discussion of children's literature with students from elementary school to undergraduates, claim "good books lead to good conversation," which lead to the cultivation of student voice (p. 19). The texts selected for participants to read and discuss in this course were designed to foster an awareness among students that their own experiences are part of a "larger human experience" (Adams, 2020, p. 210). Gee (2017)

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views fictional stories, like the ones selected for this course, as "important means for extending real-world experience" as they vicariously experience fictional events (p. 38). This course provided students with ample opportunities to discuss literary texts. Nystrand (1997) states that the "nature of literature makes it particularly suitable for dialogic instruction" (p. 105) and discussion since the focus is on students making meaning and responding to features of the text. As a result, I felt this site would present favorable circumstances for the cultivation of student voices.

Third, I wanted a site that included students of diverse backgrounds and interests. Rosenblatt (1978/1994) and Iser (1978) explain that each individual draws different meanings from a text based on their prior experiences and interest(s). By having a site with a wide variety of participants, there was a greater likelihood of students generating and sharing varied responses. Bakhtin (1981) shares the aim of dialogue is not to "reduce everything to one single consciousness" (p. 141) but to allow multiple ideas to occupy the same space so individuals' ideas become enriched and expanded. Categorized as a course that fulfills both general education and teacher education requirements at the university, this course on children's literature enrolled students from a variety of disciplines (discussed further in the section below). Finally, it was crucial to select a site, at this current time and place in history, that was hospitable to my research and allowed me access to the classroom and to student-produced artifacts. Due to the global health pandemic, many local school districts and universities were limiting contact within their community as a preventative measure to decrease the spread of the virus. As a result, many local schools paused research partnerships with the university for the 2020- 2021 academic year. Essential to case study design is that a case is not only interesting, but

also welcoming to the research being done (Crowe et al., 2011). As the instructor of the children's literature course, I could safely access the site without imposing any additional risk or stress.

Participants

Forty-eight undergraduates enrolled in EDTP 245, Children's Literature, during the Fall 2020 semester were invited as initial participants. Thirty-nine participants identified as female and nine as male. Education majors comprised roughly 50% of participants, most seeking degrees in early childhood and elementary education, whereas a variety of disciples (i.e., nursing, social work, engineering, business) composed the other 50%. Divided between two course sections meeting on different days, students from the varied disciplines were evenly distributed between the two course sections. Overall, 61% were sophomores, 22% were juniors, 10% were freshmen and 6% were seniors. Forty-six of the initial 48 participants consented to partake in the study.

Since the study aimed to investigate how students manifested their voices, initially working with all students and keeping sampling ongoing was key. A larger participant pool lent itself to increased possibilities of observing participants demonstrating different meaning-making processes, thought processes, semiotic-expressions, and reports of learning towards voice. The process of constructing voice can't be forced, as Matusov (2019) attests "it is always voluntary" (p. 6). As seen in Clarke's (2015) study, not all students engaged in expressing their voice. Therefore, at the study's onset it was important to cast a wide-net, capturing a wide array of potential information-rich cases (Patton, 1990).

Study Sample

Keeping with qualitative methodologies, the study's purpose was to gain depth in understanding voice. Due to the large corpus of data collected, seeking depth required examining a few participants' experiences by narrowing my sample size. Therefore, I employed purposeful sampling, which Patton (2002) defines as "selecting information-rich cases for study in depth… those [cases] from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry" (p. 230). To garner information-rich cases, I identified participants present throughout the course, and willing to communicate their experiences in a reflective and expressive manner, while I also identified variation in student experiences to gain insight on how various factors (i.e., race, ethnicity, content area) mediated their voices. I used a mix of two sampling approaches; *criterion,* identifying cases that met predetermined criterion of importance, and *maximum variation*, purposely selecting a range of cases (Namey et al., 2012; Patton, 1990). I describe those approaches in more detail below.

Implementing criterion sampling approaches, I outlined key criteria determining information-rich cases. First, I only considered students who completed above 85% of course assignments and attended over 80% (13 or more) classes. This approach ensured students I selected had a full data set for me to examine. Next, I selected students who articulated in writing what influences they attributed their own learning to and any shifts in their thinking about or actions related to course topics. Two pieces of writing collected midway and at the end of the course, and one group discussion were used for this determination. In the two collected writings, I prompted students to reflect on their thinking process in this course. Specifically, they considered influences on their thinking,

voices and any shifts in their thinking about or actions concerning course topics (e.g., book selection). These two pieces of writing were also included in the overall data set.

The group discussion I examined to determine student participation was their final book club in which they reread and discussed the picturebook *Last Stop on Market Street.* *Last Stop on Market Street* was a book students read, reflected on, and discussed at the start of the semester, in week two, and at the end of the semester. In their final discussion I prompted students to discuss with their peers how their current response to the book compared to their first reflection on the book from week two and to consider if, how, or why their ideas shifted. This discussion encouraged students to be retrospective and shed light on how students would verbally express their understanding of voice.

A final criterion was for participants to be willing to be interviewed about the course and their participation, and engage in member checking after completing the course. Key to developing an in-depth understanding of student voices is having participants' input and perspective. To reiterate Meyer and Whitmore's (2020) sentiment, manifestation of voice "can only be understood through collective thinking by both researchers and participants" (p. xxv). Therefore, it was essential to have participants open to the collective thinking process.

Once I narrowed the field of participants using criterion sampling, I employed maximum variation sampling to place emphasis on breadth and diversity among participants, investigating a range of students' voices. Both academic disciplines and personal experiences influence the authoritative and internally persuasive voices students attend to. Authoritative discourse refers to traditional or official voices tied to certain institutions (Bakhtin, 1981). Different colleges or departments within universities

maintain and perpetuate their own authoritative, or what Gee (1996) refers to as dominant

(D)iscourse (White, 2011). For example, Science, Technology, Engineering, and

Mathematics (STEM) disciplines privilege observable or measurable ways of knowing.

Therefore, it was important to include participants from various disciplines to have a

variety of discourses linked to these academic disciplines represented. Whereas

internally-persuasive voices refer to ways of knowing rooted in past experiences and

"funds of knowledge" (Bakhtin; Gonzalez et al., 2005). Therefore, it was important in to

include participants who identified as historically underrepresented (i.e., Black, Latinx,

Asian, LGBTQ) as well as students who identified as part of the dominant culture (i.e.,

White). To achieve this, I established four main variations of students' experiences:

1. Intended major outside the college of education & historically
   underrepresented

2. Intended major outside the college of education & White

3. Intended major inside the college of education & historically
   underrepresented

4. Intended major within the college of education & White

I selected two students from each variation, totaling eight participants for the study. Table

3.4 provides detailed information on the master list of sample participants. All names are

pseudonyms.

Participant	Personal Identification	Major
Imani	Black Female	Education
Mariana	Latinx Female	Education
Sarah	White Female	Education
Carl	White Male	Education
Mayumi	Asian Female	Social Work (Humanities)
Spencer	White Transgender Male	Social Work (Humanities)
Amy	White Female	Biology (STEM)
Neil	White Male	Engineering (STEM)

Table 3.4. Master list of participants

Focal Students

Table 3.3 offers minimal information about each participant. Important, however, is to provide additional details including background experiences, motives for taking the course, and personal asides that are essential to understanding how students manifested their voices and how their voices evolved. These descriptors are drawn from students' autobiographies, questionaries, interviews, and reflection writing.

Imani is a sophomore elementary education major student who identifies as a Black female. At the start of the semester, she reported that she only took this course since it was a requirement for her major. Additionally, she expressed some initial concerns about having a reading disability and was worried she would not comprehend all the stories read in class. In her autobiography, she shared that she "grew up around gangs and violence" and was the first in her family to attend college. She hopes to be an elementary school teacher.

Mariana is a sophomore elementary education major student focusing on moderate and severe disabilities. When she completes her degree, she wants to be a special education teacher. She identifies as Latina. Her family immigrated to Louisville from Colombia when she was in preschool. She does not have citizenry or permanent

resident status within the US. She took this course because it was a requirement for her major, however entering the course, she expressed hope to "discover new books that spark and interest" and "broaden" her understanding of children's literature.

Sarah is a sophomore elementary education major who identifies as a White female. Sarah recently switched her major from nursing to education and took a full course load to "make up for lost time" (10.14.20_Midterm_Sarah). In addition to being a full-time student, she also works 40 hours a week. While she enjoyed reading as a child, she no longer enjoys reading books since it became "pushed upon" her in middle and high school.

Carl is a sophomore elementary special education major student who is also minoring in film. He grew up in what he describes as a "wealthy upper-class" town in Michigan without much diversity in the general population (8.26.20_SR_LastStop_Carl). He is a certified film reviewer outside of class and worked at the YMCA in the child care center. Though this course was required, he hoped it could help him find books to share with the children he worked with at the YMCA. When he reads, he likes to stick to one series and doesn't often branch out.

Mayumi is a senior social work major student who identifies as Japanese-American. Her goal is to be an international social worker focusing in education or community development. She took this course because two friends recommended it, and she felt it would help her better reach her goal of working in education.

Spencer is a sophomore social work student minoring in political science. He identifies as a White transgender male. He wants to "be a social worker that primarily focuses on community organizing and activism" (08.25.20_Autobiography_Spencer).

Spencer saw signing up for this class as a nice break from the mostly Science Technology Education Mathematics (STEM) courses he was also enrolled in for the fall. In talking about his childhood, Spencer shared he "grew up in poverty" and "experienced a lot of trauma" (08.25.20_Autobiography_Spencer).

Amy is a sophomore biology student who aspires to be a pediatric dentist. She identifies as a White female and signed up for this course after a friend recommended it. Like Spencer, she also felt it would be a nice break from her mainly science courses. Amy grew up in a small town in Kentucky. She has a younger sister with a prosthetic arm who is her best friend.

Neil is a senior electrical engineering student who identifies as a White male. He signed up for this course because he felt it would be "an easy A" and he had a "grueling" semester of courses (2.19.21_interview_Neil). He grew up in what he described as a "mostly-white" neighborhood in rural Kentucky (08.25.20_Autobiography_Neil). In middle and high school, he began to read less for fun and focus more on STEM.

Data Collection

I collected a large corpus of data, from multiple sources, over a six-month period from mid-August, 2020 to mid-February, 2021. Data collection captured multiple perspectives and information sources on ways students manifested their voices and how their voices developed over time. Data included written documents submitted by students (i.e. student autobiographies, reflective writing, and academic papers), small-group discussion transcripts and questionnaires, stimulated recall interview transcripts, as well as field notes and researcher memos. Table 3.5 outlines the data sources, when they were

collected, and the total number of artifacts. A large data set lent itself to developing an in-depth and multifaceted understanding of students' voices.

Data Source	Collection Date	Total Number
Written Documents Submitted by Students		
Student Autobiography	8/25/20	8 *(1 per focal student)*
Student Reflections	Weekly from 8/25/20 to 11/24/20	88 *(11 per focal student)*
Academic Papers	10/2/20 and 12/1/20	16 *(2 per focal student)*
Student Discussions Data		
Small-Group Discussion Transcripts	Weekly from 8/25/20 to 11/24/20	67 (42 book club, 25 thought collectives)
Discussion Questionnaires	Weekly from 8/25/20 to 11/24/20	96 (12 per focal student)
Interview Data		
Stimulated Recall Interviews Transcripts	2/1/21 to 2/19/21	8 (1 per focal student)
Other Data		
Field Notes	Weekly from 8/25/20 to 12/1/20	16
Researcher Memos	Ongoing	

Table 3.5. Data collection matrix

By generating a large corpus of data from multiple sources, I was able to triangulate my interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1986) and decrease the possibility of misinterpreting students' voices (Ashby, 2011). Each data source serves as one piece of the puzzle, contributing to a holistic understanding of students' voices in a children's literature course. This confluence of data sources strengthens the findings as "the various strands of data are braided together to [cultivate] a greater understanding of the case" (Baxter & Jack, 2009, p. 554). In the section that follows, I detail the data sources collected throughout the study and explain the data's trustworthiness and credibility.

Written Documents Submitted by Students

Students' Autobiographies

In the first week of the semester, students composed a two to four-page autobiography, describing their early literacy experiences with children's literature, thoughts on their identity as a reader, reading preferences and why they enrolled in the course. I provided a series of ten prompts to guide them in their writing, such as *What types of books did you enjoy reading as a child?* and *Today, what motivates/ demotivates you to read?* (see Appendix A for a full list of the prompts). Students submitted their autobiographies to the university's online platform.

Student autobiographies provided me insights into the social and historical contexts in which students' actions and voices were rooted when entering this course (Wertsch, 1985). Knowing students' past and current experiences in addition to future ambitions with reading and their reason for taking the course illuminated factors and situations that mediated the voices they manifested in class.

Reflections on Course Topics and Literature Selections

Often one page in length, each student wrote 11 reflections on course topics and pieces of literature. Reflective writing was built into the course design, requiring students to come to class most weeks with prepared comments. I provided students with a focus topic or prompt for each reflection corresponding with their weekly assigned readings. Topics and prompts ranged from specific questions related to professional readings, such as *what quality literary features do you look for in children's literature?* to students composing open responses to a particular piece of literature they read for their book club

(See Appendix B for the complete list of topics and prompts). Students submitted their reflections to the university's online platform before class began.

The format of students' reflections was open and varied. Depending on how students wanted to express themselves, reflection formats ranged from concept webs, poems, timelines to traditional one-page papers. I purposely did not prescribe a reflection format to allow students to express their voices on their terms. An open format enabled students to share how and what they liked without compromising their voice to meet academic or unfamiliar forms of expression.

Students' written reflections functioned to initiate or guide both the book club and thought collective discussions. Students were asked to have their reflections available (either in print or on-screen) as they engaged in their small group discussions. Students frequently referred to their reflections and revised them in conversation based on classmates' ideas and perspectives. Following book club and thought collective discussions, students returned to their original reflections to add new insights. They were asked to distinguish their new thinking by tracking changes (in Word) or using a different color font. Students submitted their revised reflections at the end of each session, allowing me to capture if and/or how students adjusted their interpretations - a mark of ongoing rethinking connected to class discussion and composition (Knoeller, 2004). Students received credit for submitting their reflections. They were not evaluated for a grade. These reflections were a key data source that provided insight into how students made themselves understood through personal experiences and illuminated outside voices, such as articles, classmates, or course activities.

Academic Papers

Students composed two academic papers, each four to six pages in length, during the mid-and end of the semester. In these papers, students synthesized their learning process, reviewed a piece of children's literature, offered a text set with rationales, and reflected on the course's three essential questions: (1) *What power does a story hold?* (2) *What makes a piece of children's literature high quality?* (3) *How do the books children read impact our larger community/ world?*

Midterm Paper For the mid-term paper, students reread all their past reflections and discussed how their voice was taking shape in the field of children's literature. They commented on shifts or changes to their thinking and writing, then described what influenced their voices the most in this course. Additionally, students reviewed the children's literature they read up to that point to note the types of stories (i.e., genres, topics, representation of various protagonists) they were reading and any patterns or shifts they have noticed in their book selection. Furthermore, they formally responded to the three essential questions (listed above) and reviewed one piece of children's literature they had read over the semester.

End of Semester Paper For their final submission, students introduced a curated collection of children's literature they assembled on a topic of their choice. Students provided rationales for the collection's topic, their process of selecting books, and the books they chose to include in their collection. They also considered how their collection responded to the course's three essential questions.

Students submitted their academic papers to the course's online platform. To ensure students' voices were heeded, I wrote a substantial response to each student. I

intended for my responses to be formative and reflective by responding to what students said so as to carry on the conversation. I did this by responding to students' specific ideas with open-ended questions or problematized an idea for them to consider in a new light. For example, Neil responded in his midterm paper that he didn't have the authority to talk about literature on civil rights or foreign culture due to his identity as a White male. In response, I commented:

> While I understand you may not feel you have authority in talking about or reading aloud books on foreign cultures or civil rights, I don't want you to avoid them. Perhaps take these next few weeks as an opportunity to get to know these issues at a more intimate level. And, instead of feeling like you need to have all the answers, think instead about approaching these books with a critical stance as we talked about this week; try approaching these books with a question.

Student Discussion Data

Small- Group Discussion Transcripts

In total, I collected 67 discussion transcripts. During face-to-face discussions, each participant sat at their own table. Tables were organized in a large circle, so that students faced one another. Right before the discussions began, small audio recorders were turned on then placed at the center of each group of tables. As audio-recorders were placed at each table, students reviewed their reflective writing to prepare for their small-group discussion. After each discussion, the students or myself turned off the audio recorder and I collected them. Most discussions lasted approximately ten minutes.

In online discussions, students left the whole-class video conference room on Blackboard Collaborate Ultra and joined an online conference room designated for their book club or thought collective. If students had access to web cams, they were asked to turn on their videos for these small group discussions so group members could see one

another's face and read body language. Before the online discussions began, a member of the group hit a record button, which captured both audio and video. In these online discussions, one member of the group acted as time keeper, setting a timer for the designated time allotted. Once time expired, the group returned to the whole-class video conferencing room for further course instruction. All discussions were later transcribed using a third-party transcription service, Rev (www.rev.com). Discussions were transcribed using verbatim intelligent transcription, which omits "ums,", "ohs," and pauses to help with readability. I carefully checked all transcripts with the audio to ensure their accuracy. Knoeller (2004) explains "[t]he analysis of classroom talk and student writing, taken together, can in fact reveal much about the way in which internalized dialogue and voicing contribute to textual interpretations" (p. 150). Thus, it was important for me to capture students' discussion in concert with their reflective writing.

Pre and Post Discussion Questionnaire

Participants completed twelve short questionnaires before and after engaging in their thought collective or book club discussions (See Appendix C). In the pre-discussion questionnaire, students were asked to consider their comfort level in sharing with the group, what they hoped to contribute, questions they had for the group, and what they hoped the group would accomplish in their discussions. In the post discussion questionnaire, students were asked to reflect on their contributions to the discussions, tensions or differences in responses in the group, and resources they found most helpful in the discussion. Questionnaires were either distributed as handouts in face-to-face meetings or digitally as an online form when the class met virtually. These questionnaires

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provided insight into students' perceptions of the book club and thought collective discussions. Specifically, the questions garnered awareness of students' feelings and attitudes that may have influenced their choices about what voices to manifest in that discussion.

Interview Data

In the two months following the completion of the course, I individually interviewed each focal student. With the aim of exploring students' thought processes and strategies in constructing their voices, I implemented a stimulated recall protocol (see Appendix D). Stimulated recall interviews invite participants to read aloud a piece of their work, while verbalizing their thought process and choices in constructing that work. Students might read a sentence or two from their written work, and then interject with what mediated them to express those words. For the stimulated recall interview, I asked participants to select two pieces of writing (i.e., reflection writing or an academic paper) from the course they'd like to talk about. At least one day before the interview, students notified me of the two pieces they wanted to discuss. Interviews lasted roughly fifty minutes and took place virtually using a video-conferencing platform, due to the health risk of COVID-19. I recorded, capturing both video and audio, and transcribed each interview.

Prior to the interview, I trained participants on how to engage in a stimulated recall interview. I began by explaining the format of the interview and demonstrated thinking aloud on a piece of my own writing. Next, I had the participant practice a stimulated recall on a small sample of their own writing (one they had not selected). After

reviewing the procedure for a Stimulated recall interview, students were ready to begin the interview.

To begin, I reminded participants of the context in which they wrote the piece of writing selected, specifically reviewing slides from class presentations, class activities, or recent books and articles read. This was intended to help participants better recall the context they were responding to. Then, I had the students read though their piece of writing out loud, while articulating their thought process and the choices they made. As Dempsey (2010) explains, this technique brings participants "a step closer to the moment in which they actually produce[d] actions. It gives them the chance to listen or view themselves in action, jog memories, and give answers of "I did," instead of "I might have." (p. 349- 350). These interviews provided insight into aspects of students' voice construction that was not visible from their writing or transcripts alone.

Other Data

Field Notes

Throughout the data collection process, I kept a journal to record my observations and thoughts on the manifestation and cultivation of students' voice. During class, I kept this notebook with me to record student actions, responses, and other class engagements pertinent to this study. Within six hours of the end of each class, I intentionally typed my notes in a digital journal, often expanding on the original ideas. This intentionality provided me a routine space to think about a range of perspectives, connections and possible patterns across the data (Glesne, 2016). Additionally, it allowed me to reflect on my reflexivity as an instructor in this study.

Data Storage and Organization

Data management was an important consideration due to the amount of influence it has on the ease of navigating analysis and on the types of analysis that can be done (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles et al., 2020). I stored all data on a secure, password-protected, cloud platform provided by the university. I consistently named data files by the date they were collected, an abbreviation for the data source, the topic of the data source, and the participants initials (now changed to pseudonyms in this dissertation). An example file name is "09.23.20_SR_LiteraryMerit_Amy". "SR" indicates the data source is a student reflection.

Initially I stored all data in one folder. Students' works submitted on the university's online learning platform were downloaded then uploaded to the cloud, and those submitted in hard copy were scanned and uploaded to the secure cloud network. I maintained a running record of all data collected in an Excel spreadsheet, indicating the date it was collected, type of data, participant(s) involved, file name, date it was analyzed (if applicable), and where it was in the analysis process (see Fig 3.1 for my template). I ordered the data in the sheet chronologically. The spreadsheet was searchable, which allowed me to locate files quickly and efficiently (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Later, I created a folder for each focal student to include all their written documents, discussion data, and interview data.

	Date Collected	Topic	Data Source	Subject	File Name	Date it was Last Analyzed	Where is it in the analysis process?
1	8/25/20	Autobiography	Student Autobiography	Amy	8.25.20_AB_Amy	3/17	Coded for disruptions
2	8/26/20	*Last Stop on Market Street*	Student Reflection	Amy	8.26.20_SR_LastStop_Amy	3/17	Coded for disruptions

Figure 3.1. Data collection chart

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<div align="center">**Data Analysis**</div>

I adapted Nowell and colleagues' (2017) six phases of thematic analysis (see

Table 3.6). While the six phases present a linear process, analysis was iterative and

reflective as I constantly moved between phases. For instance, while searching for themes

in phase three, I often returned to phase two to change a code's scope if it was too

narrowly or broadly defined.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6
Familiarizing self with the data	Generating Initial Codes	Searching for Themes	Reviewing Themes	Defining and Naming Themes	Producing the Report

Table 3.6. Six Phases of Thematic Analysis adapted from Nowell et al. (2017)

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method used to identify, analyze, organize,

describe, and report themes within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is ideal for

handling large data sets, as it requires researchers to implement a well-structured

approach to grasping the data, producing a clear and organized account of the study

(King, 2004). Additionally, it is an effective method to examine various participants'

perspectives, highlighting differences and similarities in addition to generating

unexpected insights (Braun and Clarke, 2006; King, 2004). To ensure finding credibility,

I engaged in member checking and triangulation within data collection. Furthermore, to

enhance transferability, I created thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of codes and themes,

ensuring that participants' voices were not rendered invisible. Thick descriptions allow

those reading the study to determine their sites' transferability. Moreover, throughout the

analysis, I present reasons for methodological and analytical choices to establish confirmability. In the following section, I describe the analytic methods and steps used during each phase.

Phase One: Familiarizing Myself with The Data

With nearly 300 pieces of data collected across the eight focal participants, I first immersed myself with the data to better understand the collected contents' breadth and depth (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Through repeated active readings of and listening to the data, I familiarized myself with the entire data set. To begin, I created a participant attribute chart (explained in subsequent section) that identified each participant's background, reasons for taking the course, and their unique history and experiences that possibly mediated the manifestation of their voices. Next, I chronologically read through data sources from one participant at a time. In line with Braun and Clarke's (2006) recommendation, I read through the entire data set without considering coding since a complete understanding of a data set mediates possible code creations. Instead of coding, I wrote notes and memos, being vigilant about my perspectives, hunches, and developing themes I saw. Finally, I read through the data sources once more, created a summary matrix to capture critical points across the data set and identify possible codes that I would return to in the subsequent phase.

Participant Attribute Table

My first analytical step was to create a demographic and attribute table that listed the focal participants' key research-related descriptors. Miles and colleagues (2020) suggest that a study with multiple participants benefits from tabular displays of

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participants' attributes. A table offers an at-a-glance representation of who is in the study. Additionally, this chart provided space to document possible cultural resources that mediated students' voices constructions. Categories used to describe the participants in the chart included year level, gender, race/ethnicity, intended major, motive for taking the course, and personal background (see Appendix E). I initially used information on the university's faculty portal ULink and students' autobiographies to sketch out the chart. These sources identified basic student demographic information, their initial motive for taking the course, and initial insights into their personal background. These attributes served as starting points to which a larger constellation emerged upon analyzing their reflective writings and discussions. Throughout the rest of phase one, I recursively returned to the chart adding further information presented in student reflections, discussions and think-aloud interviews. For instance, in Spencer's reflection on the picturebook *How Alma Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal, 2018), he shares his own name story, describing to me for the first time his identity and experiences as a transgender male. This reflection deepened my understanding of Spencer's background and strengths he brought to the course that were not revealed in his initial autobiography. Through this recursive process, I was able to gather rich information on the cultural resources and histories each participant brought to the class pertinent to their voice.

Reading and Memoing Emergent Ideas

Following the creation of the participant attribute chart, I closely read focal students' reflective writing, course papers, pre- and post-discussion questionnaire, and discussion transcripts in the order they were written or occurred to gain a holistic sense of the participants' experiences. I printed copies of each document, placing them

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chronologically in a binder for each focal participant. Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest that it is essential to "build a sense of the data as a whole without getting caught up in the details of coding" (p. 188). By holistically reading students' reflective writings, course papers, discussion questionnaires in addition to reading and listening to discussion transcripts, I was able to get a sense of each student's engagements with course materials and participation in class discussions. Following the advice of Chadwick (2020), I listened to student discussions and interviews while reading the transcript since "we can never fill the gaps of what is (inevitably) lost as we turn sounds, speech, and embodied research encounters into textual and transcribed forms" (p. 80). By reading and listening to these data sources, I was better able to understand participants' tones, pauses, and inflections, that a transcript could not fully capture and hear how these shifted throughout the study.

Analytic Memos

While reading through the data set, I jotted notes with a pencil in the margins and consistently typed memos to help me better understand the data. My hand-written notes in the margins document my initial reactions, questions, and connections to scholarship on voice. For instance, some of my marginal notes in response to students' reflective writing included "Why does he consider the textbook to be the main knowledgeable source on artwork and illustrations?" and "I wonder how current events, mainly the BLM marches influenced her thinking here." Merriam and Tisdell (2016) equate this process with "having a conversation with the data" fostering a more active reading (p. 204).

From these notes, I typed up memos. All memos were dated and captioned with a descriptive title so they could easily be retrieved and sorted, for example, "11/23/20 –

Learning Terms for Concepts I Already Knew." Memos were not intended to summarize the data but were "attempts to synthesize [the data] into higher-level analytical meanings" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 95). All memos were typed and stored using the computer program Dedoose. Throughout the entire analysis process, I wrote memos. As suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018) consistent memoing helped me track the development of my ideas through the analysis process and created an audit trail.

Second Read Through and Summarization of the Data

After holistically reading through the corpus of data once, I reviewed each data source once more. This time I created a summary matrix for each participant to describe key aspects from their reflective writing and book club or thought collective discussions (see Figure 3.2 for an example). While each column noted the specific date a source was created or collected, the rows identified pertinent information to the research questions. When considering students' reflective writing, this included: *reflection format, brief summary, cultural resources, classroom resources, how meaning is made, comments on authorial self, and general comments on reflection.* In considering their small group peer discussions, rows captured *what they hoped to contribute, influences, and general comments on the discussion.*

CaTu

	8/16 Last Stop	9/2 Lit Merit	9/16 BC 2	9/23 Wind, Mir	10/07 Lillian	10/14 Single	10/21 Refugee	10/28 Issue	11/17 GB	11/24 LastStp
Format	Paper	Paper	Paper	Paper	Paper	Paper	Paper	Paper	Visual	Paper
Summary	Starts w/ summary, discusses message and how he connects to it	Formal introduction, introduces 4 criteria w/ connection to textbook or life. (Structed)	Short summary then shares why he likes book, with brief description of illus. Revisions: lot more detail on illus.	Begin w/ personal hist, connects to article, shares change in thinking, explains article, states claim, makes a promise	Begin w/ critical response tied to curr. events, connects plot to story importance, urges ppl to vote	Personal reaction, connection of topic to YA novel.	Begins with definition from article, and builds on definitions with takeaways from story	Stance on issue influenced by reading, rational from reading, then unpacks own response & connec.	Visually compares reality to misjudgment of police office	Review of bk, change in thinking, stance on illus and on writing. Revisions – discuss diversity
Cultural Resources	Writing film reviews (influence w/c and format), childhood experiences	Personal experience Childhood preferences	Att: heritage/ culture	Personal History Previous books read Att: on children's lit Current Events	Current Events History Classes Att: generational duty	Personal History	Past Beliefs	Teaching experience Voice of students w/ disability Stance: future ed.	Current Events	Stance: future ed. Att: show growth
Classroom Voices	None apparent	Textbook (revisions) Class activity-quiz	Textbook Book Club Insights (+) Class Activity	Articles Class Activity	Class Activity Bishop (1990) Lillian	TedTalk Bishop (1990) YA Novel Guest Speaker Class Activity	Article Refugee Book Club Insights Bishop (1990)	Article Picture books	Ghost Boys Classmates Bishop (1990)	Textbook Past class activities Past articles
How is he making meaning?	Forging connections between CJ and own life	By making conn. to personal preferences & past experiences, he is more descriptive in content. Areas where he doesn't, comes across as a list of facts form textbook.	Opinions on the importance of heritage guided his thinking, & prompt mediated his discussion of illus. However, after BC and class see how that influence his understanding of book.	A disruption in his thoughts and beliefs through reading the articles. Topic was personal. Looking to undue the past in his reading going forward.	The election close at hand Book encourages him to recall voting history in America and further mediates that importance to vote	Comes to understand topic through putting "old" self in the shoes of someone who was stereotypical and with using examples from YA Novel. Builds more meaning in hearing guest speaker.	Starts w/ definition from article and then supplements that w. understanding of characters from the book, while also questioning past thoughts.	Leans heavily on the words of the article and considers identity as future educators and advocate for students with special needs	Goes through a range of emotions from disgust to shock. To construct meaning, makes a product that "to the point" shows others the theme of the book. Trying to connect to or find something meaningful to say	Wanting to show growth, makes meaning my discussing "sanctioned" topics such as literary and artistic merit. No connection to self like first draft.
Comments on Authorial-Self	End with a strong stance on opinion of the book.			Urgency to spread message of diversity to others	Telling people to vote and not to take it for granted	Feels like he is sharing a lesson with readers.	Questioning self and understanding of refuge – written almost to self	Begins by standing behind voice of article, then steps into role of teacher	Need for these books to be read	Desire to show change in thinking (influenced by prompt)
Comments	Perhaps due to the nature of the questions asked Ca felt it was necessary to find a connect to the protagonist. However, the connection seems like a stretch, connecting to feelings of jealousy.	When he doesn't have personal connections to content in the book he talks in hypotheticals and is often vague.	relies on a quote from textbk – give all authority to it. Revisions = change combines class lecture and bk to discuss illus. prompts may be a source of tension – wanted to focus on culture	This draft, compared to others feels more personals due to disruption of past ways of knowing. "This is the most I ever wrote in a thought-draft" from TC discussion	Sees book as a window for readers, not until BC does he see this as a potential window for his classmates. Feels surface level – not as impassioned	"blew me away." "I have been in the shoes of all the closed mind people"	"embarrassed to think that I once believed" Another example of Carson's beliefs being disrupted	I sense there is almost tension, like CaTu wants to be in the know and have an independent voice, but still is leaning on the articles to communicate and rationalize it	Focuses on misconception and more obvious wrong doing. What is missing is response and emotion to topic.	Surface level comments that touch upon key class topics using generic comments. Lack specificity. How did questions guide this.
Contribute	Something different/ unique	Share thinking & let group know I care. Curiosity, comes with question.	Discussion of heritage Raise question on illus		Wanted to hear from others to further understanding	Moderator for the group, wanted to hear from guest			Response and connection to book.	Respond and change to book, but also respond to classmates
Influence	Spurred from a group mate's question, Ca makes a new connection to Nana in light of his role at the YMCA	In discussion heard agreeing with most things.	BC members stories showed importance of names. Felt it was a personal topic which meant some tension	Affirmations and quiet group members encouraged CaTu to say more.	BC member influenced outlook on voting rights – Ca attests this change to them being minority and having more experience	BC member shared flip side of story of how they were the ones receiving stereotypes	Groups from diverse backgrounds who had similar experiences		BC help draw more connections to current events and how they were experiencing it	Felt group energy was low
Other	Feels a sense of authority as education major and worked with kids	AsFu dominates the discussion – making this feel less like a conversation but of an academic exercise.	Question on illus feels genuine not procedural or setting him up to display	Led discussion, was the spokesperson. Felt topic of race brought tension (wasn't mentioned)	Felt he had to alter voice since it was a tough topic (White privilege?)	Othering group members, acknowledging different experiences	Sees background as key reason why experiences are different from BC		"I can see myself in the book" "everything happens for a reason"	Felt group energy was low, ppl were tried w/ end of sem

Figure 3.2. Data summary chart for each focal participant

While creating a summary matrix for each participant, I took detailed notes about possible ideas for codes, also known as pre-coding. Some of these initial ideas included *book club impacts, tension with prompts, the influence of identities,* and *disruptions.* The notes provided descriptions of what I saw in the data related to the potential code, illuminative excerpts from the data, and sometimes connections to my theoretical frameworks or research literature.

I highlighted significant participant passages and quotes that struck me concerning manifestations of voices. Many of these were passages that challenged my personal assumptions, destabilized my role as an instructor, and broke with past student rhetoric. A passage example that destabilized my role as an instructor came from Imani discussing how her reflections shifted over the semester with her book club. She shared, "I was just going to say I had kind of talked about the same thing but like I don't know if the terminology was... It's like you have your own vocabulary and how you speak, and

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we learn new terminology. It's almost like you feel like you're forced to add it into your vocabulary when you talk about a certain topic for others to hear you" (11.18.20_BC_LastStop_Imani). Imani's word "forced" caused me to reflect on how I introduced and expected students to use course terms. It disrupted my perception of me providing an equitable and open space for students to express themselves. Reading this, I felt it would be a "codable moment" worthy of my attention (Boyatiz, 1998). Rich quotes and passages, like Imani's, were preliminarily coded as quotes and copied into an excel document to retrieve more easily in later phases of the analysis.

Phase Two: Generating Initial Codes

After familiarizing myself with the entire data set, I crafted initial codes, consistently revisiting, interacting, and reflecting on the data. In a qualitative study, a code is a short phrase or word "that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of" the data pertinent to the research question (Saldaña, 2016, p. 4). Coding fosters the development of ideas and meaning from unstructured data (Morse & Richards, 2008). I used an inductive approach to identify codes ensuring initial codes were rooted within the data instead of fitting it into an existing coding framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Patton, 1990).

I first constructed preliminary codes based on my initial observations, memos, and pre-coding from phase one. Due to the sheer volume of the data corpus and my close familiarity with the data set from repeated readings, memoing, and experience as an instructor, I decided to formulate preliminary codes as opposed to engaging in line-by-line/ open coding. Next, I engaged in reflective writing and peer debriefing to define an initial coding template from the preliminary codes. This coding template served as a data

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management tool to organize similar data segments to form interpretations (Crabtree &

Miller, 1992). After, I systematically applied these initial codes to the entire data set

while remaining open to new potential codes. I describe this process in full below.

Preliminary Coding of the Data

I initially generated 57 preliminary codes based on my observations and

reflections from phase one. I began by systematically reviewing participant summary

charts and pre-coding from phase one to create codes that described what the students

were doing and thinking in relation to their voices. Utilizing a mix of three coding

methods, I employed process coding, using gerunds to connote action, in vivo coding,

adopting students' actual language, and some descriptive coding, employing a short

phrase to summarize observations (Saldaña, 2016). Example preliminary codes included

acknowledging group diversity, "adjusting to the space," needing to tell my own story

first, and *disruption of ideologies/ beliefs.* Using Excel, I organized the preliminary

codes. In each row of the Excel sheet, I included the possible code's name, the code's

definition, data excerpts that matched the code description and linked related memos (see

Figure 3.3).

Descriptor Name	Descriptor Definition	Example
explicitly citing other's stories to make self understood	Use this code when students explicitly refer/ cite to course articles to express/ support their: stance/ views/ value/ beliefs.	"there are going to be people who believe that my experience don't matter, my experiences don't matter. And so when you share your experiences is not as pertinent to them, so they don't really take them in as much as these scholarly, like articles and writings and like facts that they can't really negate (2.19.2021_Interview_MeNo_37:05) "[articles] were more like condensed that I could reference. I felt like I could get my point across a lot better through these articles than I could with my experiences just because if I did talk about my experiences, well, it's a lot of like stepping stones to discuss" (2.19.2021_Interview_MeNo_39:53)
sharing personal stories/ connections to make self understood	Use this code when students share personal stories/ connections to express/ support their: stance/ views/ value/ beliefs.	((in response to questo posed in book club about *Maddi's Fridge*)) "like I know this from experience cause I grew up poor, and its not like I have anything against it, some people are just really good at hiding it, cause they feel if people find out people will look at them differently. Or like me for example I'm not the type of person who wants to ask for help cause I don't want anyone to ever feel they have something to hold over me, something to hold over my head, so I will literally try to figure out ways to get things accomplished myself and stretch myself for thing before I ask for help, so sometimes we get really good at hiding things... especially with things like this" (9.16.20_memo_MiGo_DisussionNotes)
having something to share	Use this code when student express their story is worth sharing.	"I feel like my thoughts that are provided in the middle of like my thought draft are backed up and made stronger by providing my background" (2.01.2021_Interview_CaTu)
"Sounding Scholarly"	Use this code when students discuss/ talk about sounding more professional or scholarly in how they express themselves	"I began to say things with a more professional and educated tone, and started to reference thing learned in the semester with much more frequency and ease than I was able to at the start of the course" (12.01.20_TD_CaTu). "Like if one of us couldn't find the words, what somebody was thinking, like, we'd be like, "Oh, like, is this what you're trying to say?" But in more like sophisticated terms. So like, I can have a thought, but I didn't know how to define it and she'd be able to define it." (2.17.21_Interview_SuWh_11:54) MiGo: "It's like you have your own vocabulary and how you speak, and we learn new terminology it's almost like you feel like you're forced to add it into your vocabulary when you talk about a certain topic, and so for me, it's like I understand what I'm talking about and I can talk about it, but as far as like using specific terminology, it feels forced so I don't know if I actually use it correctly, but I can tell you what I'm talking about." (11.18.20_BC_3_LastStopOnMarketSteet_12:35) 'I feel later thought drafts were focused on different articles that influence me and my thought process. I feel like my writing almost became like more formal in that way to where, like in the beginning, all I could talk about was like my experiences, because that's all I really knew. And the more I learned, the more I transitioned into a more like, almost scholarly, like why representation matters in a less personal way and a more of like, this is fact, like, you can't really argue with this" (2.19.2021_Intetview_MeNO_35:37)

Figure 3.3. Screenshot of Excel sheet to capture preliminary codes

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) advice, I initially aimed to identify numerous initial codes as it was unknown what may be interesting or salient to the study. In this initial phase, I was open to codes overlapping, so that I might code one segment of data with two or more initial codes. Additionally, when coding data excerpts to illuminate these preliminary codes, I included surrounding data to not lose context (Bryman, 2001).

Defining an Initial Coding Template

Following the creation of my preliminary codes, I debriefed the process with two colleagues, further examining my thoughts and engaging more deeply with the data. Nowell and colleagues (2017) recommend peer debriefing in this analysis phase to encourage the interrogation of thought and development of ideas. Through debriefing, I gained a heightened awareness of various relationships among different codes and potential themes to examine in phase three. For example, three of my preliminary codes identified various ways course activities challenged students' initial voices (i.e.,

reexamining past representation of self, disruption of belief/ ideology, rethinking the status quo). In comparison, two codes illuminated occurrences when course engagements affirmed students' voices (i.e., *"fitting to me and what I believe"* and *seeing self in course texts*). All five descriptors portrayed a disruption to students' manifestation of voices, in which stable self-expressions were interrupted or less prominent self-expressions– often repressed from others– were affirmed by course events or activities. Therefore, through peer debriefing, disruptions were noted as a potential theme to explore in phase three and a category to initially group preliminary codes.

Based on these debriefings, I organized my preliminary codes into eight main categories; *disruptions*, *connections, institutional pressures, anticipation and responses, individual/ community benefits, group dynamics, sense of self, and miscellaneous* (see Table 3.7). Using categories made the 57 codes more manageable to explore and identify within the data corpus. Table 3.7 served as my initial coding template.

Disruptions	*reexamining past representation of self* *disruption of belief/ ideology* *rethinking the status quo* *"Fitting to me and what I believe"* *Seeing self in course texts*
Connections	*Needing to tell my own story first* *Forced connection* *Having something to share* *Sharing personal stories/ connections* *Sharing other's stories and/or experiences* *Showing hesitancy to share own story*
Institutional pressures	*"Sounding scholarly"* *Experiencing tension with prompts* *Tailoring voice to prompts* *Choosing a writing format of least resistance* *Grades*

Anticipation & Response	• *Anticipating instructor's response* • *Anticipating peer's responses* • *Concealing ideas due to peer's response* • *Reflecting on voice being heeded*
Individual/ communal benefits	• *Hearing peers "confirms my ideas"* • *Hearing peers: "furthers my knowledge"* • *Communal benefit* • *Individual benefit* • *Wanting to pose a question to learn with the group* • *Having something to teach the group* • *Furthering others' ideas*
Group dynamics	• *Class environment* • *Describing group tension* • *Acknowledging group diversity* • *Welcoming and accepting peer's ideas*
Sense of self	• *(trans)gender identity: influencing interpretation* • *Academic major: influencing interpretation* • *Academic major: influencing writing format* • *Future occupation: influencing interpretation* • *Previous experience: influencing perceived authority* • *Racial identity: influencing interpretations* • *Racial identity: influencing perceived authority* • *Describing reading-self*
Miscellaneous	• *"Adjust to the space"* • *Changing actions* • *Discussing influence of reflexive writing* • *Describing tension in constructing views* • *Changes in voice* • *Revising voice*

Table 3.7. Initial coding template

I uploaded all codes to Dedoose, a web application for qualitative research to store, organize, manage and reconfigure data. Software programs like Dedoose are shown to aid researchers in efficiently working with complex coding schemes and large amounts of data. (King, 2004; Saldana, 2016). To begin, I first created root codes for each category. Under each root code, I listed the preliminary codes within each category as child codes (see Figure 3.4). For each child code, I included the code's description in

addition to linking a memo that contained example excerpts from the data and kept track of memos associated with that code. Dedoose allows for flexible and dynamic coding in which new codes could be expanded vertically (i.e., more descriptors or categories), extended horizontally (change hierarchy), and contracting (merge or delete code) (Salmona et al., 2020). For instance, I expanded the initial code *disruptions to beliefs/ideologies* to include *challenging disruptions to beliefs/ ideologies* and *affirming disruptions to beliefs/ideologies* as I felt I could further delineate two types of disruptions. My initial organization was flexible, in line with thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and allowed me to restructure or add initial codes as I revisited the data.
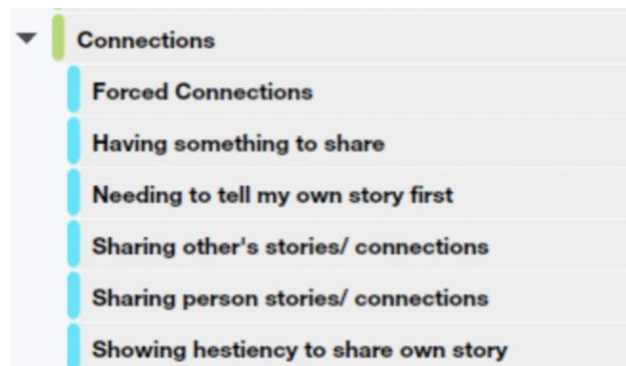
Figure 3.4. Root codes and child codes in Dedoose

Applying Initial Coding Template

Once I uploaded the codes within Dedoose, I systematically applied codes throughout the entire data set, focusing on one category at a time. At this time, all artifacts were uploaded onto Dedoose. By isolating excerpts from each artifact within Dedoose, I could attach one of my initial codes to that excerpt. Dedoose then created a separate Excel sheet that listed highlighted excerpts and the codes I assigned to it. By the end of this phase, I developed a list of codes across the entire data set.

I gave each data item equal and full attention, working through the data

participant by participant. While coding each category, I stayed open to coding other

interesting aspects of the data that didn't "fit" the initial code and coded them as *excerpts*

to revisit. Similar to phase one, I engaged in consistent memoing to monitor emerging

impressions of relationships and meaning within the data, in addition to establishing an

audit trail (Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1999).

Phase Three: Searching for Themes

Once I initially coded all data and developed a list of codes across the entire data

set, I sorted and collated codes to generate themes. Miles and colleagues (2020) define

themes as "an extended-phrase or *sentence* that identifies what a unit of data is *about* and/

or what it *means*" (p. 73). Themes are more abstract than individual codes and seek to

summarize significant portions of the data. In short, I used themes to connect coded

portions of data to capture and consolidate various students' experiences to bring meaning

to recurrent experiences or observations regarding manifestations of student voices

(DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000). These themes were not intended to reduce all student

experiences to a singular totality but to find relationships between those experiences to

create a deeper meaning. Like my initial codes, I generated themes inductively, linked to

the data instead of existing theory or research.

Organizing Codes into Themes

Before searching for themes, I first organized and collated coded experts to get a

sense of what I had identified in the data corpus. To begin, I downloaded from Dedoose

an excel sheet listing excerpts I coded, the data source the excerpt came from, and the

codes I assigned to the excerpt. I added a column that indicated what participant the

coded excerpt came from (see Figure 3.5). Next, I organized and grouped the excerpts by

the assigned code to get an idea of each code's frequency and participants' spread. While

theme development was not dependent upon the frequency of codes, it did allow me to

observe the prevalence of an experience/ observation within the data set.

Code	Partcipant	Data Source	Excerpt
Forced Connections	SuWh	10.14.20_SR_MultiCulturalNovel_SuWh.docx	So often, we make assumptions based off one story, one show, one movie, but as it was explained in the video, that is only PART of the story. I feel it would be as if I wrote an article on how my freshman year of college was tough, so I decided to drop out of nursing school. My readers would likely read it and thinking, 'what a shame' or 'oh look another college dropout.' And probable think how unsuccessful I will be now. I know that is what I would assume after reading an article on a nursing school dropout. However, this ONE article doesn't tell my readers how I found a career I'm even more passionate about, how I decided to take a 18 credit hour semester while working 40 hours a week, and show my motivation and dedication to my new career path. The one single story does not give me justice, but it only allows readers to make assumptions of who I am and what my story is. The two sources we studied, showed me how single stories, images, videos create society to make assumptions and stereotype things that we have no business making stereotypes about.
Personal Stories	ShWi	10.04.2020_Midterm_ShWi.docx	The first book I read for this class on my own was Jacob's Room to Choose. I sought out a book about being transgender or the general idea of gender identity and presentation. This book is important to me because I am transgender, and I had no representation of how I felt as a child when I was a child. I was kicked out of bathrooms for not looking like a girl (I wore mainly boys' clothes and had to shave my head one year because I had incurable lice), and I wish I had had the support the main characters did when they experienced the same problem.
Personal Stories	CaTu	8.26.20_BC_3_Last StopOnMarketStreet.docx	I know that Nana's an optimist, and she makes anything that's super negative positive. That's kind of like how I am. Like in Michigan, I work at a Child Watch at the YMCA, and we watch kids and stuff. And then that's like a big thing. You have to stay positive, no matter what, or the kids are going to get all scared of you. So, yeah. So I understand what made Nana do that.
Personal Stories	ShWi	8.26.20_BC_3_Last StopOnMarketStreet.docx	I grew up in a really poor rural town. And so like reading this book, I didn't talk about it in my thought draft, but I was thinking about it the whole time. It's like these people obviously aren't well off. They don't have public transportation in my town and we didn't have a car. There is no soup kitchen. They only just got a food pantry five years ago. And so it was just... It's interesting about... I don't know. These things he's concerned and complaining about, I didn't have the option to have, which is also back to what we were saying, like why it's so good that she was making sure that he understood that these things aren't something to be complaining or ashamed about, really.
Personal Stories	SuWh	11.18.2020_SR_BC_4_SuWh.docx	The story takes place on a bus. From real life experiences, I can say that the artist did a great job at depicting what life is like on a bus. If you have ever rode a tarc/bus, then you would see that being on a bus does let you see a variety of culture in our society. Young people, old people, fat or skinny, everyone rides the bus. It is a great way to experience how people who are in your community are living.
Personal Stories	SuWh	11.18.2020_SR_BC_4_SuWh.docx	I think that since I related this story too more real life experiences this time it allowed me to better explain my thought process.

Figure 3.5. Screenshot of excel sheet listing codes and excerpts

Next, as Braun and Clarke (2006) recommended, I created a long list of the

different codes (see Appendix F) and sorted them into potential themes. Though codes

were initially sorted into categories to aid in coding the entire data set, I abandoned those

initial categories. When developing themes, I wanted to look at the collection of codes

holistically, finding connections and relationships between the codes to answer my two

research questions. As King (2004) suggested, I began searching for themes with a few

predefined codes to guide my analysis initially. First, I surveyed codes connected to the

concept of disruption, as this was something unexpected I had found in the data corpus

and felt could aid in answering my second research question, *how do students' voices*

shift? I gathered codes connected to the concept of disruption and looked for

relationships among those codes. For instance, I grouped the codes *"adjust to the space"*

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and *changes in voice format* since they demonstrated a type of shift connected to the presentation of their voices.

Once I examined codes connected to shifts or disruptions to student voices, I looked at codes that described how students' manifested their voices and again searched for relationships among those codes. For instance, I grouped the codes *hearing peers "further my knowledge," welcoming and accepting peer's ideas,* and *acknowledging group diversity* since they described various ways peers influenced the manifestations of student voices. In line with Nowell and colleagues' suggestions, I aimed to identify themes most relevant to understanding the phenomenon under study (i.e., voice). Codes that did not fit into these initial themes were not discarded, but as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), placed into a "miscellaneous" theme."

Developing Thematic Maps

After creating initial themes, I sketched out various webs in my researcher notebook, trying various ways to further organize codes into "theme-piles" (Braun & Clarke). Eventually, I created an initial thematic map displaying five main themes I constructed for the first research question and three main themes for the second research question (see Figure 3.6 and Figure 3.7). As Halpren (1983) recommended, I memoed throughout the process, documenting my thinking about the hierarchies and development of concepts and themes.
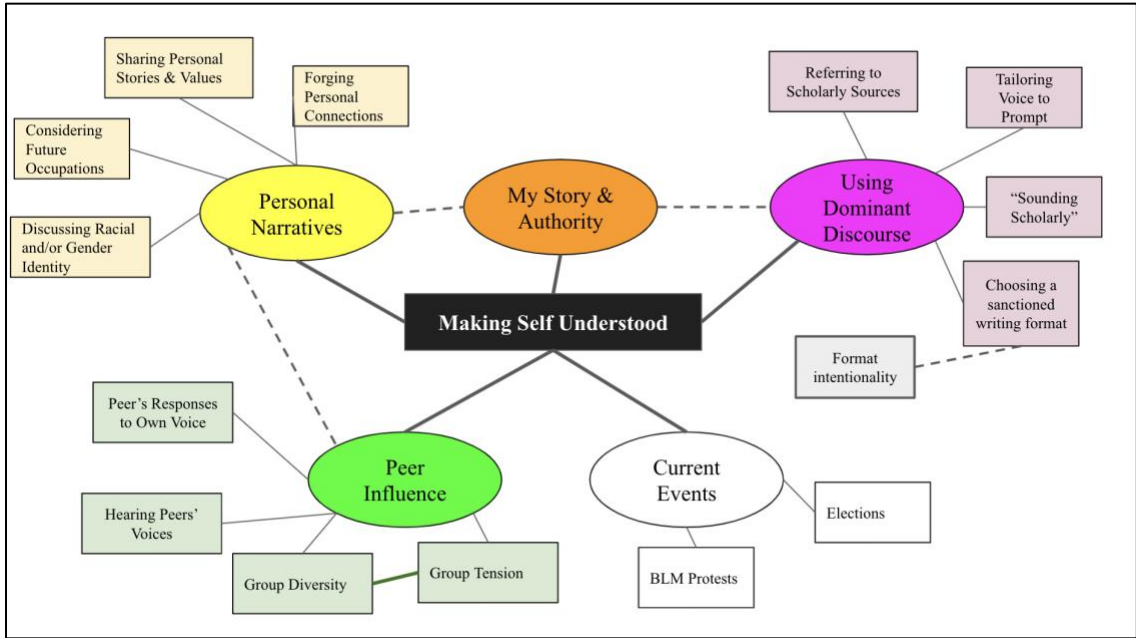
Figure 3.6. Initial thematic map, showing five themes for research question one: How do students manifest their voice?

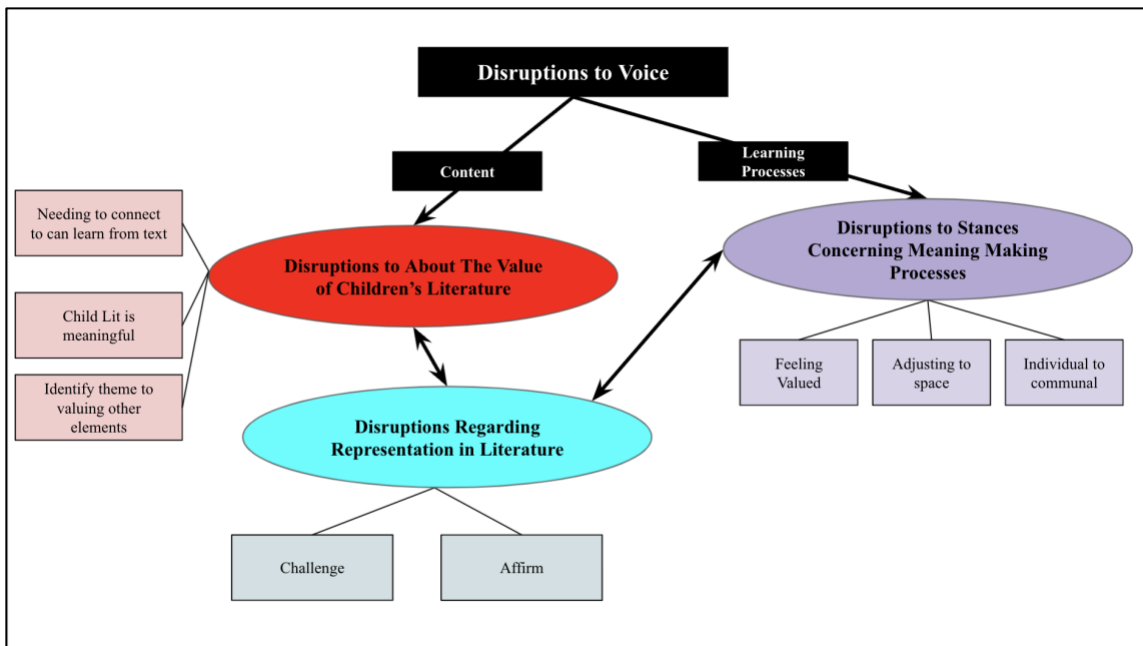*Figure 3.7.* Initial thematic map, showing three themes for research question two: How do student voices shift over time?

In each thematic map, the black boxes represent the two main themes I initially identified for this study; *making self understood* and *disruptions to voice*. The colored ovals connected to the black boxes name major sub-themes associated with each theme.

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Finally, the colored boxes attached to each sub-theme connote main categories or initial codes that describe each subtheme. While some of the category names are the same as the initial codes, for instance, "*adjusting to the space,*" others are new in which I collapsed multiple codes within that category. For example, *individual to communal* brought together four initial codes: *Communal benefit, individual benefit, having something to teach the group,* and *wanting to pose a question to learn from the group.* When an initial code, salient to a subtheme, could not be combined with other initial codes, I kept it its own separate category.

Based on my initial thematic maps, I created an excel sheet for each potential sub-theme theme that housed all coded excerpts attached to it. Any coded excerpts that did not fit into my initial thematic map, I kept in a separate document, since, as Nowell and colleagues (2016) suggest, it was uncertain at this point whether these initial codes would stick or be further refined combined, or discarded.

Phase Four: Reviewing Themes

In phase four, I aimed to refine my initial themes to ensure data within each theme cohered meaningfully and that there was a clear distinction between the various themes. Nowell and colleagues (2017) recommend that initial themes "be refined into themes that are specific enough to be discrete and broad enough to capture a set of ideas contained in numerous data sets" (p. 10). To review my initial themes, I first read all collated excerpts for each theme to see if they cohered. Next, I considered the validity of each theme concerning the entire data set by reading through the data corpus once more, recoding as needed. Braun & Clarke (2006) aver the need to recode data should be expected at this

phase since coding is an ongoing process. Finally, I refined my initial thematic maps to reflect the different themes and how they fit together. This process is fully described below.

Review Coded Extracts

The first step in phase four was to read through coded extracts connected to each theme to ensure, as Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested, (a) data coheres meaningfully together within a subtheme and (b) that each theme is clear and distinct from other subthemes. I printed out excel sheets, created in phase three, that listed codes and excerpts for each subtheme. In total, there were nine documents, one per subtheme and one for miscellaneous coded excerpts. I first read through each excel sheet, carefully reading the excerpts for the five sub-themes connected to the central theme of *making self understood.* Then, I read through the three excel sheets for the sub-themes connected to the main theme of *disruptions.*

As I read through the coded excerpts for each subtheme, I engaged in analytic memoing, specifically noting coherent patterns I saw across excerpts within a theme. For instance, when reading excerpts for the subtheme *peer support*, I noticed how participants discussed the diversity of race, background, academic major, and gender within their group as an asset to their thinking and increased the level of support they felt in sharing their voices in discussions or reflective writing. This pattern was a clear and identifiable distinction between other categories connected to the sub-theme *peer support*.

While reviewing coded extracts, there were instances in which I combined categories within the sub-themes. Combining categories and sub-theme creates a more

manageable set of significant themes that summarize the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). For instance, I collapsed the categories of *referencing articles* and *referencing the instructor* into one new category called *referring to scholarly sources*. Both illuminated instances students referred to sources outside their personal experiences and sources "sanctioned" by the academic (D)iscourse (Gee, 2001). Additionally, within this category, I also included miscellaneous excerpts in which students referred to guest speakers. Combining these codes allowed for a further reduction of categories and described how students leaned on scholarly sources more broadly.

As I reviewed initial themes, I began to reconsider the names for sub-themes and categories. For example, the sub-theme title *Leaning on Scholarly Sources* did not adequately describe that set of ideas. After considering Gee's (2001; 2002) concept of dominant (D)iscourse (described in detail in chapter one), I realized this sub-theme demonstrated different ways students pulled on the course's dominant (D)iscourse to make themselves understood. They used course terminology to sound more scholarly, referred to scholarly sources, and tailored their voice to the prompt. Therefore, I renamed the sub-theme *Using Dominant Academic (D)iscourse.* Though I further discuss naming themes in phase five of analysis, this proves that phases did not occur in a linear process but were recursive.

Consider the Validity of Theme in Relation to Data Set

After reviewing the coded extracts for each subtheme, I considered both the validity of individual sub-themes with the data corpus and if the sub-themes accurately reflected what I saw in the data set as a whole. To do this, I re-read the entire data set

once more to see if (a) the sub-themes worked in relation to the data set and (b) to code any additional data with themes missed in earlier coding. From this process, I coded an additional twenty-six excerpts, mainly from student interviews, that were salient to the various sub-themes.

Develop a Second Thematic Map

Based on reading the coded extracts and the entire data set with the themes in mind, I revised my initial thematic maps (see Figure 3.8). For instance, when considering research question one, I further delineated themes that described resources students used to make themselves understood, and factors that contribute to or concealed their voices. Additionally, I eliminated the theme *current events* since there was not enough data to support this theme and turned the code *discussing racial and/or gendered identity* as its own main theme. As I read over the data once more, there was enough data to support this and it became evident that it was a major factor influencing their voices.
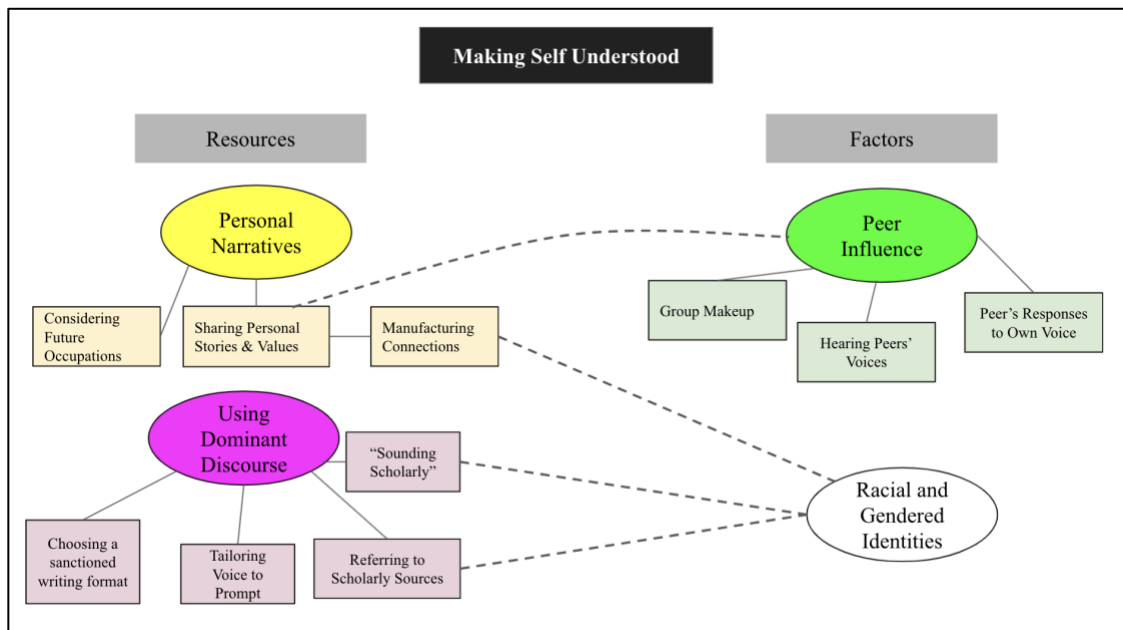
Figure 3.8. Revised thematic map, showing five themes for research question one: How do students manifest their voice?

Furthermore, on the thematic map I denoted various relationships between sub-themes and categories. For example, as I read through the coded extracts, I observed a relationship between the theme *of sharing personal stories and values* and *peer influence*. Often through students hearing peer's testimonies or feeling their ideas were heeded from the group, students began to share their narratives. The influence was evident in how personal narrative became more prevalent in peer-led discussions or reflection revisions as or after they interacted with their peers.

Phase Five: Defining and Naming Themes

After thoroughly reviewing and refining the themes, I defined and named each theme. First, I conducted and wrote a detailed analysis of each sub-theme in addition to establishing "the story each theme tells" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92). Then I revised the sub-theme names so, as Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested, a reader has a sense of the theme by reading the title alone. After following the recommendation of King (2004), I engaged in peer-debriefing to ensure my themes were sufficiently clear and comprehensive.

Writing Up A Detailed Sub-Theme Analysis

I returned to the collated data extracts and organized them into coherent accounts with accompanying narratives to compose a detailed analysis for each sub-theme. Following the recommendation of Braun and Clarke (2006), my analysis did not

paraphrase content from the data extracted but illuminated what is interesting about each

sub-theme and why, relating to my research questions.

For each sub-theme, I composed a definition, describing, in a couple of sentences,

the content, and scope of each. For instance, the report I wrote for the sub-theme peer

influence read:

> This theme reveals how class peers mediated various ways students manifested
> their voices. It becomes clear that the make-up of peer-led discussion groups, the
> anticipation of peers' responses, hearing peers' voices, and group tension shaped
> how students made themselves understood. This sub-theme further indicates how
> peer relations play a significant role in student learning.

Crafting Name Titles

Once I crafted a detailed analysis and definition for each sub-theme, I considered

titles for each sub-theme that would quickly identify the essence of each theme. Table

3.10 and Table 3.11 provide a summary of the revised theme names.

Making Self Understood			
Employing Personal Narratives	Enacting the Dominant Discourse	Responding to Peer Influences	Considering Racial and Gendered Identities
• Sharing personal stories & values • Manufacturing connections • Considering future occupations	• Referring to scholarly sources • Tailoring voices to prompts • "Sounding Scholarly" • Choosing a sanctioned writing source	• Anticipating and responding to peer's voices • Group Makeup • Feeling supported by peers	

Table 3.10. Subthemes to respond to research question one

Disruptions		
Disruptions to Self-Expression About the Value of Children's Literature	Disruptions to Meaning Making Processes	Nature of A Disruption
• Viewing children's literature as meaningful • Appreciating varied aspects of a story • Learning from children's literature	• Feeling valued • Adjusting to Space • Thinking Individually to Communally	• Challenging • Affirming

Table 3.11. Subthemes to respond to research question two

Peer Debriefing

To ascertain the clarity of my themes, I employed the help of a knowledgeable peer who was familiar with my study and thematic analysis methods. Numerous scholars (King, 2004; Lincoln & Guba,1985; Nowell et al., 2017) highly recommend solo researchers seek consultation from outside experts to determine sufficient clarity and expose potential aspects of the research that would otherwise remain unspoken. I took detailed notes and recorded the peer debriefing session to create an audit trail and use it as a reference for describing my methodological decisions.

Phase Six: Producing the Report

After working out the final sub-themes and categories in phrase five, I was ready to write up the final analysis for the study, presenting my findings and interpretations of the data in light of my theoretical framework and research literature. Throughout my findings report I selected examples, and extracts to demonstrate the main essence of my arguments. The aim of any analytical narrative needs to go beyond describing the data and instead make claims in relation to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

After writing up the report I reached out to all participants to engage in member checking. I heard back from five of the eight focal participants and scheduled a forty-minute video conference call with each participant individually. In that forty minutes I shared with students an overview of my findings and provided them excerpts of the report in which they were represented to read. I ask them to reflect on the accuracy and resonance of their experiences with was presented in the findings. All discussions were recorded and transcribed.

Establishing Trustworthiness

This qualitative case study provides a fine-grained analysis of how undergraduates manifest their voices in a children's literature course and how their voices shifted over the semester. The research was designed to examine the cultural and academic resources students used to illustrate their voices and elements that mediated shifts to students' voices. As I designed the study, collected data, and analyzed the data, I applied standard qualitative case study and thematic analysis techniques that met trustworthiness criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined four key criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to establish trustworthiness. I describe and define how I applied each below.

Credibility

I used several methods to address the credibility of my research report to ensure my representation of participants "fit" respondents' views (Tobin & Begley, 2004). I achieved prolonged engagement by working with participants and collecting data over

the entire semester, lasting a total of five months. I built rapport with participants, both as their instructor and researcher, and observed them develop over the Fall 2020 semester. During the five months, I had sufficient time to document various ways students manifested their voices and factors that mediated their voices. Furthermore, I triangulated my findings across multiple data sources (student reflections, academic papers, discussion video/audio recordings, discussion pre- and post-questionnaires, think-aloud interviews, field notes).

Although I was the only researcher, I engaged in frequent peer debriefing with two different colleagues during data collection and analysis to provide an external check on my research process (Nowell et al., 2017). Both peer debriefers were familiar with the study context and taught at the undergraduate level at the university where the study took place. I recorded our conversations in our meetings or took notes of themes from our discussions in my field notes. They helped me to question and redefine my methods and categories. Additionally, during data analysis, they helped me refine my interpretations of the data by listening to my themes and offering other explanations or directions for further analysis.

Finally, I engaged in member checking with five of the eight focal participants within phase six of my analysis. I met with each one individually on a video conference platform for about forty minutes. In that forty minutes, I shared with participants an overview of my findings and specific excerpts from my report that represented them. Our conversations were recorded and transcribed for me to review and built an audit trail.

Transferability

I provided rich descriptions of my methods and findings so that others who wish to apply findings to their site can assess the transferability (Geertz, 1973; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While reporting my findings, I described the context, participants, in addition to processes and products of student voices, with enough detail for readers to determine their sites' transferability. My sub-themes and categories may apply to students' experiences in other undergraduate or secondary humanities classrooms. However, the context and data are confined to two-course sections of an undergraduate children's literature course and may not be transferable to contexts in which other subject matters are explored.

Dependability

I ensured my research process was traceable, logical, and clearly documented. I created an audit trail to provide evidence of my choices regarding theoretical and methodological issues throughout the study, outlining a clear rationale for my methodological and theoretical decisions. Additionally, I kept all raw and analyzed data organized and accounted for in labeled folders and used a table to track what I had collected and done for analysis.

Confirmability

My research safeguards the confirmability of my findings through reflexive practices, triangulation of data sources, member checking, and peer debriefing. I consistently engaged in writing theoretical and analytical memos throughout the study to

reflect on how I was constructing the data. I engaged in numerous iterations of passing through the data to question my interpretations and examine confirming and disconfirming evidence of my emerging themes. Additionally, by using multiple data sources, I developed a more comprehensive understanding of student voices and could assess the validity of one source against another. Peer debriefing also helped to challenge my interpretations of the data and ensure that I stayed grounded in the participants' experiences and perspectives. Finally, I provided thick descriptions and excerpts from student writing and discussions to allow readers to see how the data and findings were illustrated.

Conclusion

This study examined eight focal students' voices in an undergraduate children's literature course to understand (a.) how students manifest their voices (b.) how said voices shifted. Given that voice is conceptualized as situated, multiple, and dynamic, the nature of a qualitative case study best supported understanding voices' "contextualized, contested and contingent nature" (Tardy, 2016, p. 353). Using thematic analysis, I managed the large data set, implemented a well-structured approach, and examined various participants' perspectives (Braun and Clarke, 2006; King, 2004). My analysis led to developing key themes that addressed my research question. I further present these themes in the following two chapters. While chapter four describes the resources and structures students utilized to manifest their voices, chapter five details factors that contributed to and concealed students' voices.

CHAPTER FOUR:
STRUCTURES AND SHIFTS: MAKING THE SELF UNDERSTOOD

Students' voices, defined as semiotic self-expression (i.e., representations of self, stances, views, values, and beliefs), convey to others the kind of person they want to be recognized as in a given context. Throughout the children's literature course, students manifested their voices through peer-led small group discussions, reflective writings, and academic papers. When discussing pieces of or issues related to children's literature, students' self-expressions reflected how they perceived their roles and identities within the context of the course. In turn, these perceptions influenced the resources and voices they utilized and the ideologies that surfaced in their various course interactions. As Wortham (2006) attests, the construction of knowledge and the identification process constitute one another and consistently overlap. In this vein, how students saw the world closely aligned with how they want to be represented (Gee, 1996). Manifestations of students' voices are one way in which to examine how students "create new ways of being," as Holland and colleagues (1998, p. 5) phrased it, as they account for agency in these "figured worlds."

This chapter examines how students manifested their voices in classroom engagements and, recognizing voices are not static but in flux, describes what mediated changes to students' voices. By analyzing students' semiotic self-expressions, I developed categories addressing ways students made themselves understood. The primary data sources I drew on were student reflections, discussion transcripts, and academic papers. The secondary sources of data I used to triangulate my findings were student think-aloud interviews, discussion questionnaires, and field notes. I developed and refined codes using thematic analysis, taking several passes through the data. I

constructed codes to describe patterns in how students made themselves understood over the semester, especially relating to the tools, ideologies, and (D)iscourses students utilized. Recall that in chapter one I am using Gee's (1996) definition of (D)iscourse to refer to ways people enact identities through acting, dressing, speaking, etc. to be recognized as a certain kind of person in a given context. An individual's manifestation of voice is one way they can exhibit a said (D)iscourse. In this chapter I first illuminate the resources students used to manifest their voices and then describe how students' voices shifted as they participated in the course.

Structures and Resources

Students implemented various structures and resources to make themselves understood to their peers and instructors. At times they emulated an academic (D)iscourse by recreating writing genres popular in academia, appropriating scholarly sources, and tailoring their views to match course prompts. On other occasions students relied on personal connections to draw parallels between course materials and their life experiences. Additionally, they created value-statements about course content as they envisioned future selves and connections. I explore these resources and structures below.

"I know the game": Enacting Academic (D)iscourse

Participants molded their voices to mimic or recreate the specific, yet tacit discursive style of academia by enacting its dominant (D)iscourse. Dominant (D)iscourses are ways of being that are associated with status, privilege and benefits of a particular group (Gee, 1996). Universities, like other institutions, expect a particular discursive style of their participants, from students to instructors; in other words, academia has its own dominant

(D)iscourse (White, 2011). Some features of academic (D)iscourse include citing scholarly sources, using formal conventions and writing in a detached third person narrative. Benefits of manifesting an academic (D)iscourse include receiving good grades, being seen as a "full participant" (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and being recognized and understood by peers and instructors in an academic setting. Students understood there were certain rules and formalities they needed to utilize for their voices to be fully heeded in academic settings. For students like Mayumi, a Japanese-American studying social work, referred to using the academic (D)iscourse, as a "game" (02.01.21_interview_Mayumi). Students enacted various methods to inform others they were individuals who knew how to play the "game." These methods included referring to scholarly sources, using popular academic writing formats, tailoring their voices to course prompts, and accessing course terminology associated with the field of children's literature. In what follows, I describe how students made these moves.

Referring to Scholarly Sources

To play the "game" students cited, rephrased, or referenced course articles, textbook chapters, or shared videos in course reflections, academic papers, and peer-led discussions. These were sources aligned with what Bakhtin (1981) refers to as "authoritative discourse"; an unquestionable ideology linked to institutions and seen as "hierarchically higher" than other sources (p. 342). I consider scholarly sources "authoritative" as they are often considered by teachers and students as the "truth", a source one checks their own ideas in relation to. These materials, curated by myself, the course instructor, aligned with my beliefs and views for the course; namely that

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children's literature should support a diverse range of students in which students can respectfully and accurately view themselves in the books they read.

Students frequently cited scholarly sources when asked to reflect on more "sensitive" or racially charged topics (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). Sarah described "sensitive" topics as those which are "delicate… often emotionally and politically charged" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). What students' deemed as sensitive likely varied amongst students. However, at large, they were topics linked to political and social unrest occurring in the world at the time. One such topic was stereotyping and how single narratives about groups of people lead to misunderstandings. Adichie's (2009) Ted Talk *the Danger of a Single Story* introduced this topic to students. In short, Adichie spoke about her experiences of being subjected to and believing single stories and described the dangers that ensued from that. In total, the eight focal participants cited or referred to scholarly sources twenty-four times when writing about single narratives in their reflections. In contrast, when students discussed *Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2016)—a picturebook about a boy and his Nana taking a bus ride downtown—students cited scholarly sources eleven times after reading the book for the first time at the start of the semester. Then after reading the book again at the end of the semester, focal students cited scholarly sources a total of two times. In comparing their written reflections on the two assigned texts, it's clear that students tended to cite sources more when the material was deemed "sensitive."

Another topic that further illuminated the act of citing course material was the topic of refugees, after reading the young adult novel *Refugee* (Gratz, 2017). In writing about and discussing this topic with their peers, students described this topic as one

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where they might "step on others' toes" (Sarah) or be "politically incorrect"

(2.17.21_interview_Spencer). For example, half of the focal students described refugee

experiences by referring to articles or dictionaries. This can be seen in Imani's reflection,

who begins by stating, "As a starting baseline, according to Natalia Ward and Amber

Warren (2019) 'A refugee is….'" as well as Mayumi who starts her reflection with "A

refugee, as defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention is 'some who…'." Both these

students, after reading *Refugee* used the words of others to define refugees. When asked

about this, Spencer, who also used a definition from the dictionary, shared, "I didn't want

to be politically incorrect, so if it upset someone I could say, it came from the dictionary"

(2.17.21_interview_Spencer). Though these students had read *Refugee*, in addition to

three picturebooks on refugee experiences, students chose to cite another's definition as

opposed to reflecting on their understanding of refugees based on what they read. From

Spencer's interview this seems to be intentional, as it felt safe and secure to use an

"expert's" definition as opposed to creating his own.

However, it was not just scholarly sources student relied upon to be made

understood, many students also turned to sanctioned writing formats in line with

academic (D)iscourse to manifest their voices.

Choosing a Predominant Academic Writing Format

Though students had the opportunity to explore various writing formats such as

concept webs, letters, infographics, etc., many students chose to write formal papers,

including detailed book summaries or book reports when reflecting on literature read in

class. I classified formal papers as writing that frequently formulates an argument or

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thesis, follows a structure that develops said argument or thesis, utilizes formal vocabulary as opposed to colloquial phrasing, and is often written in the third person. I consider formal papers and book reports main genres of academic (D)iscourse within literacy courses. First, especially within higher education, courses expect students to present their ideas in paper format. Look at almost any humanities course syllabus, and classes will likely use a final paper to assess students' learning. When I reviewed students' writing regarding the first two course reflections, 69% of the responses reflected formal writing structures. Neil explains that formal papers "feel right" and are "solid" compared to other mediums.

Second, in line with students' perceptions on the "solidness" of composing papers, many of the focal students crafted these papers by beginning with a thesis or summary. For example, Carl opened his week two reflection on *Last Stop on Market Street* with a detailed, half-page overview of the story. Another example is Mariana, who began her reflection on quality picturebook features with a thesis statement writing, "The best picturebook around must consist of a few different aspects, I describe each below. First…" (09.01.20_SR_LitMerit_Mariana). Additionally, Sarah led her reflection on the book *Sparkle Boy* (Leslea, 2017) by defining the theme stating, "The book *Sparkle Boy* by Leslea Newman is a story explaining the importance of accepting others for whom they are…" (9.16.20_SR_Sparkle_Sarah). Each student applied a structure to their writing reminiscent of a formal book report.

High school lessons likely drilled into students the importance of starting an academic paper with a thesis statement. These lessons stem from state academic standards on how to craft an essay. For instance, Kentucky Writing Standard for grade

11- 12 states students should "introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s)" when writing informative/explanatory texts (Kentucky Department of Education, 2019, p. 332). Sarah, in her interview, stated she felt like she "had to" start with a thesis statement and talk about the theme because that "was how it was always done, so it made sense" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). Moreover, when talking about literature, for years, students had composed book reports in which the aim was to summarize a story, more in line with Rosenblatt's (1982) efferent stance. In this study, students favored writing formal papers for, or thesis statements in their reflections, to mimic the preferred structures of academic (D)iscourse.

Tailoring Voices to the Prompt

Several focal students relied on a prompt to manifest their voices. Prompts included questions posed to students as they wrote their reflections as well as directions for participating in peer-led discussions. While prompts were used as a scaffold to guide students' thinking and learning, they also guided how students performed their voices in the children's literature course. For example, Amy, a sophomore biology major, routinely fashioned her own self-expressions and altered her peers' responses in small group discussions to respond to the prompts. She did this consistently with multiple peers at the start of the semester. One example of this is visible in a thought collective discussion with Imani, an education major. The prompt asked them to describe Bishop's (1990) metaphor on mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors in their own words, explicitly stating what it says by rephrasing it, sharing their interpretation, and explaining why it matters. Imani began by sharing her views about Bishop's quote:

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Imani: I feel like another big part that stood out to me in her [Bishop's] quote was literally the words of affirmation, because I feel like as people, like, even if we don't realize it, we're always looking for some type of self-affirmation, and I feel like, not only can we find that in like stuff that mirrors us, but just like in the Ted Talk, um, how she [Grace Lin] wanted it to be Dorothy, like in some way she connected with that character.

Amy: Ok. So, would you say that that is more what it's saying or why it matters?

Imani: Umm...

Amy: Cause I can kind of see basing on self-affirmation being like why it matters. So instead we can say it matters because we as humans, um, like we want self-affirmation and then explain that.

Imani: Yeah

Amy: So... ok, we'll write that. What do you think?

Imani: Sounds good I guess.

In the discussion, Imani began by freely sharing her response and views on Bishop's quote, seemingly not regarding the prompt. Amy, in response, sought to revise Imani's statement to respond to the discussion prompt more directly, asking is that "more what it is saying or why it matters?" Amy reconfiguring her words to directly respond to the prompt's phrasing. Eventually, Amy rewrote Imani's self-expression, stating, "it matters because we as humans… want self-affirmation." Here she inserts the word "it matters" from the prompt and boils down Imani's sentiments to fit in a sentence that succinctly answers the prompt. In this instance, the course prompt was a key structure for Amy in deciding how to demonstrate not only her own, but her classmates' ideas.

It was not just in discussions where prompts shaped students' voices; I also saw this in students' reflective writing. For instance, Carl addressed this directly when responding to their book club selection *Alma and How She Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal, 2018). The book introduced readers to Alma, a young Latina girl, as she learns the story behind her full name. In addition to reading their book club selection that week, students also read about picturebook design in their textbook. Correspondingly, the prompt for that week's reflection invited students to consider the moves the illustrator

made in their book club selection to help convey the story. In total, sixteen out of twenty-one sentences in Carl's reflection responded to this prompt. For instance, he begins his reflection by citing the textbook shared:

> "In chapter of our textbook it is mentioned that. Major function of illustrations is to 'reinforce the text,' and having the "Illustrations and diagrams restating visually what the words say" (p. 42-42). This book does exactly that, it depicts what is going on, making it a great tool for readers who get a little lost of confused in the text" (9.26.20_SR_Alma_Carl).

However, later on, in his pre-discussion questionnaire he talked about composing his reflection, writing, "I mainly tried to write about the illustrations, cause it's the focus of this week although I really want to talk about the importance of heritage and Alma's culture." (9.16.20_DiQu_Alma_Carl). Carl preferences responding to the prompt over his own interests related to the book. There was intentionality in him framing his voice this way. Factors that led to this are further explored in chapter five.

By enacting the academic (D)iscourse through citing scholarly sources, using formal writing formats, and tailoring their voice to the prompt, participants informed their peers and instructor they were individuals who knew how to play the "game." However, this also told the individual of the kind of person they were, mediating their actions (Holland et al., 1998). Specifically, playing "the game":

- shaped participants' voices to notice specific aspects of a text or topic aligned to the dominant (D)iscourse of the literature course, such as a story's theme or plot
- guided how they fashioned their voices, such as composing papers, and
- encouraged them to use a more efferent stance (Rosenblatt, 1978), where students focused on reporting information via formal papers

These mediating effects are further illuminated by Sarah, who stated, "I'm used to talking in facts, not feelings," (12.01.20_SR_Sarah) and Neil, who discussed how papers are

"natural" forms of expression in school (02.19.21_interview_Neil). This instinct to talk in facts over feelings, or to write papers, derived from engaging in "the game" of school for numerous years. These instincts were "laminated" to use Holland and Leander's (2004) term, a durable way of making oneself understood in academia. Therefore, the academic (D)iscourse informed students of what was "natural" in school settings.

When looking over students' manifestation of voice over the semester, it becomes clear that students relied on reproducing the academic (D)iscourse more heavily at the start of the semester than at the end. For instance, students frequently referenced the textbook to express their views and values on what makes a good picturebook at the start of the semester, more so than at the end of the course. This is illuminated when examining the total number of references made to the textbook between all focal participants on their first reflection on *Last Stop on Market Street*, eleven, compared to a total of two on their last reflection of *Last Stop on Market Street.* Examples of referencing the textbook include Carl, who begins his reflective writing with "In chapter 4 of the Children's Literature Briefly textbook it says a major function of illustrations is to reinforce the text" or Mariana who wrote, "This book has believable and round characters. According to [our textbook], this is a key quality marker."

In the initial weeks of the course conversations and reflections placed a larger emphasis on discerning what made a quality picturebook with supplemental textbook reading. In doing so, students leaned on the textbook to manifest their voices. However, as the semester progressed, students referred less to the textbook and more to their own experiences reading children's literature and course discussions. When asked about this, Neil shared:

It been like, let's just say a while since I read a picturebook, so I didn't really know what to look for. The textbook told us [quality markers] so I just used that… after reading twenty, thirty plus books I didn't even think to use the textbook because I figured out what I like in picturebooks (2.19.21_Interview_Neil).

As Neil expressed, students' references to the textbook were prompted by an initial hesitancy of what made a good book and saw the textbook as a go-to source for answers. Additionally, this initial use of referencing scholarly sources appeared to be influenced by students' anticipation of my response as the instructor. Mayumi shared, "I've been a student for 12 years plus years. I know that teachers appreciate when we use course materials. The teachers want to see how you're using concepts you read about. So, I made sure to show that, especially in the start [of the semester]" (2.9.21_interview_Mayumi). As Mayumi illuminates, students' experience from other courses likely mediated this initial reliance on the textbook when describing quality features of a picturebook.

"My Own Perspective and Unique Lens": Reliance on Personal Connections

Sharing personal anecdotes was one way students demonstrated how they were making meaning with course texts and literature. They made visible their unique life experiences to illuminate views, ideas and representations of self. In sharing their stories, focal students:

- Supported their reasoning and inferences

- Expanded their understanding of course concepts

- Demonstrated empathy for book characters

- Established purpose and authority in their voices

- Created entry points for self-expressions on a topic

- Interjected ideological assumptions

- Narrated a future self

For example, at the start of the semester Carl, a White education student, relied on his life experiences to give meaning to the children's book *Last Stop on Market Street.* The book illustrates the experience of CJ, a young Black boy, as he rides the public bus across town with his Nana. CJ questions why they must ride the bus while others have cars, why he does not have an iPod, and why they travel to blighted neighborhoods. In response to reading the book Carl, pulls on personal memories and insights to state, "I'm just like CJ."

In his reflection, he wrote the following:

The message of the book was to be grateful for what you have and not be jealous of what others have. And that really hit home for me, because growing up, I grew up in an area that was really wealthy, and then there was us, the middle class… I used to always be jealous of the kids that had a TON of stuff, I would voice that to my parents, like I wanted the latest version of the iPhone or the Nintendo that just came out. Also, kids in my school would go on tropical vacations and we would go camping. Well talking to my parents, they would make me realize I have to be grateful. They told me that if I work hard then maybe I could get those items I wanted. So, I'm just like CJ, we both did not have what other kids had but we learned we needed to be grateful and just work hard (8.26.20_SR_LastStop_Carl).

Carl's personal connection was an entry-point for him to formulate self-expressions regarding the text. His connection supported his reasoning on the importance of the theme, and established credibility in what he was saying. As well, he used his own experience of not getting what he wanted to demonstrate insight and empathy for CJ, showcasing he had first-hand knowledge of how CJ felt. Finally, in sharing his connection he injected an ideological assumption, of White capitalism, that working hard will help you attain more material wealth, a message not conveyed in the story.

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Amy, a White biology student, offers another example of the various ways students utilized their personal stories to make meaning and manifest their voices. She read an article depicting how disabilities are represented in children's literature and three pictures books that featured (dis)abled protagonists. As Amy considered the material, she also reflected on her experiences with her younger sister, born with one hand. She wrote:

> I chose to learn more about how disabilities are represented in children's literature because I feel like I have a personal connection to the topic... Growing up, I never thought of [my sister] as any different than me because, in reality, she isn't. To this day, I haven't found anything that she can't do. Does she go about doing some things different than me? Yes, but that doesn't make her any less because she doesn't do things the traditional way. Kids need to learn and see this in picturebooks. What I see in my sister, I also saw in the characters I read about this week. (10.28.20_SR_Issues_Amy)

From Amy's vantage point, she had anecdotal authority in talking about disabilities. In our interview, she shared, "from growing up with my sister, I know more than anything how important [kids with (dis)abilities seeing themselves] is" (2.18.21_interview_Amy). The authority in her voice based on the experience with her sister seemed to give her permission to both advocate for children with (dis)abilities and developed a bond with the character in the literature she read. For instance, she asserts her view that "kids need to learn and see [representations of disabilities]" directly after sharing personal anecdotes about her sister. Her first-hand experiences of knowing that those with (dis)abilities are just as capable bolstered her later argument. Her connection both informed and drove her statement of belief on picturebooks surrounding (dis)abilities.

Amy's relationship with her sister also gave her permission, in a sense, to demonstrate solidarity and strong connections with the book characters. Amy's response, "what I see in my sister, I also saw in the character," conveys a perceived deep understanding of the characters' actions and feelings. While Carl drew on a capitalist

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ideology, connected to childhood memories, to help make a story relevant to him, Amy

leaned more on experiential knowledge to find ways to connect with the characters. Both

Carl and Amy demonstrate how their stories offered entry points to self-expressions, gave

their voices authority, and how they saw their experiences as valuable in building

connections to book characters and course content.

A further example of how students used personal narratives to convey empathy

for characters comes from Imani, a Black education student. She employed personal

insights and situational awareness derived from her experiences to demonstrate empathy

for Sarah, a protagonist in *Ghost Boys* (Rhodes, 2018). Sarah is the daughter of a police

officer who shot and killed a Black twelve-year-old boy after mistaking his toy gun for a

real gun. In her book club, Imani shared:

> It's not like I'm sticking up for the officer or anything. I'm all Black Lives
> Matter. But I do realize from personal experiences and from knowing people that
> have judged me based off the actions of our parents that it kind of does get crazy,
> especially when you're in situations like that, because they're put on mainstream
> so much, it may blow up so fast that it's like my life has literally changed in a
> matter of two hours. Still, it wasn't because of anything I did.
> (11.17.20_BC4_GhostBoys_Imani).

Imani's history of being judged based on her parents' actions provides a foundation for

her to understand and expand upon the experiences of Sarah in the book. Though she

does not go into full detail recounting her experience, she clarifies to her book club that

her perception of the book is informed by her life story. Similar to Amy and Carl's

connections, Imani assumed authority in making her claims. Furthermore, Imani's

experience not only provides an avenue for her to bond with Sarah but also to expand

Sarah's experiences, not fully detailed in the book. From her own experiences, she can

infer what is going on around Sarah and how her life is turned upside down based on her

father's actions. Like Amy, she uses experiential knowledge to find ways to connect to course content and expand upon what the book presents, reading between the lines of the text.

Connecting experiences, insights, and personal stories to course content and stories in their voices was highly valued and sought after by many students. It was a marker of quality conversations for many students. Sarah, a White education student, reflected on this in her book club's discussion of Lillian's Right to Vote, shared, "This was our best book club discussion so far. We were able to relate a lot more to our own personal experiences, which led to a more interactive discussion" (10.07.20_DiQu_Lillian_Sarah). Personal stories were launching points for Sarah to discuss the books or topics at hand, making for more "interactive" discussions. Furthermore, students saw their stories as a way to put their stamp on what they shared. Carl talked about this, stating, "including my personal experiences … gives my own perspective and unique lens rather than just repeating a ton of stuff that like a lot of other people would have said" (2.01.21_Interview_Carl). There was a sense of novelty in drawing connections to one's own life and the topic at hand.

In addition to sharing personal anecdotes, students' connections to and insights regarding future occupations helped inform their self-expressions, providing reasoning, purpose, and entry points to their self-expressions. Most commonly, this manifested itself with students enrolled in teacher education programs as they considered their future job as educators. By envisioning perspectives of a prospective job, they demonstrated self-expressions motivated by the requirements of that job. For instance, Mariana, an education student, shared with her book club, "This book is definitely going to be a great

conversation starter when teaching children about gender roles"

(9.15.20_BC_Morris_Mariana). Here, Mariana reflects on the value of the picturebook

Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress (Baldacchino, 2014), considering her future

responsibilities as a classroom teacher. Specifically, the belief that the book will be "a

great conversation starter" is mediated by considering her future occupation and job of

initiating conversations with young children.

Mayumi, a social work student, presents another example of this in her midterm

paper. She writes, "I want to work with kids in the future, so I know I have to select a

variety of books that can affirm and build empathy for children"

(10.04.20_Midterm_Mayumi). Her desire to work alongside children influences this

sentiment and provides the rationale behind her self-expression. When manifesting their

voices in this manner, students pulled upon their future job's cultural resources and

ideologies, from a book needing to be a good conversation starter to books needing to

affirm and build empathy with children. Additionally, the connections served as a point

of authority. For many, speaking from the perspective of a future teacher empowered

their claims. For instance, Carl preferences his self-expression with his position as a

future special education teacher. In his reflection, he wrote:

> As a future special education teacher, I know students with learning disabilities
> such as autism. I experience the emotions and feelings that these students display,
> and plenty if not the majority of them constantly tell me they feel left out. These
> students need mirrors, and other students need books so they can understand their
> experiences. (10.28.20_SR_Disbailties_Carl).

Carl situated himself in the role of his future occupation stating, "[a]s a future special

education teacher," explicating the (D)iscourse (Gee, 1996) he wanted to perform. This

declared position supports his view that students with disabilities "need mirrors and other

students need books so they can understand their experiences." By referencing his identity as a special education teacher, he made his position and views understood.

Students' personal narratives told both themselves and others specific stories about their experiences to illuminate their self-expressions (Williams, 2018). In short, to be understood and make meaning was to tell their story. Their stories were not just retelling their lived experiences but also presenting their systems of beliefs and ideals. Furthermore, for many students their personal narratives provided entry-points for manifestations of voice and gave their voices credibility.

In sum, focal students enacted the academic (D)iscourse and formed personal connections to course materials to make themselves understood in the classroom. The utilization of these various resources had implications in how students' positioned themselves within and viewed the course context (Gee, 1996). Manifestations of voice are demonstrations of meaning-making (Whitmore & Meyer, 2020)—they are ways students report how they see the world and themselves. While students utilized these various structures to make themselves understood, their voices were not static but dynamic. How students made themselves understood shifted over the semester due to disruptions.

Disruptions

Students' ideologies mediated the structure of their self-expressions, specifically how they revealed representations of self, their stances, beliefs, views, and values (Gee, 1996; 2000). These ideologies were strengthened over time as repeated experiences and encounters validated them. They perpetuated self-expressions that for each student were

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commonplace; a logical way of thinking and being. I refer to these types of self-expressions as being "laminated" (Holland & Leander, 2004); expressions that are figuratively layered with protective material (i.e., confirming past experiences) giving them strength. Nevertheless, voice is not a stable entity or something that remains constant. Even the most durable self-expressions are prone to shifts or what I have termed disruptions. I define *disruptions* as events or activities that interrupt students' "laminated" self-expressions.

My concept of disruption is similar to Fecho's (2011) and Garcia and O'Donnell-Allen's (2015) notion of *wobble* - a naturally occurring unexpected event that induces question and a sense of imbalance. Garcia and O'Donnell-Allen argue wobbles "introduce instability into our lives" (p. 19) and, as Fecho explains, "marks a liminal state, a state of transition" (p. 53). Wobble is a critical component of Garcia and O'Donnell-Allen's *Pose, Wobble, and Flow Framework* used to describe teaching practices. While *poses* convey stances teachers consciously take shaping their classroom practices, *wobbles* call those poses into question. Eventually, once teachers work through those wobbles, they achieve a *flow*, a deepened appreciation, and assurance in their stances and practice. They argue this process is not linear but recursive and essential to development.

Mariana, a Latina education student who immigrated to the US from Colombia at three, illustrates a succinct example of a disruption. In her midterm paper, she reflected on laminated beliefs that were disrupted by course content. She wrote:

> I've always had this sense of children's literature being simple and entertaining for kids, but I never really thought about enjoying it this much as an early adult. I have seen myself in so many of the books I have read this semester as so many different characters have spoken to me, which, when I was a child, was taboo. I

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believed my experiences were not something that should be shown in children's books. However, some of my favorite [books] this semester has been Jude from *Other Words for Home* by Jasmine Warga and Yuyi from *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales. These women faced many of the same challenges I did when first coming to live in America, and I was honestly surprised by the accuracy of the books' contents compared to my own experiences. I just never expected to find it in a children's book. (10.04.2020_midterm_Mariana)

Mariana disclosed two durable self-expressions. First, she felt children's literature was "simple" and something she could not enjoy as an adult. Second, she felt it was taboo for picturebooks to portray her life's experiences. In a later interview, she further elaborated on this, sharing, "the literature I read as a child tried to turn me into a little American. I don't want to say I lost my culture, but I definitely didn't see it in school, so I thought these books [that represented my home culture] were taboo" (2.19.21_interview_Mariana). Repeated school events of not seeing her Latina culture in school, especially in literature, partly cemented her idea that Latina or immigrant experiences did not belong in children's books and that the intent of said books was to "entertain." However, events like reading *Dreamers* (Morales, 2018), and *Other Words from Home* (Warga, 2019) ruptured this notion. Her belief that children's literature could not be inclusive of her experiences is seemingly disrupted, as she shares her "surprise" of seeing experiences similar to her own portrayed in children's literature. This disruption mediated a shift in how she manifested her voices, highlighted later on in this section.

Like Garcia and O'Donnell-Allen's (2015) *Pose, Wobble, and Flow framework*, I see *disruptions* as integral incidences that foster thought and identity expansion. For example, Mariana expanded her view of children's literature from being simple stories on American ways of life to stories that include diverse immigrant experiences. However, while the concept of *wobble* mainly names the action and state of imbalance, *disruptions*

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consider the entire activity system. *Disruptions* identify an individual's previous ideologies, describe the events of a *wobble*, examine mediating components that prompted instability, and investigates the outcome of said activity.

When examining disruptions to participants' voices within the children's literature course, I identified two overarching disruptions, outlined in Figure 4.1. One category describes how course activities disrupted students' laminated meaning-making processes, while the other details how course engagements disrupted student voices on course content. I describe each in further detail below.

Disruption Category	Disruptions About the Value of Children's Literature	Disruptions Concerning Meaning-Making Processes
Definition	*Instances when course activities disrupted students' stances, representations of self, in addition to their beliefs regarding the value of children's literature.*	*Instances when course activities disrupted students' meaning-making processes and therefore their manifestations of voice.*
Example	Sarah states she no longer reads picture books at a surface level with the attitude of "they're just cute" but approaches children's literature with a "critical lens to seek its deeper meaning" and understand the author's or illustrator's intentions (10.04.20_midterm_Sarah).	Though Neil first sought to share the "right answer" or present novel observations to his peers, around mid-semester, he was less concerned with being correct and more engaged in exploring new thoughts and ideas with his book club and thought collective. (2.19.21_interview_Neil).

Figure 4.1: Categories of Disruptions

"We were helping each other find ideas": Disruptions to Meaning Making

> I was an engineer, and in my major, there is a right answer… so I was used to just, especially in my classes, finding that right answer or the correct processes to approach things with. And coming to this class, at first, I felt I needed to find the correct process to approach reflections and discussions, check all the boxes that needed to be there, and get my ideas heard, so you knew I had the correct response.
> Neil (2.19.21_Interview_Neil)

> When I would write something, I would go by what the rubric is asking, no more no less. And it was to be strictly facts, I think this goes back to high school where you were never supposed to put how you feel on a paper… in this class that changed midterm when we had to write our midterm paper and so many reflections. I had to use what I was feeling and come up with my own stuff for writing. You know it wasn't black or white anymore, but a shade of gray.
> Sarah (2.17.21_Interview_Sarah)

Students pull from multiple epistemologies or ways of learning when they enter the classroom. These epistemologies reflect their "laminated" meaning-making processes confirmed over time through repeated school, home, or cultural experiences, informing them of what knowledge looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Illuminated in the quote above, Neil, a White engineering student, entered the children's literature course with an analytical approach searching for a correct answer. His background in STEM related courses that are preparing him for a career in engineering likely informed his approach to learning. Whereas Sarah, a White education student, reported high school experiences initially influenced her to stick to facts and respond within the parameters of a rubric. They saw learning as an independent practice of reporting out information for their well-being, to be correct, or meet the demands of a rubric. In turn, these approaches to meaning-making influenced how they manifested their voices, further detailed below. Therefore, disruptions to students' ontologies and epistemologies led to shifts in how they exhibited self-expressions. This section examines disruption that introduced instability to students' learning processes, mediating changes to their voices.

I focus on Neil's experiences as an extended example to illustrate this disruption. Neil was a senior electrical engineering student. Taking this course fulfilled a general education requirement he needed for graduating the following semester. In his quote which opened this section, it is clear Neil began the course with a durable approach to knowledge, specifically that learning was about uncovering and reporting correct responses analytically. At the start of the semester, in his pre-discussion questionnaires which asked what he hoped to contribute to the peer-led discussions, he further demonstrated this epistemology. In them, he expressed a desire to report out to others

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stating his hopes to "contribute one concept that is unique to everyone else" (8.26.20_DiQu_Neil), to "contribute unique ideas that other members will remember for future discussions… that surprises the other group members" (9.02.20_DiQu_Neil), and to point out unique observations no one else would find (9.16.20_DiQu_Neil). For Neil, the purpose of manifesting his voice was to display what he knew.

Neil and I further discussed this, in which he elaborated:

When it came to discussions, at that point [the start of the semester], I saw it not as a discussion but more of an assignment. I knew you were recording it, so I needed to make sure that I at least got a few solid points off to get credit. So that is where I started… I needed to be recorded saying something smart and correct... I didn't do discussions in my other courses. Mainly it was all lectures where we reported out answers, so I kind of did that too (2.19.20_interview_Neil).

Neil viewed discussions not as a place to collaborate with others and seek shared understandings, but rather as a place to showcase what he knew.

Neil's approach to meaning-making shaped the nature of his initial reflections. His writing was, as he described it, "very formulaic" (2.19.20_interview_Neil). For the first four weeks, he wrote a bulleted list of observations about the art, word usage, content, lesson, or point of view. For instance, when reflecting on *Lubna and Pebble* (Meddour, 2019), a story about children at a refugee camp, he revealed his ideas in a concise format. He stated, "Good story/ theme - Finding happiness even when you are alone and share it when you are not alone." (9/16).

In addition to influencing his writing, his approach to learning and what he valued as success shaped how he manifested his voices in peer-led discussions. Recall in Neil's discussion questionnaires that he completed the first month of the semester, his focus during peer-led discussions was to deliver information. For example, as his peers shared their reactions to *Lubna and Pebble*, Neil focused on his own contributions. He regarded

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his reflection, in a list format, ticking off responses others stated to ensure his response was a novel idea. (9.16_fieldnotes).

Furthermore, Neil interjected his ideas from his list, often interrupting his group's line of thought, to establish his contributions. His book club discussion about *Last Stop on Market Street* further highlights this:

> St 1: They showcase different disabilities, like the blind man. And kids are always like, "why is he like this?" But I liked how this book showcased that it wasn't actually a disability but that he could enjoy things with his other senses. And that it wasn't apparent at first look.
> St 2: Yeah, when he did close his eyes in the book, CJ experiences that and appreciates it. He gets to see it from his shoes.
> St 3: Hmmmm… I didn't even think about that. It does send that message to kids.
> St 2: Yeah, I really love the message of this book.
> St 3: It's good to teach kids to be curious, understanding, and build empathy. Like CJ, with the help of his Nana, is doing that.
> Neil: Ok, so the progression of the story focuses half on the journey and half on the destination. I think the bus ride on the way there provides a decent bit of character growth, so by the time they reach the last stop, most of the meaning has been established.
> St 2: Hmmm
> (Pause – 3 seconds)
> St1: Yeah, I've just never seen books portray disabilities in this way, have you all?

As the group built upon one another's observations, Neil inserted a bulleted point from his reflection. His contribution came across as incongruent with what the group was discussing. This seemingly threw them off, indicated by the three-second pause, until ST 1 returned the discussion focus back to the portrayal of disabilities in the book.

Neil explained these instances from his perspective in our interview. He stated, "[p]eople were sharing, so I would share an insight I had from my list, and the group would just move on, I'm like, no I don't think y'all hear me, but they would continue on, ignoring my new point" (2.19.21_interview_Neil). Neil found that his peers were not

receiving his ideas as he expected and that his reflection in list form was not aiding him in being a part of the conversation. He described feeling "left out" and partly frustrated (2.19.21_interview_Neil). Neil shared that around week five, "[I felt] Okay, this isn't it"-this stance and approach I'm taking in this course are not being received. He continued:

> I shouldn't see this as an assignment where I just need to say as much smart things as possible. Instead, I need to have a discussion that actually means something... So it's not as much of a "look at what I found." It's actually an, "Oh, Hey, like, did you all notice this?" or, "what'd y'all think about this"... it has to be something to build off of. I saw that to be the point around that time [week five]. We were helping each other build ideas, not just showing off. And so, it didn't matter what you found; if it didn't build off anything, it was useless (2.19.21_interview_Neil).

A disruption to Neil's approach to knowledge generation occurred around week five. Promoting his ideas no longer usurped building knowledge as a group. He shifted from taking an individualistic to a communal approach to learning. As a result, Neil's voice shifted. For instance, instead of composing formulaic lists for reflections, Neil engaged in writing longer narratives. In discussing this new written format, he shared:

> I sat myself down, and I pictured a person that was just standing where my wall was. And I was like, okay, here's what I think about this. And so it's apparent that I'm literally just writing what I'm saying… I would think of questions that the person would ask me, and then I would answer those questions. So in my mind, while I was typing, I thought of things my group might ask. Like them saying, "could you elaborate on this part?" And I would just go ahead, start elaborating on that part (2.19.21_interview_Neil).

Neil began reflections with his group in mind, speculating how he could further his group's collaborative understandings, as opposed to advancing his own thoughts. He does this by taking up a conversational approach, envisioning his group mates' questions. This in turn, prompted him to further elaborate on his ideas, taking a more aesthetic stance when manifesting his voice in writing. Neil was no longer searching for the correct answer but exploring possible queries his group might pose.

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From week five on, Neil wrote longer narratives, inserting more personal stories and opinions, and revealed a shift in his pre-discussion questionnaires. When asked about what he hoped to contribute, Neal moved from presenting his knowledge to asking questions and listing possible topics to further examine with his group. For instance, in week nine, after reading *Lillian's Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965* (Winter, 2015), he wrote "I want to ask my group what's next in terms of voting rights. What does the US need to do next? And would Lillian be proud of what's happening now?" These questions, while implicitly showing his belief that the fight for the right vote is not over, sought to incite discussion where he can both learn and share with his group.

Additionally, while Neil made few revisions to earlier reflections, later reflections sometimes had up to a page and a half of new thinking inspired from the group. In his reflection on *Lillian's Right to Vote*, he added two new paragraphs incorporating a group member's frustration about how her friends don't care about the election. He wrote "People need to realize that voting is not an unearned right, but a privilege many worked hard to get and still are. It baffles me that some people are too lazy to care and vote. Wake up people!" (10.07.20_SR_Lillian_Neil). Neil assimilated his group member's experience to further respond and draw connections to the book.

Neil's experience provides a robust example of how course engagements, such as peer discussions, can disrupt students' durable meaning-making processes, leading to shifts in how they manifested their voices. Like Neil, other focal students demonstrated shifts in their voices mediated by disruptions to their meaning-making process. These disruptions often occurred from students as they shifted from taking a

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more individualistic to a communal sense of learning, or from students moving from a more analytical, efferent approach—in which the aim was to take away and report information—to a more aesthetic approach in which students focused on their experiences and intuition regarding content (Rosenblatt, 1994). Both these shifts are seen in Neil's extended example above.

A further example of this is Amy, a biology student, who, similar to Neil, approached discussions as a way to display one's knowledge. At the start of the semester, her hope in peer-led discussions was to "contribute a fresh perspective on the book and leave the other members thinking, wow that's good. I never thought of that" (8.26.20_DiQu_LastStop_Amy). In our interview, she shared how she wanted to "impress" her group and show that she was "just as knowledgeable as education majors" (2.18.21_interview_Amy).

This sentiment is illuminated in her thought collective discussion on the literary merit of picturebooks. As a group, they were instructed to name and discuss qualities they valued in picturebooks, and write them on a shared chart to share with the class.

> Amy: OK, so what qualities do you think are most important in a picturebook? I think illustrations
> Imani: Illustrations are good.
> Carl: Yeah, some books have a few words and it's the illustrations that tell the story.
> Imani: I think also it's important for a book to have an influential message
> Carl: Oh yeah. That's key.
> Imani: I mean, it doesn't have to be preachy, but you want to take something away, feel something.
> ST 4: Yeah, like you want to be able to walk away with something new. It doesn't have to be a new fact, it could be understanding someone else.
> Carl: I see that, I think--
> Amy: -- Yeah, ok. So, illustrations, I'll write that down on our chart. And then below I'll add message. Ok, next, what does this look like? Well illustrations it's so important that they support or extend the plot, I read about that in our textbook.

Carl: Um, ok. Yeah. Also going back to what ST4 was saying, I think it is important for books to have a purpose in that message, does that make sense?

Early in the semester, Amy tailored her voice to the prompt, enacting the academic (D)iscourse, as discussed previously, to display knowledge and come across as "knowledgeable." Her focus was on responding to the discussion prompt of considering quality features. In doing so, she shared her input and, at a surface level, recounted Imani's main point to succinctly write it on the group chart. In doing this, she interrupted Carl, who appeared to be expanding Imani's idea. A pattern of adapting group discussions to the prompt and interrupting others was emerging as a way for Amy to manifest her voice.

However, around mid-semester Amy's discussion peers began to grow frustrated with her. In their discussion on *Lillian's Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965* this tension is audible. Amy started the discussion by responding to the discussion prompt, which asked students to take a critical stance and view the book considering whose viewpoint is expressed, who benefits from hearing this story, and what action they might take after reading the book.

Amy: Ok so let's start with whose viewpoint is expressed? I'll start. This book shows readers the experiences Black voters faced in America.
Jenny: Yeah ((pause)) Did anyone else learn this stuff in school? Like I was shocked.
George: No, I am embarrassed so much of this was like kind of new to me.
Amy: Alright, well we can discuss who benefited from the story. I think, for sure, kids today need to learn this because…
Jenny: ((heavy sigh)) I know it's crazy that we didn't learn this in school. I mean I learned about women's rights to vote.
Kristen: Yes, we learned a lot about women's rights, but not about this. I had no idea about the literacy test, that's crazy!
George: It kind of makes me upset.

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Amy: Yes for sure, it is clear that kids in school need to learn this and would
    benefit from hearing this…
Jenny: I think this gets at what we talked about last week, we have mirrors of
    what voting for White people look like in America but not Black people.
Amy: Well, I…
George: Yes. I didn't even think about that.

Though Amy made multiple attempts to state her views in line with the discussion

prompts, the group does not respond and seemingly ignored her comments. Jenny's

heavy sigh on line five and Jenny and George cutting off Amy's comment in line nine

and eleven illuminate the group's frustration. Additionally, Amy did not respond or build

on to what was said, but continued to assert her beliefs in line with the prompt.

Amy appeared to sense this tension after her book club's discussion. In her post

discussion questionnaire, she wrote, "I noticed in our discussion the group really wanted

to talk about the book's connection to today's election and window books, while I was

trying to make sure we answered all the discussion questions… I tried to get my ideas

across but the group didn't seem to listen." (10.07.20_DiQu_Lillian_Amy).

The following week, after discussing Adichie's concept of a single story, Amy

recorded these thoughts on her post discussion questionnaire:

Normally, I would say that I was the leader of the group and help drive the
discussion. However, this time it was not the case. I took the back seat in this
discussion and was an active listener. It's not that I wasn't prepared or have
anything of value to say, I just felt I had to step back and hear others
(10.14.20_DiQu_SingleStory_Amy).

Amy's desire to drive the conversation and display what she knew appeared to be

interrupted. This change is further observed the following week. In her pre-discussion

questionnaire, instead of sharing her desire to present novel ideas or perspectives, she

states, "I want to walk away from the discussion with a new thought to think about or

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something I could further look into about this book" (10.21.20_DiQu_Refugee_Amy). In this conversation, there was a shift in Amy's approach to meaning-making. She no longer sought to primarily display knowledge but aimed to construct knowledge with the group, influencing how she manifested her voice in discussions. For instance, instead of posing her ideas or sticking to course prompts, she followed up on what others are saying, asking them "tell me more" or "where did you find that" and built on what others contributed (10.21.20_BC2_Refugee).

As Amy's ontology shifted from individualistic to communal ways of being, so did her voice. At first Amy intended to show off what she knew, tailoring her voice to discussion prompts and stating her beliefs without considering or building onto her peers' ideas. Yet, mid-semester, this process of meaning-making is disrupted. In turn she begins to listen and build knowledge with the group. Amy confirms this in our interview. She shared:

> I have never been in a class where we do [discussion groups], so I wasn't really sure what to do. I think at first, I just wanted to prove to others I was smart. I'm not an education major, but I can say things about kids' books… Eventually, I saw I didn't have to have all the answers. That wasn't the point. ((laughs)) The point, you [Ms. Fletcher] said it I think, is to expand what we know. I don't think I did that at the start, it took time. (2.18.20_interview_Amy).

Unsure how to approach peer-led discussions, Amy exhibited a voice in line with "playing the game." If she played this game this helped to ensure she would be heard and taken with authority. Amy saw knowledge as something she exhibited not built on in discussions. However, through repeated discussions, and perhaps due to the responses of her peers, this changed. She refashioned her voice to co-construct knowledge with her peers and expand her understanding of course material.

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For Amy and Neil, how they responded in group conversation shifted. Initially, these two participants relied on durable ways of displaying knowledge to others—sharing individual insights without much consideration of what others were contributing. When peers did not take up their responses and seemingly ignored their input, a disruption in their meaning making processes occurred. The disruptions led to taking up collaborative discursive practices, essentially "adjust[ing] to the space" (09.19.21_interview_Neil).

Focal students also experienced a disruption to their meaning making as they chose what to contribute with the group. Sarah noted, " [responding openly] wasn't instinctive. I'm used to rubrics or knowing what teachers want. I'm used to talking in facts, not feelings… not that there are no facts, but things are subjective. I felt more comfortable talking that way as the semester went on" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). An efferent response was intuitive for Sarah; she was used to focusing on "the information to be acquired" and reported back when reading literature (Rosenblatt, 1979, p. 110). Yet, with time, through repeated discussions and reflective writing, she felt more comfortable leaning into subjective aspects of books, getting into that "shade of gray" she described in the opening quote to this section. A similar shift is also seen with Neil who began the semester by composing lists and ended the semester writing reflective narratives.

As students' ontologies and epistemologies were disrupted so too were their voices. However, this was not the only disruption that influenced students' voices. Additionally, students' perceptions of course content was thrown into disbalance leading to further shifts in their voices. This leads into discussion on the next disruption outlined in this study, disruptions to how students valued and viewed course content.

"I just never expected to find it in a children's book": Disruptions to How Students

Value Children's Literature

> I worked at a YMCA child watch center where I constantly read books to kids, but I always took them as sort of joke and never seriously thought about them… I constantly just dismissed them as basic and childish. I always thought there was no real "art" to children's book… but I was unfathomably wrong. Now, when talking about books, I examine the illustrations and make a point to discuss the deeper meaning.
>
> <div align="right">Carl (10.04.20_midterm_Carl)</div>

> At the beginning of the semester, I would read a book, and by the end of it my thoughts would be 'wow, that was cute,' but now I read a book and observe the illustrations, I decipher the words on the page, I look for a deeper meaning behind the plot, I do not want to read a book anymore and just think it is cute, I want to read a story and understand the plot, the illustrations, and the why of the book. These books aren't just cute they're influential tools.
>
> <div align="right">Sarah (10.04.20_midterm_Sarah)</div>

Students' voices regarding the value of children's literature shifted over the semester. By value of children's literature, I refer to how they viewed the merit and importance of children's literature both in their own lives as young adults and for younger readers. In many instances, students' views expanded, from "cute," "basic," and "to entertain" to considering children's literature as "an influential tool" with "deeper meanings."

One student, Imani, a Black education student, began to acknowledge the value of children's literature beyond how to use it as a teacher. Entering the course, she expressed a durable stance (i.e., self-expression) regarding course content being pertinent to her future career. Her autobiography is evidence of this where she wrote, "I signed up for this course so I can be a better teacher and know what books to show my students" (8.16.20_autobiography_Imani). Imani furthered this perspective by noting in her beginning of the semester written reflections how she may use and evaluate the selected

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children's literature when working with children. For example, in her first reflection on *Last Stop on Market Street*, she wrote, "This is definitely a book that many children can learn from and will be one I put in my library when I start teaching" (8.26.20_SR_LastStop_Imani). In her second reflection, she also shared, "Books in my future library require certain features" (9.02.20_SR_LitMerit_Imani). She went on to express the importance of books having specific attributes, outlined in her textbook, such as tension or pictures that extend the plot, when teaching children (9.02.20_SR_LitMerit_Imani). In the first four weeks of the course, Imani primarily made meaning by reflecting on the course's contents relevant to her future teacher role and citing the course textbook.

However, her views regarding the value of the course content began to shift. In her mid-term paper, she wrote:

> I put this class on my schedule because I need it for my degree… When the class started, I thought that it would just be reading books and talking about why us, as future educators, would choose to have these books in our classroom library. All my education classes are about the future, what we will do, so I thought it would be like the others, how to become a teacher. However, I was wrong in a sense. We do talk about that, but I have learned that children's literature is much more thoughtful and deeper than I could have ever imagined. I'm not just learning about children's literature as a future teacher, but thinking about me as a reader now. This course is teaching me about myself in a way and helping me appreciate books (10/04/2020_midterm_Imani).

This perspective is made visible in her reflective writing later on in the semester. Imani begins to insert more of her connections, reflecting on her experience as a reader instead of focusing on connecting course content with her aspirations of being a teacher. For example, in discussing the book *My Name is a Song* (Thompkins-Bigelow, 2020), which shows the importance and beauty of names from all cultures, Imani's reflection

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focuses on her name. To be understood, she tells her own story, specifically how the book

functioned as a mirror since individuals mispronounced her name so frequently.

Furthermore, when discussing *Refugee* (Gratz, 2017), a young adult novel about three

children seeking refuge, Imani reflects on her response to the book writing. She noted, "I

felt sad, angry, and confused reading this. Refugees are not something unique to our

generation, it's been going on for years, yet no one wants to do anything about it"

(10.21.20_SR_Refugee_Imani). In this reflection, Imani unpacked her evolving views

and reactions about refugees' experiences. In stark contrast to Imani's earlier reflections,

she does not regard her future role as an educator but focuses on her aesthetic experience

with the book (Rosenblatt, 1978). A shift in how she made herself understood occurs as

previous ideologies about education courses and the value of children's literature are

disrupted. She shifts from using her future occupation and referencing scholarly sources

like the textbook to inserting more personal connections and stories to make meaning.

While Imani's transformation focuses on the relevance of children's literature in her life,

for others, a disruption occurred in what aspects of a story they valued.

Students exhibited numerous transformations in what they valued or expected

throughout the semester when reading children's literature. Many of their reflection

revisions explicitly documented these shifts. For example, Mariana began the semester by

believing all books should be "educational" and "teach lessons kids can understand"

(08.25.21). However, following a discussion with her peers in the third course session,

she revised her beliefs, stating:

> While I do think that teaching a lesson is important, I kind of realized, based on
> my discussion, that it's more important for it to convey a message. Books for kids
> don't just have to "preach"... [a message] is different from teaching a lesson
> because the reader may not be learning anything new, they may just be looking at

something from another perspective or getting a deeper understanding (Mariana_09/01/20_TD_revision).

Mariana's view that all children's books should have an explicit lesson, more didactic in form, shifted as she began to consider how books may convey a message or leave an impression. This shift influenced how she manifested her voice about children's literature. In her first three weekly reflections, Mariana explicitly named lessons that various books provided or she critiqued a book for their lack thereof. However, after the third class session and discussion with her thought-collective, Mariana alters how she discusses children's literature. Instead of stating the lesson, she began to reflect on her key take-away from the book.

This shift is made clear when comparing her first reflection and final reflection on *Last Stop on Market Street*. Her first reflection focused on what she perceived as the story's lesson; helping others. She wrote, "The book teaches children the importance of helping others even when you do not have a lot. We learn this lesson by watching CJ and his nana help out at the soup kitchen. This is valuable for all kids to see" (8.25.20_SR_LastStop_Mariana). Mariana expresses a clear statement on what she infers the book is trying to convey to readers. However, in her final reflection, revisiting this book fifteen weeks later, she described the book's underlying message of diversity and how the book encourages readers to "find the silver lining within various seemingly negative scenarios" (11.24.20_SR_LastStop_Mariana). Her later reflection is less focused on a specific statement or what she infers de la Peña, the author, wants readers to take away from the story (i.e., a lesson). Instead, she touches upon the themes the book presents.

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Neil illuminates another example of a shift in the value of children's literature. At the start of the semester in his written reflections and peer discussions, he focused on retelling the plot, stating the point of view, and discussing the artwork. He shared in our interview, "[a]t first, I wasn't really invested in the stories we read. They were children's books, simple stuff right, and I'm 21." His detachment to children's literature comes across in his reflections and discussions with his peers, as his voice is devoid of personal stories or connection and reads much more "formulaic" to use Neil's term. However, Neil went on to share, "I just remember reading for class each week and being like, wow, okay, that's crazy philosophical, I didn't expect this in a children's book. Like I was learning stuff… it surprised me that these messages are being shown to kids in books" (2.19.21_interview_Neil). Neil had a laminated self-expression that children's books were "simple" and something he would not relate to. Yet, after reading more children's books, this notion is disrupted, as he began to view children's literature as "crazy philosophical" – holding more complex ideas. This disruption influenced how he manifested his voice in book club discussions and within his reflections.

To illustrate, early in the semester, Neil and his book club explored *Lubna and Pebble*, a story about a young girl in a refugee camp who uses a pet rock to keep her comforted. In this discussion, Neil seemed to avoid talking about the story's theme and instead reflected on the book's artwork.

St 1: The pebble obviously meant so much to her.
St 2: Yeah, that pebble was her way of coping. And people don't always really know how to process everything that's going on. I mean, their home is gone. So I think she drew the smiley face on to be comforted. Like I love the detail where she found the pebble, and she saw the pebble smiling back at her.

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St 3: Yeah, me too. I think she was just looking for some kind of affirmation that what she was feeling was okay. She needed someone to smile, and she couldn't get that from her father at the time.

St 1: Yeah, I think as humans, we all need that affirmation or assurance sometimes.

St 2: You can see her mood change with pebble based on the colors in the illustrations…

Neil: I think a lot of the art's really interesting in this book and well done. For example, this page [showing the refugee camp] really stood out to me. I thought that was really cool how she uses blue to set the tone, similar to what we read about for homework. I would rate the artwork with high marks (9.16.20_BC2_Lubna).

St 1: Hmmm… yeah, in the grand scheme of things, it's just a rock, but it's important to her. It's getting her through this tough time.

St 3: Yeah, it's her way of coping. I think her father sees that, and in a way, he is comforted in return.

While the group focused on discussing the importance of pebble to the young girl, Neil deviates from the topic to instead analyze the book's art, using scholarly sources (i.e., the course textbook) to make himself understood. His contributions to this discussion are devoid of seeing the story as holding complex ideas (i.e., coping) and instead returns to a linear description of the book's features.

However, seven weeks later, Neil's discussion after reading Last Stop on Market Street at the end of the semester takes on a different tone. He shared:

This book is just so diverse, especially the last page with the soup kitchen. It shows people of all ages, races, and abilities. This book showed me that anyone could be in this situation. It is humbling. It makes me appreciative. This is important stuff. (11.24.20_BC_LastStop_Neil).

Compared to his discussion on *Lubna and Pebble*, Neil analyzed the story's messages, importance to children, and relevance to his own life. Instead of pulling on scholarly sources or linearly presenting his ideas, he speaks to his aesthetic experiences and reflects more deeply on the story's message. Furthermore, he touches upon the book's relevance to his own life.

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When students regarded the contents of children's literature as relevant to their own lives and meaningful stories, as opposed to "cute" or "superficial," they employed personal narratives, approached literature with a more aesthetic stance, and experienced greater flexibility in their thinking. Furthermore, students used more internally persuasive discourse instead of strictly relying on academic (D)iscourse. Integrating various voices and life experiences in conjunction with scholarly sources to negotiate their voices. However, when they saw course material as a task, they relied on the academic (D)iscourse to illuminate their self-expressions.

"My Voice is intertwining with what I'm learning in class": Course Structures That Mediated Shifts

Students' voices shifted over the semester as disruptions occurred to their meaning making processes and views about the value of children's literature. Three key factors contributed to these disruptions; the stories selected for students to read, routine peer-led, small group discussions, and opportunities for reflective thought and writing in weekly reflections. To discern how students' voices shifted, these disrupting components deserve a closer examination.

Book Selection

> This book [How Alma Got Her Name] I would not have picked up. But it was good, it was deep, deeper than I thought, it focused on cultural heritage which was not something I expected in a children's book.
> Carl (09.16.2020_BC_Alma)

Assigned children's literature, such as *Last Stop on Market Street, How Alma Got Her Name,* and *Refugee* disrupted students' stable sense of what children's literature

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entailed, influencing their voices regarding the value of children's literature. They frequently expressed feeling "caught off guard" (8.25.20_SR_LastStop_Mariana) or "surprised" (2.19.21_Interview_Neil) by the story's content. As seen in the introductory quote, Carl, was surprised by the depth presented in the picturebook *How Alma Got Her Name*. Additionally, Mariana, in her first reflection, articulates further this disruption. She wrote, "[*Last Stop on Market Street*] kind of caught me off guard because I feel like there are other children's book that I have read and they are just so simple… this book feels a lot more developed" (8.25.20_SR_LastStop_Mariana). For Mariana, being exposed to *Last Stop on Market Street* complicated initial thoughts of books being simple.

Amy had a similar experience after reading *Refugee* in her book club. *Refugee* is a young adult novel that tells the story of three different children, Isabel, Joseph, and Mahmoud, from three different periods. Each child had to flee their home due to war, persecution, or politics. Amy shared with her group:

> gosh, this book really showed me how important it is to hear stories that are well, difficult... You know, before I'd focus on, well funny books, that's what I assumed all children's books to be. But reading this, it's like kids need these stories too. The story of Isabel and Joseph was hard to hear, but I think it was written in a way that allowed you into their life, which is important in a children's book. I hadn't really seen this until reading this book. Or even really considered it (10.21.20_BC2_Refugee).

Amy, Mariana, and Carl offer examples of how assigned literature mediated a shift in their perceptions of children's literature. By encountering specific materials, their beliefs on the value of children's literature are refashioned, informing their voices.

Moreover, in our interviews, students clarified the influence course books had in mediating shifts in their voices. When I asked Imani to explain why she felt her

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perception of children's literature changed from being important to her not just as a future

educator but also her as a reader, she shared:

> The books we read I was connecting to, I didn't expect to connect to a children's
> book the way I did. I mean from day one we read, what was it, *Last Stop on
> Market Street*, yeah, that got me by surprise, but I thought it was a one-off. But
> each week the books we read I connected to, so yeah, I mean this stuff was
> relevant to me now as a 20-year-old… We read books I don't think I would have
> chosen if they were not assigned (2/13/21_Interview_Imani).

The stories Imani read in this course were ones she was able to identify with as a young

adult, showing that children's literature can present value at any age. This realization was

not a "one-off" but was a series of realizations through reading several pieces of

children's literature that influenced her to see how the value of these pieces extended

beyond the classroom.

Sarah also discussed the role course texts played in mediating changes in her

voices from seeing books as "cute" to "influential tools." She shared:

> To be honest, before this course, most children's books I read were like Dr. Seuss
> or the books about the puppy. I think his name is Biscuit. But each week, you
> selected books for us to read that were so different from ones I'd ever read. Like I
> had no idea authors were writing these kinds of things for children, like talking
> about gender norms with *Sparkle Boy* or even racism so blatantly in *Black
> Brother, Black Brother*… I realize that books are powerful. This sounds hokey,
> but reading these books made me realize we can learn a lot from hearing these
> stories, so just imagine if kids started hearing these books at like 3 or 4
> (2.17.21_Interview_Sarah).

After reading *Sparkle Boy* and *Black Brother, Black Brother* (Rhodes, 2020)*,* Sarah saw

power in children's literature themes that addressed social issues, compared to previous

books she had read such as the *Biscuit* series or books by Dr. Seuss. To her, these books

were "different" fostering a shift in what she saw as valuable components of children's

literature, namely exploring more complex and challenging themes.

Reading selected course literature disrupted and encouraged students to step

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outside their laminated ideologies on the value of children's literature. Exposure to these texts conflicted with their previous notions of what children's literature entailed and mediated them to reframe their thinking and, as a result, shift their voices on the value of children's literature. Additionally, many students shared that the assigned literature were ones they might not have chosen on their own. While the assigned literature influenced shifts in students' voices, discussions surrounding these texts were also potent mediators.

Book Clubs

> It'd always be like, I'd come in [to my book club] with this idea about the book we were reading and then someone would say something that blew it up. Not bad blew it up, but just like 'Oh I didn't think about that.
>
> Neil (2.25.21_Interview_Neil).

Peer-led small group discussions, be it their book clubs or thought collectives, mediated shifts to students' voices, frequently fostering a disruption to more durable self-expressions. As Neil so vividly phrased it, previous ideas "blew up," making space for new self-expressions about the value and merit of the books discussed.

A vivid example of a peer led disruption is Amy's reaction to *We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga* (Sorell, 2018), a story featuring Cherokee characters and language on the importance of gratitude throughout the seasons. Before her book club, Amy shared in her reflection, "I would not read this book to children… I don't feel a connection to the book, and it is confusing. While the overall theme is always being grateful, it is not one children could connect to, as it is not relatable" (9.16.20_SR_Grateful_Amy). Amy entered the book club, holding a stance that the book was not one she regarded highly. In her book club discussion, she shared this sentiment with her group, who adamantly disagreed. One group member stated, "Really? I get the opposite vibe. This book is fantastic!" Another

shared, "I think the beauty of this book is that I didn't connect to the characters and was learning about the Cherokee nation. Yeah, the message is to be grateful, but also we're learning about their culture without even realizing it" (9.16.20_BC1_Grateful). In her post-book club questionnaire, Amy wrote about this disruption:

> My response to the book was very different from my group. When reading it, I didn't have any connections to the book, so it was hard for me to appreciate it. But my group made connections and points about the book I didn't think about. While I was busy trying to connect to the story, they were looking at ways it could teach children about other cultures (9.16.20_DiQu_Grateful_Amy).

Conversation with her peers likely encouraged Amy to revise her reflections. In her reflection, she underlined her original statement about not liking the book and wrote, "I would read this book again, you don't have to relate for a book to be good, just open to learning about new cultures" (9.16.20_SR_Grateful_Amy).

Amy held a "laminated" perspective that books needed to be relatable to be considered high quality. However, her peers' beliefs about the merit of the book disrupted this perception. Their voiced beliefs created instability in Amy's thinking and mediated a change in her response. The effects of this shift were present in Amy's future reflections. In her subsequent reflection the next week, Amy exhibited her new belief that the book did not have to be relatable to be considered good. Writing about the book *Black Brother, Black Brother*, she shared, "even though I cannot relate to the protagonist, this is a powerful story I learned a lot from" (9.23.20_SR_Representation_Amy). It becomes clear that peer-led small group discussions mediated a shift in Amy's voice on valuing children's literature even if it did not reflect her own life experiences.

While Amy's experience above shows how book clubs can disrupt students' voice on the value of children's literature, her situation was not isolated. In interviews, all

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students shared how their peers "altered" or "reconfigured" their thinking regarding the course in their book club discussions (2.13.21_interview_Spencer; 2.01.21_interview_Mayumi). For example, in our interview, Sarah shared that hearing her book club talk about the various picturebooks encouraged her to look beyond surface-level noticing. She stated:

> [my group] always had profound things to say [about a book], or would talk at length about the message and how it was important. They didn't regard the books as cute, so in that sense, it made me rephrase and actually, well, rethink how I talked about books. Like it was not enough to say it was good, or cute, or silly, I needed to go deeper. My group didn't force me to, it's just I felt I owed it to my group to do that (2.17.21_interview_Sarah).

Sarah shares how the nature of her voice in talking about children's literature and what she valued in these books was disrupted by the voices her group members presented. Her book club influenced her to go beyond viewing books as "good" and decipher the "deeper" meaning of the books read. This is evident in discussion transcripts in which Sarah goes from sharing in her first book club discussion how she felt *Last Stop on Market Street* was a "cute book about a boy and his grandmother" (8.25.21_BC2_Sarah) to her final book club discussion in which she shared with her group "I appreciate the illustrators' intentionality of showing diversity... With the illustrations and CJ's journey downtown, we learn to appreciate the beauty around us" (11.24.21_BC2_Sarah). While other factors such as the introduction of course content and selected literature mediated this change, her book club discussion played a significant role in this shift.

Peer-led discussions introduced students to other's voices about the merit and value of children's literature, in addition to other's responses to it. These discussions brought about aspects of the text students did not recognize or appreciate at first, causing disruptions and thus shifting their voices. Though talking with peers was key in

instigating disruptions, it was also crucial for students to have space to gather and reflect

upon their self-expressions. The process of routine reflection was also a significant factor

that led to expansions in students' voices on the value of children's literature.

Routine Reflections

> Weekly reflections shaped my view on children's literature. They
> prompted me to think about various topics that children's literature
> focuses on and helped me interpret children's literature in a way that
> speaks to me.
>
> Spencer (10.04.2020_Midterm_Spencer)

The act of writing out self-expressions in routines reflection encouraged students to

interrogate, expand, and make visible their voices regarding children's literature. Mayumi

shared:

> Having to write down my thoughts each week forced me to often rethink or question
> what I was saying… often times I think things to myself but don't really, like, fully
> see it, so writing it down was helpful… sometimes when I wrote it down I'd be like
> 'this doesn't make sense' or 'what was I thinking (2.1.21_interview_Mayumi)

Documenting her self-expressions in written form made visible for Mayumi opportunities

for her to question and interrogate her thoughts. She specifically pointed to examples in

two different reflections. The first in which she questioned how she described what made

a book high quality and the second on the importance of the book *Ghost Boys*.

Specifically, with the novel *Ghost Boys,* she recounted how she first wrote her

interpretation to the book's quote "only the living can make the world better. Live and

make it better" to only revisit it before class and rewrite her interpretation. She shared:

> This quote really stood out to me, and I thought about how children need to hear this.
> But when I read my reflection a second time before class I was like 'wait, this applies
> to me too' and I ended up changing my whole reflection 30 minutes before class to
> how this book shows the importance of using your vote to fight for justice
> (2.1.21_interview_Mayumi).

Writing out her ideas and viewpoints influenced Mayumi's shift in self expression on the impact *Ghost Boys* could have in her own life. Each iteration of her reflection was a lamination of her voice that she could later interrogate and juxtapose with new thoughts or ideas she held. Being able to write her views down and revisit them prompted new thoughts, this notion that "wait, this applies to me," influenced Mayumi to alter her voice.

Mayumi provides a vivid example of how composing reflections encouraged shifts in thinking. Similar sentiments were shared by others students. Sarah shared "I didn't like writing the reflections, I'm better at speaking, but it made me question my thoughts about the book and pay closer attention to aspects of the book I probably would not have thought of." Spencer shared a similar response stating "Writing it down forced me to question my ideas and encouraged me to refine them. But it took time. Like it wasn't until mid-semester that I saw the value of the reflections and really began to question my own thoughts" (2.13.21_interview_Spencer). Both Sarah and Spencer explain how routine reflection writing fostered them to question their voices they were manifesting. Sarah explained "often it was once I wrote something down and read it before class, that I realized my thinking may be different" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). There seems to be something powerful for these students about writing down their initial self-expressions on books and revisiting them that influenced shifts in their voices. Reflective writing prompted students to interrogate, expand, and make visible their voices regarding children's literature and their interactions with said literature.

Selected course literature, book club discussions, and routine reflective writing prompted disruptions to students' voices, mediating shifts to their self-expressions.

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Imani succinctly summarized the influence of these components well in her mid-term paper. She wrote:

> I think that my personal voice is coming and kind of intertwining with the things we are learning in the class because I am understanding it better each time we have a group discussion about it or look at examples of books to see what is exemplary to what is trying to be taught. I think it shows when I write a reflection and then learn more in class the next day and go through and revise that reflection and it becomes longer and I have more to say and connect to. My voice takes on these different things and I can talk about literature more deeply (10.04.2020_midterm_Imani).

Imani perceived her voice as being constructed through and by discussions with her peers, reflective writing, and reading exemplary pieces of literature.

Students experienced shifts to their voices not only because they accrued more knowledge but also due to course interactions. How students interacted with selected texts, thoughts, and peers fostered students to reexamine laminated self-expressions and encouraged the use of internally persuasive discourse to reveal their voices. Therefore, course texts, reflections and dialogic peer-led spaces students encountered made room for them not just to report what they were learning but to consider its value in their own lives and/or future professions. While it is clear that selected literature, book club discussion and space to reflect influenced shifts in student voices, the question remains, what do these shifts afford students?

Shifts in Students' Voices Influenced Students' Actions

Shifts to students' voices affected students' learning in a variety of ways. As students' self-expressions shifted from talking about overstatements regarding children's literature to more complex components, they began to see children's literature as valuable to them as young adults and construct critical responses to literature. Furthermore, these

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shifts influenced how students selected literature to read and how they approached reading, taking a more balanced efferent-aesthetic stance (Rosenblatt, 1978). For instance, Carl shared in his final reflection:

> I breezed through every book as fast as I possibly could at the start of the semester, and took minimal amounts of information and impact away from the books. Now, out of habit and new ways of talking about books, I have slowed down and pay attention to more complex things present in books that I didn't think to or really care to look at before (12.01.20_SR_Carl).

At the start of the semester Carl reports seeing books as "simple" and "sort of a joke." However, through discussions with peers, reading selected literature and reflection writing this notion is disrupted and he see's literature as having "deeper meaning." This shift likely mediated a change in how he read books from reading them as fast as he could to slowing down.

Similarly, Sarah who went from exhibiting self-expression on children's literature being "cute" to later stating they are "influential tools" shared in our interview how this influenced how she selected books. She said "I became more conscious of the books I choose and sought out books that had a deeper meaning or that I thought were influential" (2.17.20_interview_Sarah). The voices she manifested partly informed her actions. This is in line with Holland and colleagues' (1998) statement that individuals' voices inform "others of who they are but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as though they are who they say they are" (p. 3). Students' shifts in voices on children's literature, partly informed students of who they were becoming in the field of children's literature and shaped their future actions.

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In sum, voice is not a stable entity; voices are prone to disruptions, which I define as activities that interrupt students' laminated self-expressions. Two major disruptions to students' voices fostered shifts to how students made themselves understood in the course, namely disruptions to how students valued children's literature, and conceived knowledge. While the first disruptions examined changes in how students manifested voices about course content, the latter investigated how shifts in epistemologies altered the nature of student voices.

Shifts to student voices were not solely a result of an accumulation of facts or knowledge. Though students read upwards to 80 pieces of children's literature and numerous scholarly articles, it was interactions that prompted shifts to students' voices, specifically, interactions with peers and course material, in addition to internal interactions with oneself through routine reflective writing. In line with sociocultural beliefs about learning, manifestations of voice are innately social, shaped by social interactions (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff et al., 2005; Vygotsky, 1978). These interactions fostered "transactions" to use Rosenblatt's (1978/1994) term, exhibited through their voices, where students used past experiences merged with what was presented by peers, and course material to create meaning.

Conclusion

Students made themselves understood by sharing personal connections and "playing the game." These structures and resources allowed students to both make their voices clear and heard. Additionally, the implementation of personal narratives and citing scholarly sources imbued authority and credibility within their voices. However, how

students made themselves heard was not stagnant. The resources and structures they used

shifted as they encountered disruptions to their voices. Though students entered the

course with "laminated" self-expressions, course materials, books, and routine reflection

writing encouraged shifts to their voices, and in turn meaning making.

CHAPTER FIVE:
CONTRIBUTIONS AND BARRIERS TO STUDENTS' VOICES

This chapter examines factors that contributed to and concealed manifestations of students' voices. I define voice as the dynamic construction of semiotic self-expressions that respond to and anticipate future utterances and are heeded by others. As illuminated in chapter four, students utilized various resources to manifest their voices and underwent numerous shifts in how they made themselves understood. However, the use and value of said resources and shifts varied considerably depending on several factors ranging from students' racial and gendered identities to group dynamics. In particular, this chapter investigates four key factors that shaped students' voices. First, I describe the influence students' racial and gendered identities had on students employing personal connections and the value they saw in those connections. Next, I examine the implicit costs and benefits related to students desire to be seen as "knowledgeable" or "scholarly" as they engaged in playing the "game" (I.e., enacting academic (D)iscourse. Then, this chapter explores how the anticipation of peer's reactions and their responses both contributed to and concealed students' voices. Finally, I look at how disruptions made certain self-expressions possible.

Disproportionate Storytelling: Impacts of Racial and Gendered Identities

Students employed personal narratives to make themselves understood by sharing perceived connections, personal values, and insights. However, when these narratives are examined in a class with white and minoritized students, there is a disconnect, as students are not utilizing their stories in the same way. While all students employed personal narratives to some degree in manifesting their voices, this action was more prevalent with

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White-Cis focal students compared to their underrepresented peers. For example, in students' reflections on Bishop's (1990) literary metaphor, mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors, White focal students made a total of eleven personal connections to her metaphor, compared to three connections made by their underrepresented peers. Neil, a White engineering student, discussed how his upbringing in a "predominantly Republican area... hindered [him] from reading more 'windowed' books." He later went on to share how most of his life, he could "always see [himself] as the main character and never read books that explored different places" (9.23.20_SR_Representation_Neil). Whereas Spencer, a transgender student, directly quoted Bishop to explain why representation is essential. Unlike Neil who shared personal narratives, Spencer recounted details from another course article on its implications. He wrote, "Children like Marley Diaz who do not see themselves in texts think their experiences aren't important" (9.23.20_SR_Representation_Spencer). For White-Cis focal students, they saw their stories as important and tended to overidentify with course materials. Conversely, minoritized students were hesitant to share their experiences and deferred to making their ideas clear through citing scholarly sources as opposed to sharing their stories. I examine this phenomena in more detail below.

"My Story Is Important": Overreliance on Storytelling

Sharing stories when manifesting their voices was important for White-Cis focal students. By building personal connections to course content, these students communicated their beliefs, views, and understandings of self, at times over relying on their stories to make meaning. Carl, a White education student, provides an illuminative

example of this at the start of the semester. Recall in chapter four how Carl drew

parallels between his life experiences and CJ, the book's protagonist. In the book CJ

questioned his Nana as to why they had to ride the bus while others had cars, or why he

didn't have iPod like others on the bus. Then, as a response Carl shared his own story of

how kids in his neighborhood had things he didn't have and that his parents, who he saw

to be like Nana, encouraged a hard work ethic. Carl ended the reflection stating, "I'm just

like CJ, we both did not have what other kids had but we learned we needed to be

grateful and just work hard" (8.26.20_SR_LastStop_Carl).

Though Carl's story anchored his reflection, in the process of drawing parallels he

also seemingly manufactures connections between the protagonist CJ and himself. For

instance, we see evidence of him warping the book's theme of being grateful for what

you have to also include working hard to get what you want — a potential ideology he

held tied to the American dream, closely linked to White privilege. Yet, this value of

working hard to attain more material wealth is not portrayed in the story. Throughout the

book, Nana encourages mindfulness in CJ to take in the world around him so as to be

content with what he has. Carl seems to have interjected a hegemonic ideology of

working hard for the story to make sense in the context of his own life.

Additionally, the socioeconomic status between CJ and Carl appears to be vastly

different. Numerous times throughout the semester, in written reflections and discussions,

Carl discussed growing up in a "wealthy town," having "a lot of privileges," and "not

having to worry" financially as a child (9.16.21_BC_Representation_Carl;

10.21.20_SR_Refugee_Carl). While the book does not explicitly state CJ's

socioeconomic status, from the illustrations and plot, one can infer that CJ did not grow

up in a wealthy part of town or have the same privileges afforded to Carl. Though Carl and CJ share a mutual feeling of jealousy, Carl stretches the story details to make this connection to his own life, almost misconstruing CJ's experiences.

Carl demonstrates an example of white-cis focal students' over-reliance on using their stories in manifesting their voices, at times misconstruing course content and viewing their stories as worthy of being heard. In other words, they saw their stories as having the ability to both influence and convey information for others to understand and connect with. As noted above, Carl felt others could learn from his story. Other White-cis students expressed similar sentiments. Amy thought she had a lot of "life experience that could help expand others thinking" (10.02.2020_midterm_Amy). Neil also noted several times that sharing his experiences was "valuable" to class discussions and that his "experiences are something important to bring into the conversation" (2.19.21_interview_Neil). Moreover, Sarah reflected how class discussions connected to her own experiences were "the best" (10.07.20_DiQu_Lillian_Sarah). She expressed, "when I can relate my experiences to what we read, the conversations are always better" (2.17.20_Interview_Sarah). Here we see examples of students seeing their stories as both beneficial to others, in that others can learn from their insights and experiences, but also that their stories enhance class conversations. Similar comments were noticeably absent from their underrepresented peers.

Amongst White focal students—specifically Amy, Sarah, and Carl—multiple instances occurred where students manufactured a connection between their own life and the topic or book considered while manifesting their voices. Like we saw with Carl making connections to *Last Stop on Market Street*, this sometimes involved interjecting

ideological perspectives onto materials through sharing self-stories and misconstruing character's experiences. However, it also included students forging connections to scholarly articles in which they looked for ways their experiences mirrored those presented.

One such example is when Sarah, a White education student, drew parallels between her life experiences and the author of a scholarly article. For homework, students explored how children's literature represented various races and ethnicities. As part of the assignment, Sarah read a chapter from Marley Diaz's autobiography. In the chapter Diaz, a Black child activist, discloses how she did not see herself, a black female, represented in books and introduces her campaign for 1,000 Black girl books. In response, Sarah wrote, "Like Marley, I do not feel like I ever felt like I saw myself in picturebooks as a child." She goes on to explain that it was difficult "to see [herself] in books as a child" (9.23.20_SR_Sarah) since she needed to see an exact version of herself in a book. Sarah further explained how it was upsetting not seeing herself in a book, empathizing with Diaz.

Sarah's identification with Diaz appears to be an entry point into the conservation of representation in children's literature. Seemingly, she creates a connection between Diaz and her own life to demonstrate further the danger of children not seeing themselves in picturebooks. Sarah crafted her childhood memories to match the article read, and in doing so, altered the main message Diaz was conveying. Diaz's chapter argued that literature presented in school disproportionally represented her White peers compared to Black children.

Sarah recognizes this disconnect herself after discussing the article further with her peers. Her group recounted reading book series like Junie B. Jones and The Magic Tree House, both of which have protagonists mirroring many aspects of Sarah's identity. In her revisions, she strikes out an entire paragraph in her reflective writing and writes, "I thought about Junie B. Jones. I loved reading her books because I like I was as much a hot mess as she was. So basically, this whole paragraph is wrong" (9.23.20_SR_Sarah). Discussions with her peers helped Sarah realize the manufactured connection she had made.

Like Sarah, when Carl looked back at his previous writing on *Last Stop on Market Street* months later, he also noticed a disconnect between the personal experiences he conveyed and CJs. He shared, starting with a laugh:

> I can't believe I said that… um, yeah, so I think I realize now I don't always have to connect to characters to talk about characters. Does that make sense? Like, I guess before, when I first read the book, I thought I had to find a way to be like the main character, and I think this was a bit of, well, it was a stretch (2.22.21_interview_Carl).

Carl's insight above demonstrates this initial desire to form connections. Like Sarah, there was a drive to make connections to illustrate their voice on the topic at hand. Yet course materials like *Last Stop on Market Street* and Marley's Diaz's autobiography did not conform to their experiences or ideologies as White individuals. Therefore, for materials to make sense in connection to their own life or to identify with characters and authors, they "stretched" the details of their life and course materials, pulling them in such a direction to make a match.

A clear trend is visible in looking over the eight manufactured connections between these three focal students. Most of these connections were related to materials

linked to adversity, racism, or minoritized individuals' experiences, most of which did not correspond to students' daily realities or a dominant white ideology like we saw with Carl and Sarah.

Amy, in her interview, explains one probable reason for these forged connections. She shared:

> Before that metaphor [of mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors], I felt like every book had to be a mirror. We are always taught to find connections, so that's what I did for the first few reflections, make connections. But then, when we talked about sliding glass doors and windows, I thought I don't have to always connect, and yeah, it was, I don't know it was easier, I didn't have to be like the characters to talk about the book. That metaphor even tells us that (2.18.21_interview_Amy).

For Amy, past literacy experiences mediated an ideology that championed connections. As she states, "we were always taught to find connections." However, the introduction of Bishop's metaphor seemingly disrupted her perspective on needing to force said connections.

For these three students creating connections, even when they stretched the details of their own life or topic, were tools they used in initially manifesting their voices surrounding course topics or books. All these students were able to look back, and after discussions with their peers or course activities, recognize the rocky ground their connections stood upon. For Sarah, the added insight from her peers caused her to question the connections she made to course materials. Whereas for Carl, having more experiences readings and discussing diverse literature influenced him to reexamine his original connections. However, while White-Cis focal students saw relevance and importance in their stories, many of their underrepresented peers, in contrast, regarded their stories as having little ground in class conversations and writings.

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"No one wants to hear it": The Absence of Personal Stories

"No one wants to hear it", a statement made by Imani (2.13.21_interview_Imani), but one that resonated with other minoritized students in the group as they considered using their personal narratives to make themselves understood in the course. For them, an academic setting deterred them from fully revealing their racial and gendered identities within their voices. This was illustrated by Mariana, an education student who immigrated to the United States from Colombia at the age of three. In our interview, she talked at length, almost ten minutes, sharing her experiences about her family and self being subjected to a single story and how she never saw herself in literature growing up. She shared the following:

> I definitely feel as if my culture is very underrepresented, especially in Louisville. Growing up, literature wasn't diverse. Reading books at a young age and watching movies, I never saw myself. I thought that was normal, because we're all supposed to be American, and so I tried to be like these characters who didn't look or sound like me (2.19.21_interview_Mariana).

She went on to talk about the adversity her family faced, the struggles she had in school, and how people constantly questioned her Latina identity based on single-story narratives they held. She recalled people asking her why she didn't have an accent or why she didn't eat typical Latino food. Mariana's rich experiences coincided with topics explored in class, especially when they investigated representation and stereotyping in children's literature. However, her experiences, stories, and insights were noticeably absent in course papers, reflections, and most peer discussions. Instead, she relied on referencing course articles to make herself understood.

When asked about why she did not share these stories in class, Mariana explained:

I feel like it was intentional. I don't mind obviously talking about my experiences. I don't mind sharing everything I've been through and like letting people know like, "Hey, this is a problem," or "this explicitly happened to me." But I feel like most people won't understand my perspective or even hear it without me going into my whole life story… So I feel almost like if I were to talk about my experiences, I wouldn't be doing myself justice" (2.19.21_interview_Mariana).

Being Latina and having life experiences that differed from many of her classmates, she felt she had to go on into more detail and therefore work harder to be understood or heard. In a sense, she felt her life experiences were not easily transferable to many of her peers or instructor in the class setting. This contrasts the experiences of her White-Cis peers, who frequently referred to their personal narratives with ease and as Carl expressed, felt others could learn from their experiences. While open to sharing her story, she didn't see this course as a place in which to tell her "whole life story." Consequently, she intentionally did not include her experiences and unique insights when manifesting her voices in the children's literature course.

When reflecting on how she demonstrated her voice she recounted:

I referred to course articles because they were condensed, and everyone knew it, so they would hear it and more easily see my point. It required less work. I felt like I could get my point across a lot better through using these articles than I could with my experiences (2.19.21_inerview_Mariana).

For Mariana, scholarly articles were much more condensed and conducive to sharing in the course as opposed to telling her life stories with all the necessary detail. Furthermore, there was a sense of uniformity, in that everyone in the course was familiar and trusted the scholarly sources, in contrast to her own life story. Therefore, she saw using course articles as "requiring less work" and more convenient to share in contrast to diving into the detail of her experiences. So while she was open to telling her story, she intentionally chose to share scholarly sources to ensure others would heed her voice.

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Mariana's testimony illuminates how academic space influenced how students' racial identities could be manifested in their voices. Especially it highlights her:

- experiences being discredited in academic (and predominantly White) settings

- vulnerability in employing her narratives and pressure to adapt or avoid using them

- how her stories require able explanation to be understood.

Other minoritized focal students repeatedly expressed these three factors as reasons for why they withheld their stories. Their experiences mark a stark contrast from their White-Cis peers who over-relied on forming connections to their own life and course materials. I provide further detail about these factors below.

Being Discredited An overarching sentiment shared by many minoritized focal students was fear their experiences would not be heeded in academic settings. Although these students had rich experiences informing their self-expressions regarding diversity, race, and representation – as evidenced in our interviews—they intentionally chose to censor revealing those experiences in their voices in class. For example, Imani, a Black education student, felt her book club, composed of all White peers, would see her stories as "hearsay" (2.13.21_interview_Imani). She shared "[in] other courses no one ever listens or they ignore [my story]… it's like they turn a blind eye." (2.13.21_interview_Imani). Imani alludes to how in past courses she felt her experiences were discredited, causing her hesitancy to share her experiences when manifesting her voice in this course. This is evident in her post-discussion questionnaire after discussing representation in children's literature with her group. She wrote, "I didn't speak much today. Although I experienced Bishop's metaphor and Diaz's story, I was unsure of how

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my group would respond. A lot of times people don't want to hear it."

(9.23.20_DiQu_Mirrors&Windows_Imani). While Imani felt her life experiences

paralleled course articles written by Black women who felt invisible in literature, Imani

chose not to share her insights with her peers; rather she mostly restated claims from the

readings. Since past courses discredited her stories, there was uncertainty about how her

voice would be heard if she included them.

Vulnerability In addition to being discredited, minoritized students felt exposed

when sharing their experiences. Spencer, a transgender social work student, felt he would

be open to ridicule in divulging his story. For his second book club, his group read *Alma*

and How She Got Her Name (Martinez-Neal, 2018). In the story, Alma, whose full name

is Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela, learns from her dad the importance of the

various people she is named after. In response, Spencer wrote a two-page reflection

detailing his own name story, specifically how he changed his birth name to match his

current identity. While he shared his story with me in his reflection, he chose not to share

his full story with his group. Instead, he adapted his story, leaving out why he changed

his name and spoke for a brief ten seconds regarding its meaning. In our interview, he

shared, "My name story is so important to me. I wanted to share it [with my book club],

but I was afraid they would judge me. People might have an idea about who I am, but

sharing my story would make it clear and, well, make me subject to their judgment. It's

easier just not to say it" (2.19.21_interview_Spencer). For Spencer, he took pride in his

experiences but, like Imani, was uncertain how his peers would receive it. However,

while Imani can't leave the aspect of her race a mystery, Spencer felt he could shield his

identity as a transgender male. He intentionally did not want to expose this as he feared

he would experience judgment by his peers. Telling his story made him feel too vulnerable.

Requiring More Work Furthermore, underrepresented students perceived there to be a lot more work in telling their story, or, as Mariana phrased it, to give their story "justice." To ensure their peers or instructor fully understood their experiences, they felt much had to be explained and that in the span of a discussion or paper, there was not enough time or space to do this. Spencer further commented on this, stating, "I think for people to understand [my story], I need more than just a 10 or 15-minute conversation each class… there is a lot to unpack" (2.19.21_interview_Spencer). These three factors combined influenced students to utilize scholarly sources over their own stories.

Students' racial and gendered identities were major factors that both contributed to and concealed how students' manifested their voices through storytelling. While all students employed personal narratives to some degree, White privilege contributed to White-Cis focal students being able to use their story with ease and susceptible to manufacturing connections. These students saw their experiences as fully transferable and credible to illuminate their self-expressions. Whereas for minoritized students White privilege associated with academic spaces prompted them to obscure their stories. They faced further barriers to ensure their stories would be recognized in the classroom. And, with further analysis, illuminates an underlying cost of "playing the game" (i.e., enacting academic discourse).

Sounding Scholarly: Affordances and Constraints of "Playing the Game"

Focal students expressed a desire to sound scholarly. In their term sounding scholarly meant being "knowledgeable" (2.18.21_interview_Amy), using "more

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sophisticated terms" (02.19.21_interview_Sarah), "saying something that sounds smarts" (02.19.21_interview_Neil), "speak[ing] in a more critical and objective manner" (12.01.20_Carl) and speaking "in a less personal way and more factual" (02.19.21_Mariana). Sounding scholarly is not something I coded based on the linguistic features of students' self-expression, but instead on how students perceived their self expressions and how that perception mediated manifestations of their voices.

Students perceived being scholarly when they performed academic (D)iscourse. Or, as Neil phrased it, "you gotta talk the talk to get airtime" (2.19.21_interview_Neil). Recall in chapter four, how Mayumi referred to using academic (D)iscourse as playing the "game." This entailed students referring to academic sources, using formal writing formats, and tailoring their voice to course prompts. Though enacting academia's (D)iscourse lent itself to students being seen as knowledgeable individuals, it, at times, censored what they could say. Specifically, it both expanded and controlled: their vocabulary, the connections they could make, and the tone of voice they exhibited.

A prominent sign of sounding scholarly for students was using course terminology in their reflective writing and course discussions. Focal students purposely employed course terms to make themselves understood. For example, in reflecting on her writing throughout the semester, Amy, shared, "I notice my ideas are much stronger. I'm using course terms to get my ideas across instead of slang or long-winded sentences" (12.01.20_Amy). In this instance, playing the "game" afforded Amy confidence in illuminating self-expressions.

Another affordance was course terms gave words to ideas or sentiments students struggled to express. This was most visible with Mariana. Specific course terminology

like Bishop's (1990) metaphor mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors and the term "single-story" from Adichie (2009) encouraged Mariana to express her ideas with less difficulty. She commented "...things I believed, but didn't have a word for, I could now share... it was much more efficient using these terms" (2.19.21_interview_Mariana). For Mariana, utilizing course terminology expanded how she could manifest her voice, putting words to sentiments she had trouble illustrating.

However, while some students took pride and comfort in using course terms, others expressed deep frustration. Spencer explained this sentiment to his book group. He shared the following:

> I feel like I'm really lacking on the terminology... I really do feel like I've been able to critically look at these books in a way I've never been able to before, but with my word choice there is just not a tangible difference. Like I know I can see things differently, I just can't put it in class terms (11.18.20_BC_3_LastStop).

In her book club, Imani repeats a similar sentiment sharing "It's like you have your own vocabulary and how you speak, and we learn new terminology, it's almost like you feel you're forced to add it on your own to talk about a certain topic or be understood" (11.18.20_BC_4_LastStop). For Spencer and Imani, there was tension around using course terminology to sound scholarly. Both students felt confident in their ideas and views, yet, they saw the implementation of course terms as a barrier to their peers recognizing their voices. Imani and Spencer could identify the academic (D)iscourse but did not feel as though they were full members of that (D)iscourse since they could not use it "naturally". Spencer further elaborated, "there were times I just didn't share because I wasn't sure if I would say it right... like this was a boss idea I just couldn't share it with that terminology." Though Spencer had "boss ideas" the pressure to sound scholarly and communicate it "right" hindered him from expressing them, constraining what he could

say. While the desire to sound scholarly in using course terminology contributed to some students expanding their ideas and feeling more confident, for others it was a roadblock that concealed their idea.

In addition to using course terminology, students also regarded referencing scholarly sources as an indication of sounding "knowledgeable." When Sarah integrated quotes from the textbook into her reflection, she described "feel[ing] legit" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). She further stated, "referencing the textbook lets you know I did the reading and know what I'm talking about" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). Citing course materials afforded Sarah a sense of authority and having a better command of course information. Like Amy using course terminology, it increased Sarah's confidence that her voice would be heard. Mariana shared similar sentiments. She marveled at how she can use "the voices of experts" in place of her own and "be more profound" (11.24.20_SR_LastStop_Mariana). By making connections to course readings students felt their words had more weight.

However, like using course terminology, citing sources also had its constraints in how students manifested their voices. Namely, students felt the need to cite others constrained them from exploring their own thoughts with confidence. For instance, students expressed feeling "pressure" (2.01.21_interview_Mayumi) to cite sources so others would regard them as sounding scholarly. Mayumi shared "in papers it's more important to cite articles then share your views... professors want to know you did the reading" (02.01.21). Perceived pressures to cite course material, overrode Mayumi making visible her own ideas, views, or stances.

Sarah further addresses this directly in our interview. When asked why she cited the textbook frequently in her reflection, she shared, "I really just wanted to make sure that my point was clear that I did read the chapter… [if you weren't reading my reflection] I would have read the chapter and took it into account, but I don't think I would have referenced it, it was more to sound, well smart" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). For Sarah to "sound smart" she felt obligated to reference the textbook.

A further examination of students using scholarly sources reveals how minoritized students more heavily relied on citing experts. This was especially evident when they discussed the repercussions of individuals being marginalized in literature. For example, Mariana, Imani, Spencer, and Mayumi referenced course articles such as Bishop (1990), Adichie (2009), and Lin (2016) at a significantly higher frequency throughout the course than their White peers. This is illuminated in their week six reflection on Bishop's metaphor of mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors, where they cited scholarly sources a total of twelve times. Conversely, Carl, Amy, Sarah, and Neil, all of whom identify as cis-White individuals, cited scholarly sources a total of five times in that same reflection; half the number of references compared to their underrepresented peers.

Minoritized students shared various reasons for over relying on scholar sources. Mariana explained it was easier to cite someone else's story that everyone else had read instead of telling her own story. Additionally, for Imani, she felt that when she referenced scholarly sources, people would "hear me and accept my ideas," however, if she just told her story, she thought it would likely be considered "hearsay" (2.18.21_Interview_Imani). Mariana and Imani share using words and stories of others, sanctioned by the academic (D)iscourse made it easier for them to be understood and by

extension see as "knowledgeable." So, while playing the "game" afforded them a seat at the table, sort to speak, it also masked their stories and "funds of knowledge" they brought to the classroom.

One other approach students took up to sound scholarly was through using a more "profound" tone. Carl explained this in detail saying, "To sound profound I just looked to see how others [course articles] said it and would do the same... I didn't copy it just tried to sound like it" (2.01.2021_interview_Carl). When Carl emulated phrasing used in articles, he felt scholarly. However, this ability to speak in a scholarly tone was a "struggle" for some. Spencer shared, "in our groups I feel confident talking about, but I struggle to write it eloquently in our reflections" (11.18.20_SR_LastStop_Spencer). There was something about putting it to words on a page that was hard for Spencer. In our interview, he explained this further:

> There is an expectation in school to say things eloquently when you write. A lot of times when I write papers in school and read it back, I think that isn't me... it's someone who is trying to pass a class... I can't speak freely when I'm trying to be that person, it's like an alter ego

To be seen as scholarly, Spencer felt he must give up a part of his identity emulating an "alter ego." He was engaged in an unauthentic performance, in which he put on a mask holding back his native words. Sounding scholarly became a game of choosing the right phrases and tone to pass as being knowledgeable, another cost of sounding scholarly.

Sarah shared a similar sentiment about writing course papers. She stated, "I hate reading my work aloud, I feel like it doesn't sound like me at all... it doesn't really show me because I'm going by what a rubric wants, if that makes sense" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). Like Spencer, Sarah's voice took on a different identity when she composed course papers. Her tone was dictated by academic pressures via a rubric.

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For both Sarah and Spencer, they felt constrained in how they could express themselves in academic writing, concealing parts of their voices.

When these students strived to be recognized as "knowledgeable" individuals, they considered less the perspectives of their peers and own hunches. In turn, this fostered not an expansion of thought but a surface-level regurgitation of facts and knowledge; There was no dialogue. As Bakhtin (1981) attests, when a conversation fails to produce a new utterance, the idea is dead. In this sense, enacting academic (D)iscourse at a surface level, as seen by participants early in the study, could be seen as akin to the actions of a taxidermist. In manifesting their voices, individuals were stuffing to life the "skins" of previous ideas. This ranged from overly quoting the textbook, summarizing a story, and stating a book's generic theme in a neat thesis statement. While Bakhtin (1981) talks of double-voiced utterances and believes no two utterances are ever the same, students' aim to correspond with the academic (D)iscourse as much as possible left little space for insertion of their perspectives.

"Expanding my comfort zone": Anticipating and responding to peers

Routine interactions with class peers influenced how students manifested their voices as they both anticipated and responded to their peers' responses. For instance, Mayumi, a Japanese-American social work student stated, "As I reflected on my reflections I wrote throughout the semester, I noticed that a significant portion of my revisions were inspired by discussion with other students" (10.04.2020_Midterm_Mayumi). For Mayumi her group influenced her to expand or change her original self-expressions within her reflection. In contrast, Sarah, a Cis-White cis education student, stated "I thought

carefully about what I said [in my thought collective], I don't want to poke the bear. I didn't want to aggravate anyone or make anyone feel like they were wrong for what they were saying or bully them" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). For Sarah, being with peers influenced her to carefully calculate her voice to avoid upsetting peers. These examples show the variety of ways course peers contributed to and concealed manifestations of students' voices. Discussion transcripts and reflection revisions in particular illuminated how the composition of peer-led discussion groups, students' anticipation of peers' responses, and hearing peers' self-expressions shaped how students made themselves understood. I further examine these influences and how they shaped student voices below.

Navigating Group Membership

Students routinely commented in discussion questionnaires and some of their reflective writing on how the make-up of their group guided their self-expressions on course topics and literature. Specifically, students referenced differences in their peers' races, backgrounds, gender, and academic major as influencing their voices. For instance, Mariana, a Latinx education student, commented after her book club discussion on *Lillian's Right to Vote*, "[i]t helped to have different races and views sharing their perspective. I was introduced to ideas I didn't have before" (11.10.20_DiQu_Lillian'sRight_Mariana). Mariana shared how her peers' narratives shaped by their racial identities influenced her ideas on voting in America. Carl, a White education student, echoes this same sentiment noting, "our race impacted [groups members'] experiences [with children's literature], and this was very productive and

needed in order to further understand how windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors work (9.23.20_DiQu_Representation_Carl). For Carl, the perspective from peers of background different from his own was "needed" to augment his understanding and self-expressions on Bishop's (1990) literary concept of windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors.

Like Mariana and Carl, students' self-expressions expanded after engaging with group members whose racial, gendered, or academic backgrounds were different from their own. Students' reflection revisions incorporated the stories or perspectives of their diverse peers. For instance, Mayumi, a Japanese-American social work student, rethought Black History month after engaging with her thought collective, in which two of her group mates identified as Black. In her discussion the two Black members of her thought collective shared their concerns about Black stories being saved or only shared during Black history month. As one of the students shared "Why should we only have access to our stories one month of the year? Why can't our stories be promoted each month?" This discussion influenced Mayumi to add on to her original reflection. She wrote "[t]eachers should not relegate Black stories to a single month, like Black History month, but have them on their shelves and read aloud frequently every month. It's needed to avoid the perpetuation of single stories" (10.14.21_SR_SingleStory_Mayumi). Mayumi incorporated the ideas and experiences of her Black peers in her reflection, further expanding her understanding of single stories.

Another example of how student included the stories of diverse peers is seen with Sarah, a White cis female, who added to her reflection about the need for more books that challenge gender stereotypes. This was inspired after hearing the perspectives of her book

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club member Jerry who identifies as gay. She added to her reflection, "[g]ender norms also need to be disrupted in books. Jerry shared how if not we are just normalizing roles set for girls or boy" (10.14.20_TD_SingleStory_Sarah).

In addition to a diverse make-up of genders and races, the diversity of academic majors also shaped students' voices. Many students outside the College of Education and Human Development, such as Neil and Amy, expressed how being around people outside the sciences "expanded their comfort zone" and encouraged them to engage in new ways of thought outside their set discipline in which they "escaped [their science] bubbles" (12.01.20_SR_FinalReflection_Neil). For instance, Neil, a white engineering student, began to pose open-ended questions as opposed to observation when talking with his group. He shared:

> I think my book club was a lot of education or psychology majors, and there was someone in, I want to say, social work, but nothing like engineering. But… it was good, don't get me wrong, it was hard at first, but I learned to ask interpretive questions. Like before I just said my observations… I think them being from different areas [disciplines] got me to interact differently, like I wouldn't do that in [the engineering school] (02.19.21_interview_Neil).

The diverse make-up of majors – education, psychology, and social work – prompted Neil to tailor his voice in group discussions sharing it "got me to interact differently." Being among classmates from different disciplines influenced the format of how he exhibited self-expressions.

The diverse make up of student groups influenced how students manifested their voices. In some instances, it influenced students from varied backgrounds to incorporate and consider the perspectives of peers form different ethnic, racial, or gendered groups. Additionally, it fostered students to approach new ways of thinking and exhibiting self-expressions, as seen with Neil.

Empowered by Group Representation

While the diverse make-up of peer groups contributed to students' voice, so did being with peers from similar ethnic/ racial backgrounds. This was especially salient with minoritized students. Many of these students, specifically Imani, Mayumi, and Mariana, described feeling supported in thought collectives and book clubs due to being with other underrepresented peers in their discussion groups. This feeling of support further mediated their self-expressions. For instance, Mayumi, a Japanese American social work student, wrote, "I am specifically glad that Melody was in my book club, because although we are completely different in personality, she and I shared similar experiences as Asian-Americans and it was comforting to have a mutual understanding." (12.01.20_TD_FinalRefelction_Mayumi). When asked about this in her interview, she shared, "Melody being in my group made me feel ok, well comfortable sharing my personal stories… I don't know if I would have shared as much if she wasn't there" (2.01.2021_interview_Mayumi). Having a peer from the same racial group encouraged Mayumi to expand her self-expressions on course topics and utilize her personal stories to make herself understood. This was seen in multiple book clubs where the two would exchange stories with one another and the group on their Asian-American heritage in connection to course topics and literature. These stories ranged from them exchanging name stories, how they were subjected to a single Asian story, and their personal endeavors on how they looked for themselves represented in literature.

Imani, a Black education student, additionally spoke to being empowered to use her story after her discussion on *Ghost Boys*, where she was in a group with June, a fellow

Black peer. She wrote, "I was relieved not to be the only Black student in my group, because I could share my experience as a Black American more genuinely than have to teach my experience to others, I just felt a little more free"

(11.17.20_DiQu_GhostBoy_Imani). Imani felt "more free" in sharing her self-expressions with the group when paired with a peer from the same racial group. This can be seen in the discussion transcript, in which Imani and June share reactions to the book:

> Imani: I think that's great that that it made you [referring to other members of her book club] feel that range of emotions just because that's literally... I feel like when you know about a situation and you see it on TV
>
> June: It's different than being there
>
> Imani: yeah, it's different from reading something that's technically fictional, but it's the exact same situation because it still gives you different, strong emotions because it's like... This one is a made-up story, but it's so relatable
>
> June: MmmHmmm, it's a reality, it brings our story to life
>
> Imani: Yeah, it's like, this situation is so specific that it's almost crazy that it sends you on that roller coaster of emotions because it's like, dang, I really see this in the world.
>
> June: Yeah, and now reading this we all feeling this again.
>
> Imani: Yeah, this story hits just so close to home, literally.
>
> June: Mmmhmm
>
> Imani: My family has been turned away from jobs. I'm afraid of not getting a job as a teacher outside of West Louisville because I'm Black. Our skin has become…
>
> June: Yes
>
> Imani: … a threat. And this book just made me mad. And if I'm mad, this mad about reading it in a book, I wonder what the world thought about actually seeing it in person.

Imani, in her discussion questionnaire, described she "could share my experience as a Black American more genuinely" by having June present in her group. Sharing her experiences ranged from Imani discussing personal narratives about her family's experience with racism and her worries about what this might mean for her as a future educator.

The racial make-up of the group, as highlighted by Imani and Mayumi, influenced how students exhibited their voices. Peer groups, in which underrepresented students were not isolated, prompted these students to expand their voices by feeling empowered to share more personal narratives in the presence of peers who had similar racial background. This finding corroborated the ideas of Steele (2010), who said students feel more supported and stereotype threats are reduced when underrepresented individuals are not isolated in peer groups.

Considering and Attending To Peers' Responses

When manifesting their voices in peer groups, students tailored their voices in anticipation of how their peers might respond. In some instances, the anticipation encouraged students to suppress their self-expressions, whereas in others it encouraged students to engage in new lines of thoughts.

For students like Sarah, a white education student, and Spencer, a transgender social work student, they felt pressure to alter their voice so as to not "step on their [group members'] toes" (2.17.21_Interview_Sarah)—possibly upsetting them—or "expose myself" (2.17.21_Interview_Spencer)—exposing themselves to peer judgement. For instance, Sarah reflected on how she crafted her voice when discussing "delicate" topics with her peers. She shared, "I never know where the fine line is because I don't ever want to step on people's toes because I feel we are in a very delicate society when it comes to things like that [gay rights]. So, it's hard to know like, is this okay? Is this not okay to talk about?" Another example of this can be seen with Carl, a white education student, when discussing the book *Lillian's Right to Vote* (Winter, 2015). In his post

discussion questionnaire, he wrote "[t]oday's main topic [voting rights] was closely connected to politics. Everyone has their own personal beliefs, and some people are more passionate about it than others, so at times it seemed as if I had to watch what I said in order to prevent further tension in the group" (10.07.20_DiQu_Lillian_Carl). Carl anticipated "tension" from the group in discussing voting rights which in turn guided what he felt he could say. While Carl is often very active in most book clubs, he is noticeably quieter in this discussion. He spoke at length only twice, whereas in other discussions he spoke six or more times. For both Sarah and Carl, their decisions to censor their own thoughts may have been in response to the current political and social climate of 2020.

While the anticipation of peers' responses influenced some to suppress their self-expressions, in other instances it shaped new forms of expressions exhibited in student voices. Neil shared how he "would think of questions the people in my group would ask me and then I would answer those…. and so when those questions came up in discussion, I was like, I got something to say here, so it helped me to think about them" (2.19.21_Interview_Neil). When Neil anticipated group members' questions, it prompted him to preemptively write and respond to them in his reflection.

Amy similarly described "having my group members on my shoulder" as she read and wrote her reflections, namely Julia, one of her book club members. Julia frequently referenced specific page numbers or quotes from picturebooks they discussed. Amy noticed this and began to do the same. When asked about this, she said, "I wanted to also be able to share a favorite page with Julia cause I knew she would always have one written down… when she shared a favorite page, I could now share one too since I had it

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written down" (2.18.20_Interview_Amy). Amy's anticipation of Julia's response in book club discussions mediated how Amy both composed her reflections and shared with the group. Students' voices were mediated not just by the anticipation of their peer's responses but also from heeding their peers' voices.

Peer responses in course activities and small group discussions prompted students to expand or change previous self-expression. For instance, in week three, when students considered quality features of a picturebook, Mayumi began by primarily listing qualities defined in the textbook in her reflection for that week. However, in her thought collective, her peers shared ideas that went outside the scope of the textbook. This resulted in Mayumi revising her reflection writing, "From hearing about my group member's characteristics I am now inspired to think about appropriateness, book dynamics, creativity and levels of engagement when selecting a book" (09.20.20_TD_LiteraryMerit_Mayumi). She then went into detail, describing appropriateness and level of engagement. This example shows how Mayumi's peers expanded her views on what made a book high quality.

Spencer speaks directly to how peer interactions expand ideas. He wrote, "I find the most improvement with my revised reflections that I submit after class because discussions with my group are incredibly helpful in better understanding the content" (10.04.20_Midterm_Spencer). Spencer perceived his peers as influential in guiding his voice to convey a deeper understanding of the course topics, noting an "improvement" in his self-expressions.

Peer led discussions also contributed to expanded understandings and manifestations of voice. As group members made connections, observations, or shared

their views, a more profound relationship or understanding was fostered for others. For

instance, in their first book club, when discussing *Last Stop on Market Street*, Carl shares

his connection to CJ, the main character, which encouraged Spencer to consider his

relationship to the book.

> Carl: So, the message of the book was to be grateful… and like CJ I used to always be jealous of the kids that had a ton of stuff and I'd like tell me parents, but they would make me realize that I have to be grateful for what I have and work hard.
> Spencer: I didn't even think about this until now. I didn't talk about it in my reflection, but now you have me thinking about it. Like it's obvious these people aren't well off. And well I grew up in a really poor rural town, but my parents didn't really do a good job of doing that… I think he is lucky, like you, to have someone to help him see the good.
> Carl: Yeah my parents were always telling me to be grateful. It made me realize these kids that were well off are like... I probably had a lot that they wanted and desired that they don't even have.
> Spencer: Yeah, yeah. I just, I guess I have more in common with CJ, but I don't think I realized or thought about being grateful for what I had. I didn't have a Nana like CJ. And maybe I need to start being more appreciative and not so down.
> Mayumi: You have to be your own Nana Spencer
> Spencer: I guess so.

Carl's response influences Spencer to consider his connection to the book and how his

experiences related to the story. "I didn't even think about this…" indicates a new line of

thought formed from the interactions with his peers. Spencer then makes himself

understood by employing his connections after Carl previously did the same. Like we

saw with Spencer, Sarah talks explicitly at length about her peers furthering her ideas in

our interview. She shared how "bouncing off ideas" with her peers helped her "better

understand" the examined books and topics (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). Hearing peers

prompted students to voice new or deeper connections to course topics or selected pieces

of literature.

Additionally, while students might have only written a few words in their reflection on a topic or book, they would further expand their views in discussions as they interacted with their peers. For example, Imani wrote one sentence in her reflection about the theme of the picturebook *Maddi's Fridge* (Brandt, 2014). She wrote, "I think this book's message is that you can try and try, but sometimes you just need a little help, and that is ok" (9.16.20_TD_Maddi_Imani). However, in discussion with her peers, Imani expands her views, speaking for over a minute on the theme, responding and building on her peer's responses in which she gave examples from the book in addition to her own life.

> Student A: I feel like this book kind of teaches the message of being selfless,
> cause I feel like young kids don't really think about that.
> Imani: I would agree with that, but also it like teaches the message that even
> though you want to do something on your own it is ok to ask for help.
> And sometimes you really do need to ask for help. Because like
> Sophia promised Maddie she wouldn't say anything and tried to get her
> food on her own, but we all know being adults you can't just put fish in
> a backpack and expect everything to be ok.
> Student B: Oh my gosh yes.
> Imani: Like you were saying, I feel kids are so wholesome and like and have the
> best intentions. And that was her intention to get her food because she
> had no food, but she didn't know the proper food to take, and she didn't
> want to tell anyone because she made Maddi a promised. But it gets to
> the point where you know this is bad, and you need to ask for help.
> Student A: Oh yeah, absolutely. I think even as adults, this happens.
> Imani: Uh-huh. Like I know, I've told my friends stuff, even about my mental
> health. Asking them to keep it a promise
> Student A: Yeah, I hear you.
> Imani: But they knew I needed help, so they broke that promise to help me.

This excerpt shows how Imani goes into much further detail in her discussion compared to her writing. For instance, she builds off what others said, where she stated "I would agree" or "Like you were saying" and responds to peers' comments by making

connections. Namely, when student A shared this could happen to adults, Imani gives an example from her own life.

Sarah was another student who routinely said more in her discussion. She noted, "I probably sound like a different person in discussions like you really hear me because well that's just how I best share my thinking, when I'm like with other people." (2.17.21_Interview_Sarah).

Furthermore, interacting with peers prompted students to integrate course material into their views and ideas. For instance, Sarah shared, "[i]n our book club discussion we were able to bounce ideas off each other and if one of us couldn't find the word, we'd be like 'oh do you mean this' and use more sophisticated terms [course terminology]" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah). In groups these students modeled for one another how and when to use course terms authentically in class conversations. They helped one another apply what they were learning, by attaching "sophisticated terms" to the ideas they were expressing.

I also see evidence of students integrating course terminology due to their peers' responses in their reflection revisions. Students adopted terms or concepts discussed in their thought collectives or book clubs into their reflections. Imani talked about this in our interview; she shared that in her revisions, her "responses to the books hadn't changed, but my classmates helped me put a term with it and explain more why that thought is important" (2.13.21_ interview_Imani). Amy also discussed the importance of discussion with her peers in using course concepts. She stated, "[s]ome class terms are tricky at first, but when a new term or concept has been introduced we talk about it more depth with our peers or as a whole class and I truly feel I understand it and can use it. It

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clicks." (11.18.2020_SR_LastStop_Amy). For Amy, exploring course concepts with her peers was key to implementing them in her voice.

While the examples above show ways peer responses positively interacted to influence student voices, there were also instances in which peer interactions fostered tension in how students exhibited their voices. For instance, Mayumi, after discussing *Lillian's Right to Vote* (Winters, 2015) shared in her discussion reflection, "The book club was great, but we all had similar viewpoints so that limited the perspectives within the discussion" (10.07.20_DiQu_Lillian_Mayumi). Mayumi alludes that her peers didn't expand her voice since group members had similar beliefs. This is further reflected in her reflection revisions, as on this day, she makes no changes to her original reflection.

Mariana described another example of tension in her post-discussion questionnaire. She wrote, "Today we disagreed, I felt as though this book [Morris Micklewhite and The Tangerine Dress] was not only intended for children, but also teens and adults. But many in my group didn't agree because they felt all children's books are strictly for children. There was no single consensus." (9.15.20_DiQu_Mariana). When I look at the discussion transcript, I can see their disagreement unfold. Students went back and forth discussing this topic and, in doing so, pulled examples from other books or further explained their rationale behind their belief. While they did not come to a consensus, there is evidence that they expanded their own belief to make themselves understood to one another. The group didn't feel they had to come to a consensus or walk away with a singular interpretation; they were willing to disagree and, in that disagreement, created tension which led to an expansive cycle in their understanding of the book.

Peer interactions shaped how students demonstrated their voice, both in

discussions and in their reflective writing. This was not just something I observed in the

data but was also recognized by the focal students in their discussion questionnaires and

student interviews. The diverse make up of their groups, anticipation of what their peers

might say, and their peers' responses all mediated how students manifested their voices.

At times these various factors expanded, altered, and restricted students' self-expressions.

Challenging and Affirming Disruptions That Impact Student Voice

As depicted in chapter four, students' voices shifted regarding course content and

meaning making processes. Yet, the nature of these shifts and how said shifts manifested

themselves varied among participants. Disruptions, at times, challenged "laminated" self-

expressions and other times affirmed suppressed self-expressions. While challenging

disruptions called into question students' commonly held beliefs about children's

literature, themselves, and the world; affirming disruptions strengthened students' less

prominent self-expressions. These various disruptions fostered shifts in how they made

themselves understood, especially with course contents related to representation.

Yet, who was influenced by these types of disruptions and how these shifts manifested

themselves greatly differed. Therefore, a deeper analysis examining challenging and

affirming disruptions is needed to shed light on the nature of these disruptions.

"A Slap in the Face": Challenging Disruptions

Course materials, class discussions, and routine reflective writing challenged

students' stable self-expressions regarding course content, especially when regarding

representation. I define challenging disruptions as instances in which students' "laminated" self-expressions were not just questioned but confronted, fostering the manifestation of new self-expressions that frequently contradicted old ways of making themselves understood. For example, Amy's, a White biology student, view regarding representation was challenged mid-semester. This is highlighted in her reflection where she wrote:

> I had not thought about representation in children's books and why it is important. It didn't really seem important. I was content with the books that I had read as a child because I could easily see myself in the books I read. The thought never crossed my mind that other people might not be represented in books like me… I think it's time I focus on this issue more, I can't ignore it (10.14.20_SR_SingleStory_Amy).

Starting the semester Amy did not see representation as an "important" issue. Since she had always seen herself represented in literature, she never considered the implications of not seeing herself. However, her stable view of representation as not being crucial is challenged as she considers how underrepresented groups may not see themselves.

 Mayumi, a Japanese American social work student, provides another vivid example of a challenging disruption encouraging a shift concerning representation. Mayumi initially manifested strong beliefs about the implications of representation in children's literature during her week five reflection. The class had just read Bishop's (1990) theoretical piece on mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors for homework. In the article, Bishop states, "when children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read… they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part" (p. 1). Mayumi responds to Bishop in her reflective writing, saying:

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The abundance of experiences and memories that have influenced who I am today makes me confident in myself without seeking validation and affirmation from books around me… Bishop (1990) suggests that when children can't see themselves in the book they read, they feel devalued in society. Although I often didn't see myself in the books I read, I learned to see aspects of my personality or my life background as ways to relate to characters. Through that learned behavior, I minimized the effects of feeling devalued by the lack of representation in the books I read. I am a confident individual and didn't need mirrors… I don't remember feeling disappointed [as a child] when the main characters failed to represent identities that I shared (9.23.20_SR_Mayumi).

Mayumi defends numerous stable self-expressions the in week's readings seemingly question. First, she stands by being a confident individual, not someone who feels devalued, as Bishop suggests. Second, Mayumi believes that seeing oneself in books is not as crucial as the course readings attest since growing she did not have books that mirrored her experiences and feels no lesser for it.

In our interview, Mayumi shared, "I remember reading [Bishop] and being really shocked. Because I didn't see myself in books, but I didn't feel devalued… I felt really vulnerable writing this reflection." Bishop's metaphor contradicts Mayumi's articulated notion of who she is, prompting this state of instability. Though course articles questioned her beliefs, she remains resolute in manifesting these laminated self-expressions in her initial reflective writing.

Mayumi's discussion with her thought collective on Bishop's metaphor introduced additional instability to her voices concerning representation in children's literature. Her group included two students who identified as Black and two who identified as White. In her post discussion questionnaire, Mayumi described how Imani, a Black education student, disclosed the weight she felt from being underrepresented in literature. Mayumi wrote, "[s]he helped me see the importance of mirrors and consequences when there aren't mirrors provided. This was something different from my

response, but makes me question my reflection now" (9/23/20_DiQu_Mayumi). Hearing her peer's response to Bishop's metaphor encouraged Mayumi to reshape her voice on the matter.

Following her thought-collective Mayumi revised her reflection. Using Word, she highlighted the text shared above and added a comment that stated the following:

> Reading this for a second time makes me challenge my own idea. I think that everyone seeks validation and affirmation in some way or another. While I think that I was able to say this because I am confident in who I am today, I wonder how access to more "mirror" books would have affected my less confident younger version of myself. Perhaps this feeling of being devalued is not as conscious as I thought but is more implicit and builds over the years. I consider myself to be highly empathetic. I wonder if this was something that developed as a result of reading so many window books. I also wonder if I developed empathy at the expense of confidence in my own cultural identity (9/23/20_TD_Mayumi).

Though hesitant to lean into these initial challenging disruptions, we see a shift in her voice concerning representation in her revisions. She shifts from viewing representations of diverse protagonists as unwarranted to considering how a lack of representation likely influenced her as a young reader and young adult. This shift is mediated by course readings and conversations with her peers, initiating new lines of thought and perceptions of her own identity.

In total, I coded 61 instances of challenging disruptions regarding students' voices on representation, like that of Mayumi and Amy. Of these 61 instances, a majority, roughly 72%, came from Amy, Carl, Sarah, and Neil, all of whom identified as Cis-White individuals. For these students, how they represented themselves, their beliefs and values shifted, contradicting past, more prevalent views.

One common theme among White-Cis focal students was how they talked at length in reflections and discussions on how they used to regard themselves as "well-rounded" readers or "open-minded" (2.18.21_interview_Amy; 10.14.20_SR_Single_Carl), but now questioned their experiences and perceptions of self. Sarah illustrated this shift as she reflected with her thought-collective on the books she had read throughout the semester. She shared, "I always thought of myself as someone who read broadly but looking at the books I've read, I see I'm narrow-minded. I'm not exploring books outside my comfort zone." Previously Sarah exhibited a belief in past reflections that she read "broadly," namely that she was reading books featuring diverse characters and cultures. However, in closely examining the books she read, considering the ethnicity or race of each book's protagonists, this representation of self is contradicted, and she sees herself as being "narrow-minded."

Furthermore, Carl has a similar shift after watching Adichie's (2009) Ted Talk, *The Dangers of a Single Story* – a 20-minute talk that examines how when individuals hear only a single story about another individual they risk posing critical misunderstandings. In his reflection, he wrote, "[i]t blew me away because I have been in the shoes of all those closed-minded people she talks about in her speech… I relied on stereotypes to judge others." (10.14.20_SR_Single_Carl). In this response, Carl retrospectively looks back on himself, stating a new representation of self that he was previously "closed-minded" and uses the past tense "relied" to explain his previous actions of using stereotypes. When asked about this in our interview, he shared, "I grew up in a town with little diversity. I had no idea I was relying on stereotypes the way I was. Her talk was really a slap in the face." His interview further reveals how Adichie

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disrupted his conception of self, or as he explains, "a slap in the face" to previous

conceptions.

In addition to altering representations of self manifested in their voices,

these White-Cis students illustrated new beliefs on the importance and influence of

representation in children's literature. For instance, Amy, quoted earlier, shared how

representation was not a topic she considered necessary when looking at literature.

However, in her reflection around mid-semester, she writes, "All children need to see

themselves accurately represented in books. It is VITAL all kids have representation"

(10.14.21_SR_Single_Amy). Amy's beliefs shifted to considering representation to be

"VITAL," written in all caps.

When manifesting these shifts, students pulled on various resources outlined in

chapter four to make themselves understood. Figure 5.1 depicts how all students

displayed these shifts. Overwhelming, as seen in the graph, 67% of the time, students

manifested these shifts by sharing their personal narratives, either independently or in

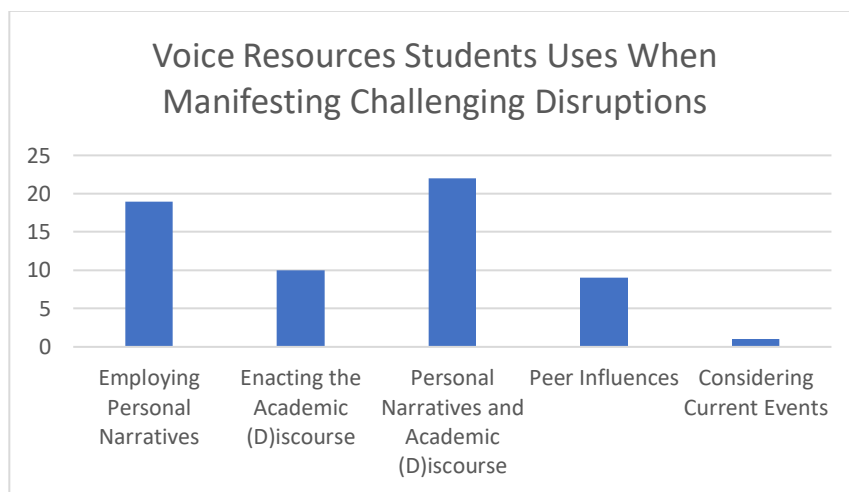concert with the academic (D)iscourse.

Figure 5.1: Ways students made challenging disruptions concerning representation
understood

For example, Carl, a White education major, consistently employed his personal history to make clear to others this shift in voice. In six reflections and three discussions, he refers to his background and experiences as the impetus for why representation is "essential." Previously, Carl did not see representation as an essential issue in children's literature but come mid-semester, he viewed it as necessary when considering books to read to children. To make this point understood, he routinely cites his narrative. Frequently he shares how he "grew up in a majority White school and town with little diversity to be seen" (10.14.20_SR_Carl) and retells his experiences of reading series such as Magic Tree House and Harry Potter, which "provided little diversity" (12.01.20_SR_Carl). He reflects on these personal experiences to make clear to others how he "missed out on reading windows and sliding glass doors and have learned so much more about the world and the ideas and beliefs of many types of peoples from reading diverse books in this class" (9.23.20_SR_Representation_Carl). Due to his experiences as a child and those in this course, he sees representation as essential, relying heavily on his personal narratives to make his voice distinct.

Personal narratives were the primary way students manifested shifts in self-expressions to challenging disruptions on representation in children's literature. Moreover, most of these shifts were made amongst White-Cis students in this study, compared to their underrepresented peers. These findings further support my analysis on disproportionate story telling that I detailed above. This difference begs the question of why White cis-students were more apt to manifest challenging disruptions to their voices. A closer examination of these disruptions in comparison with affirming disruptions fosters a clearer picture as to why.

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"I Had the Words to Go with My Thinking": Affirming Disruptions

Mariana, a Latina education student, joined the course with views and beliefs in the "back of her mind" regarding representation that she initially chose not to express. Similarly, Imani, a Black education student, said, "Black girls underrepresented in stories was nothing new to me. I've lived it, just never shared it." Students like Mariana and Imani enter classrooms with an array of subdued self-expressions they frequently choose not to illustrate in course discussions or coursework. Specifically, in this study, many of these expressions dealt with issues surrounding representation in children's literature. While students held certain beliefs or values, they often kept them concealed until course activities encouraged them to publicly manifest their voices. I refer to this shift, from suppressing to illustrating self-expressions, as affirming disruptions. In these instances, course engagements (i.e., reading material, peer-led discussions, or reflections) confirmed beliefs, spurring students to manifest their concealed self-expressions. Unlike challenging disruptions, all but one of the 34 coded affirmative disruptions found in this study manifested in underrepresented students' voices, namely Mariana, Imani, Mayumi, and Spencer.

Imani had numerous affirming disruptions throughout the study. I focus on her experience as an extended example below because the way in which Imani discusses her experiences is similar to what I saw among other underrepresented students. Imani discusses the nature of an affirming disruption with her book club at the end of the semester. When asked by a peer how the group felt their thinking changed, Imani responded:

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> I don't think my response in thinking about [representation in books] has changed. I've always believed this but didn't always say it… I think in this class, what I originally believed and saw, I now can put a term with it and explain why it's important. You know, now others can hear me. I can say this book is a mirror or sliding glass door, and we all get it, believe it. (11.18.2020_BC)

In the first line, it's evident that Imani's beliefs about representation have remained the same throughout the semester. What has changed is how she manifests those beliefs. Course terminology and the introduction of Bishop's metaphor provided both a support and framework for her to make her beliefs salient to others in the course.

Coming into the course, Imani felt the importance of underrepresented students seeing themselves. In addition to her above testimony, her autobiography is evidence of this as she wrote, "I just wish there were more books we could all relate to or be in." While she believed this, she did not readily express it in initial course discussions or reflections. However, after being introduced to Bishop's metaphor, Imani became more vocal in stating her beliefs. When asked about this in our interview, she shared:

> Before the terms, you know, the metaphor, I didn't think people would want to hear it [the importance of representation in literature] or even believe it. So I didn't talk about it. I thought I had to talk about specific word things… like figurative language and illustration, color or mood things. But when we read [Bishop, 1990], like, I could use her words and people would hear me, and I could talk about it. I had the words to go with my thinking. (2/13/21_interview_Imani).

The introduction of Bishop's metaphor disrupted Imani's voice by empowering her initial self-expressions. Beliefs she initially concealed due to fear others would not listen or believe her, were confirmed and elaborated on in course reading. Imani felt she could now manifest her voices on representation and have the assurance that classmates and professors would heed it.

Similar to Imani, Mariana, discussed how Adichie's Ted Talk influenced her voice. In our interview, she stated:

I've always believed what Bishop's metaphor had to say, but Adichie's single sided story resonated with me the most because it was something I had not put together in my mind, but I felt it so strongly. It was like this final missing piece of the puzzle, to where I could connect my experiences with Bishop's metaphor and with Adichie. I felt as though her single story was what I needed to complete my project of who I am. (2.19.21_interview_Mariana*)*

More than just having terminology, course readings provided Mariana with an abstract

concept (i.e., single stories) she struggled to piece together on her own. These readings

not only confirmed but clarified her beliefs, shaping how she made herself

understood. Her belief about completing her "project" can be seen as Mariana expanding

her voice; it allowed her to better manifest who she is.

Figure 5.2 depicts how students manifested the 34 coded affirmative disruptions

across the study. Participants most frequently (73% of the time) made these affirmative

disruptions understood by citing scholarly sources, either independently or in concert

with their individual experiences. This contrasts with Figure 5.1, depicting challenging

disruptions in which students primarily used personal narratives to manifest shifts in their
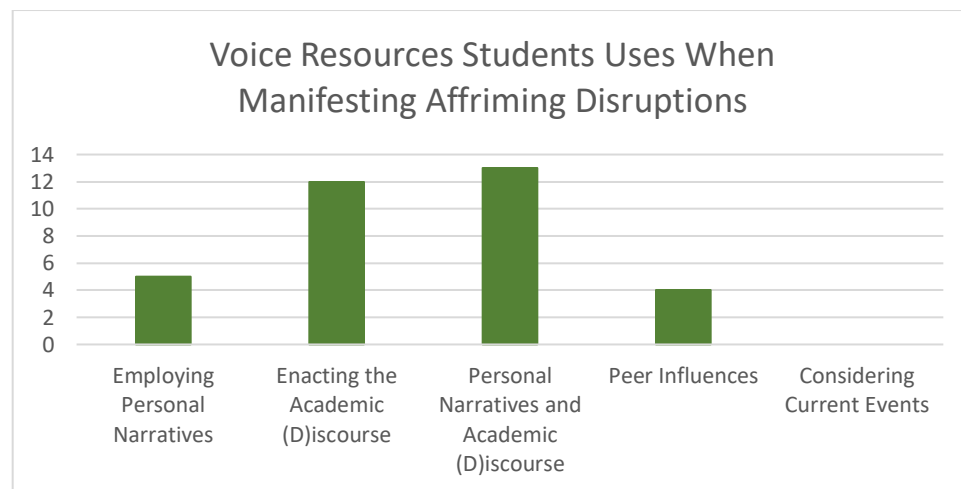
voices.

Figure 5.2: Ways students made affirming disruptions concerning representation understood

For Mariana, Imani, Mayumi, and Spencer, they integrated the terminology, ideologies, and values presented in the course to illustrate their subdued self-expressions on representation in children's literature. Specifically, they manifested their voices utilizing the dominant (D)iscourse by referring to scholarly sources or sounding scholarly, sometimes on its own or in conjunction with their personal narratives. Again, this further corroborates earlier findings on how minoritized students leaned away from sharing their stories.

For instance, Spencer, a transgender social work student, in discussing the importance of diversity the second half of the semester consistently cites a 2018 infographic on the diversity in children's book and Bishop's (1990) metaphor. In his midterm paper, he writes, "The infographic (2018) shows we have to be intentional in the books we choose." In the next paragraph, he then cites and rephrases Bishop's metaphor and states his belief that:

> children should be able to see themselves represented in stories. This creates understanding between different races, religion, nationalities, and gender identities, reducing the effect of learned bigoty. There is no excuse why a kid like me can't find their experiences in a book (10.04.20_Midterm_Spencer).

Spencer utilizes Bishop's metaphor and the infographic to give his voice authority. By leading with information from scholarly sources, he builds a case for his claims. In his think-aloud interview, he talked about this, stating, "I could be more bold, more frank" when utilizing course materials that supported his initial views (2.19.21_interview_Spencer).

Similar patterns are seen across underrepresented participants. Though students' experiences and personal narratives first informed their voices, they consciously decided

not to employ their stories to make themselves understood. Patterns seen with affirmative disruptions contrast those seen with challenging disruptions regarding representation in children's literature. Namely, White-Cis students mainly used their narratives to manifest shifts in their voices regarding representation, whereas underrepresented students primarily enacted the academic (D)iscourse to demonstrate said shifts.

    While all focal students experienced disruptions, disruptions were not a monolithic entity. What they afforded students and how they unfolded varied considerably among students. Students' race and gendered identities influenced the nature of students' disruptions regarding course content, and how those disruptions manifested themselves. Disruptions contributed to students expanding their voices and casting a critical eye on the commonplace.

    Though all students experienced disruptions to their voices, the nature of their shift was heavily influenced by their racial and ethnic backgrounds and academic discipline. For example, many underrepresented students in this study found their voices to be empowered through course readings. They, therefore, relied on the dominant (D)iscourse to exhibit changes in their voice. Whereas White Cis students often found their voices challenged and used their narrative to showcase the reasoning for and/or importance of that change when illustrating their voices. Furthermore, students from a STEM background frequently presented an epistemology of knowledge being definitive, influencing how they initially raised their voices. However, through interactions with students mainly from disciplines within the humanities, they began to see knowledge as

dynamic, introducing flexibility into how they manifested their voices. These findings allude to the power and influence (D)iscourses associated with individuals' backgrounds or academic disciplines' have on students' voices (Gee, 1996).

Conclusion

This chapter investigated factors that contributed to and concealed students' voices. Findings reveal how focal students' racial and gendered identities created parameters for telling their stories in academic spaces. Though minoritized students chose to conceal their stories, White-Cis students over-relied on theirs. Additionally, students' desire to sound scholarly and be recognized as part of the academic community influenced students to rely on the academic (D)iscourse. Though it bolstered some students' voices and confidence, it also deterred students from sharing their views in fear they would incorrectly perform the academic (D)iscourse. Moreover, disruptions to students' voices contributed to changes in what they expressed. In some cases, disruptions altered students' views, while in other cases, it prompted students to reveal ideas they were previously uneasy sharing. Finally, interacting with peers regularly impacted students' voices. The group makeup, mainly the diversity and avoidance of isolating minoritized students, encouraged students to broaden their views and share personal anecdotes. It increased the group's vulnerability in sharing. Also, students' voices were impacted as they anticipated their peers' remarks and responded to what their peers said.

These various factors transpired on account of students making bids in the classroom to be recognized as a certain "kind of person" (Gee, 1996). In other words, for

students to be recognized, a fundamental tenet of voice, they considered their racial and gendered identity, the ability to sound scholarly, disruptions, and peers' responses when performing their self expressions. The factors both created and constrained what students could produce in terms of meaning-making and voice.

CHAPTER SIX:
DISCUSSION

This chapter begins with an overview of the study's purpose, the research questions that anchored the study, and the methods used to answer those questions. Based on findings from the study, I interpret the main take-aways. This chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and practice.

Research Overview

This qualitative case study's overarching purpose was to understand how undergraduates manifested their voices in the context of a children's literature course. The term *manifest* refers to demonstrations of meaning-making, both products rendered, such as speech, writing, or visual, and what students reported about their meaning-making (Whitmore & Meyer, 2020). The study sought to contribute to current literature on students' voices and dialogic teaching practices.

I explored ways students elected to manifest their voices in dialogic classroom spaces where students had agency in deciding how to exhibit self-expressions. My goal was to examine how students utilized various cultural and academic resources, ideologies, and (D)iscourse to make themselves understood. As explained in chapter one, I use Gee's (1996) definition of big D (D)iscourse to refer to how people enact identities through acting, dressing, speaking, etc., to be recognized as a certain kind of person in a given context. Additionally, I aimed to describe how students' voices shifted over the semester. Therefore, I focused on the following research questions:

1. How do undergraduates manifest their voices in a children's literature course?

    a. What cultural resources, tools, and voices do students appropriate?

b. In what ways do they appropriate the voices of others and/or various (D)iscourses?

c. What ideologies surface in the manifestation of students' voices?

2. How do undergraduates' voices shift over the semester?

a. How do these shifts manifest themselves?

b. What mediates shifts in students' voices?

c. How do these shifts influence students' actions?

d. How do students perceive these shifts?

I used a case-study design to examine the voices of eight focal students in my children's literature course during a 15-week semester to answer these questions. Using criterion and maximum variation sampling, I selected information-rich (Patton, 1990/ 2002) participants with varied racial, ethnic, and academic backgrounds. I collected students' written artifacts (i.e. reflections and academic papers), as well as transcripts of peer led discussions and interviews. To further my understanding of how students manifested their voice, I used thematic analysis to analyze, organize, describe and report themes within the large data set. Analysis of students' written reflections, small group peer-led discussion transcripts, and academic papers, led to key findings regarding how students illustrated their voices in an academic setting. Moreover, by sequentially analyzing artifacts of students' voices over the semester and interviewing students on their perceptions of how/ if their voices changed, I documented shifts to their voices.

Summary of Research Findings

After careful examination of students' written artifacts, small groups discussions, and interview responses, I developed main findings regarding how students illustrated their voices in the context of a children's literature course and how their voices shifted over the semester. As discussed in chapter four, focal students predominately enacted the academic (D)iscourse and formed connections to course materials to make themselves understood in the classroom. Disruptions to students' "laminated" self-expressions encouraged students' voices to shift. "Laminated" self-expressions are pronounced beliefs, values, stances, or representations of self that students regard as "truth" or the status quo. They are often affirmed through years of schooling and/ or accepted among social and home groups (Holland & Leander, 2004; Wortham, 2006). I documented two significant disruptions to students' voices. One category described how course activities disrupted students' laminated meaning-making processes influencing how they manifested their voices. For instance, Neil came into the class seeking to report out information and find correct answers. However, after engaging in multiple peer-led discussions, he shifted to seeing knowledge as a collaborative process in which he would aim to build responses with his group. A second category examined the importance and purpose of children's literature. In many instances, students' views regarding children's literature expanded, from "cute," "basic," and "to entertain" to considering children's literature as "an influential tool" with "deeper meanings."

Chapter five details key factors that contributed to and concealed students' voices. First, students' racial and gendered identities mediated students' utilization of their stories. While white-cis focal students over relied on their stories and at times

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manufactured connections, minoritized students refrained from including their

experiences in their voices. Second, students' desire to sound scholarly influenced them

to employ the academic (D)iscourse. This in turn both expanded and controlled: their

vocabulary, the connections they could make, and the tone of voice they

exhibited. Third, the anticipation of and the responses made by peers shaped students'

performances in class discussions. Finally, the nature of a disruption being challenging

or affirming influenced the kinds of shifts the occurred to students' voices.

Discussion of Research Findings

Building from my findings, I consider the role dialogic interactions placed in

fostering dynamic and collaborative voices among students. In these interactions,

students moved away from close adherence to scholarly sources and the instructor's point

of view, and began to juxtapose their experiences, peers' voices, and expert sources to

reconstruct knowledge. Next, I illustrate how students' worldviews and racial and

gendered identities made particular voices possible. Finally, I argue that disruptions to

students' voices lead to transformations. When course engagements destabilized students'

preset and pervasive self-expressions, they were encouraged to problematize and expand

their world views and, as a result, voices. Like a fish seeing water, disruptions

encouraged students to make sense of the seemingly natural reality they've been encased

in, from prevalent ideologies to epistemologies.

Dialogic Interactions Encourage Internally Persuasive Discourse: A Greater Demonstration of Voice

Dialogic interactions are tension-fueled exchanges between or within an individual(s), in speech or text, that result in the co-construction of new understandings (Bakhtin, 1981; Nystrand, 1997). The structure of the children's literature course lent itself to numerous routine dialogic interactions. For instance, reflective writing prompted students to actively negotiate and make visible their self-expressions. Additionally, as students revised their reflections, they engaged in meaningful inquiry, making sense of various ideas from their experiences, readings, and peers. Other times, students engaged in "transactions" while reading various course texts (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). Furthermore, book clubs and thought collectives encouraged students to engage in cumulative and reciprocated conversations (Alexander, 2017) in which students frequently shared, considered, and chained together their ideas (Reznitskaya et al., 2011).

However, in many classrooms, academic (D)iscourse is pervasive. Recall from chapter four that academic (D)iscourse describes ways of being, including manifestations of voice, that are privileged and required to be seen as a full participant in educational settings. Academic (D)iscourse is often intuitive and done without much thought. However, specific structures led study participants to, figuratively, rise above the dominant academic (D)iscourse to explore more flexible and inclusive voices. Dialogic interactions, such as book clubs, thought collectives, and reflective writing, supported students in having increased agency and a sense of community. This increased agency and sense of community encouraged students to question commonplace assumptions and

experience disruptions. In turn, these disruptions emboldened students to engage in internally persuasive discourse, a Bakhtinian (1981) term describing a dynamic voice that assimilates a wide range of voices. However, when agency or community was missing or stood on shaky ground, students quickly returned to emulate the academic (D)iscourse. Figure 6.1 visually depicts how these various structures supported one another to foster a greater demonstration of voice. I further illuminate this phenomenon below.
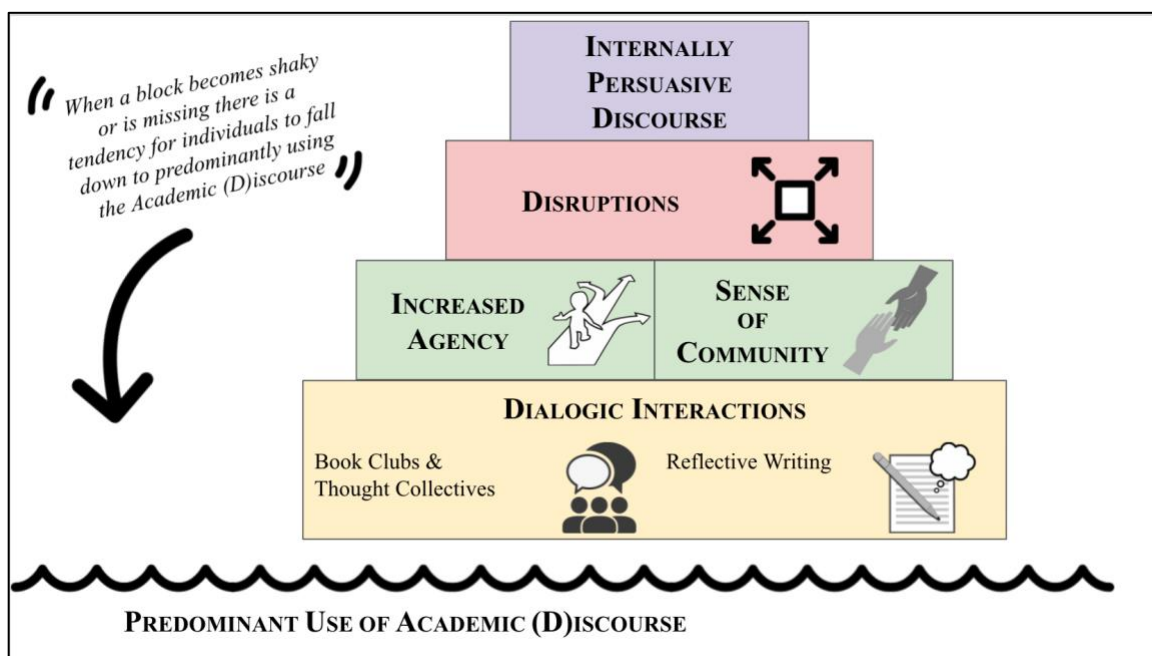
Figure 6.1. Structures Supporting Internally Persuasive Discourse

The juxtaposition of relative voices illustrates Bakhtin's (1981) notion of internally persuasive discourse. Through these interactions, students considered and assimilated the voices of others in which their voices were what Bakhtin described as "half-ours and half-someone else's" (Bakhtin, p. 345). Students' voices expanded as they interacted with and applied other's self-expressions to "new material, new conditions" (Bakhtin, 345-46). Their illustrations of internally persuasive discourse stand in stark contrast to an authoritative voice that acknowledges a static and singular truth

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individuals cannot question (Bakhtin; Nystrand, 1997). Unlike internally persuasive discourse, it does not shift to incorporate other's voices or new contexts (Morson & Emerson, 1990).

I link students' use of academic (D)iscourse in this study to an authoritative voice. Focal students viewed academic (D)iscourse as a preferred way of being within higher education settings. The voices of scholarly sources or that of the instructor and the use of formal writing format were, unless provoked, often unquestioned by students. Especially true for minoritized students, when using academic (D)iscourse there was little room for the inclusion of other voices.

Though a corpus of empirical evidence links dialogic interactions to numerous positive effects on students' learning from higher-level thinking, increased student engagement, improved comprehension and understanding of texts (e.g., Alexander, 2004; Boyd & Rubin, 2006; Chinn et al., 2011; Christian & Zippay, 2012; Nystrand,1997), this study further illuminates how dialogic interactions encourage students to engage more closely with internally persuasive discourse. Furthermore, my research builds on previous studies that examine discursive features in manifestations of students' voices in academic settings (e.g., Gray & Biber, 2012; Hood, 2012; Jeffery, 2011; Martin, 2000, Martin & White, 2005). As students participated in the children's literature course, they manifested their voices on course topics in diverse ways. They relied on personal narratives and the academic (D)iscourse, as well as responded to peers to make themselves understood in their writing and discussions. While previous studies closely examined textual functions associated with voice, such as hedges, boosters, or personal pronouns (Hyland, 2002; 2008; Lancaster, 2016; Martin, 2000), I examined resources students implemented in

their self-expressions. Additionally, many of these studies focus on ways students manifested a voice more in line with an authoritative voice. In contrast, my study examines voices more closely resembling an internally persuasive voice, providing a broader scope of tools students implemented to manifest their voices outside of textual features.

In this study, many students manifested self-expressions aligned with "playing the game" of school. "Playing the game" referred to students mimicking or recreating the specific yet tacit discursive style aligned with the dominant (D)iscourse of academia. To be understood within the course, students felt they needed to manifest their voices by composing formal papers, tailoring their voices to the prompt, and repeating the words of experts. When Amy intentionally chose to fashion her self-expressions and alter peer's responses to align with course prompts in course discussions, she was engaged in playing the game. I correlate "playing the game" with an authoritative voice. Much like a board game with set rules, academic (D)iscourse had its own set of parameters for students in this study. Similar to Bakhtin's depiction of an authoritative voice, academic (D)iscourse often "demands that we [those participating] acknowledge it, that we make it our own... we encounter it with its authority already fused to it" (p. 342) if we are to become full participants.

Many students described enacting academia's dominant (D)iscourse as feeling "natural" (02.19.21_interview_Neil). Students' inclinations to talk in facts over feelings or convey self-expressions in formal papers derived from students engaging in "the game" of school for numerous years. Their instincts to engage with the academic (D)iscourse were "laminated" to use Holland and Leander's (2004) term, a durable way

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of making oneself understood. Therefore, the academic (D)iscourse determined students' "natural" ways of being in school settings.

However, as Wortham (2006) discussed, laminated ways of being in academic settings are not natural. Instead, they are sentiments constructed years in the making, from repeated experiences in school and a long-standing history of how students present their ideas in academic, often monologic, settings. This perception stems from what Wortham calls "models of identity"— accounts inferred about an individual's behavior. In this case, years of schooling created a norm for what makes a "good student" within academia, such as illuminating one's voice in formal papers, citing scholarly sources, and talking in "facts." For instance, when talking about her experiences with writing and composing course papers, Sarah said she would "go by what the rubric is asking, no more no less. And it was to be strictly facts. I think this goes back to high school where you were never supposed to put how you feel on a paper" (2.17.21_Interview_Sarah). Sarah was following a way of being, informed by previous courses, to be a "good student." Like the rules and procedures of a board game, this identity both informed and influenced her actions. When students constructed their voices to fit a prescribe view or authoritative discourse, autonomy was lost.

Nonetheless, as students engaged in instructor designed dialogic interactions, students' enactment of the academic (D)iscourse began to fade. As individuals interacted with others—through discussions or reading a text– and interrogated their thoughts through reflective writing, they garnered access to more words, ideas, and processes. In addition to incorporating the academic (D)iscourse, individuals found the internally persuasive discourse of others meaningful and, as a result, "assimilated the words of

others" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341). Providing students with dialogic spaces seemingly disrupted students' perceived need, understanding, or desire to "play the game." Or, perhaps dialogic spaces engaged students in playing a new game; as dialogic spaces have their own discursive style students must adapt to, to become full participants. For instance, Neil, an engineering student, began the course reporting facts in his peer-led discussions but felt no one was listening. It was not until he began to listen, incorporate, and expand upon group members' voices that he discerned he was a full member of the group.

Significant to understanding students' manifestations of voice is how students' reliance on enacting the academic (D)iscourse dissipated as they engaged in routine dialogic interactions. When students felt pressure to prioritize the anticipated response of an instructor or institution—be that for an "A", positive feedback, or affirmation of ideas—they made little effort to define a voice outside the authoritative one. However, when students prioritized less the need for an "A "or "get the job done" (2.17.21_interview_Sarah), associated with "playing the game," students encountered and exhibited more agency. In turn, "entirely different possibilities open[ed] up," fostering an expansion of thought (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345).

Minoritized students were more inclined to manifest internally persuasive discourse when grouped with peers from similar racial/ ethnic groups. Students like Mayumi, a Japanese-American, shared feeling "comfortable" (2.01.2021_interview_Mayumi), whereas Imani, a Black student, stated she felt "relieved" and "more free" (11.17.20_DiQu_GhostBoys_Imani). There was less pressure to transmit an academic voice fused with political and institutional power (Bakhtin,

1981), in other words, White privilege. Instead, they engaged in a dialogic space where their views, beliefs, and values were juxtaposed with course content and peers who held a "mutual understanding" (12.01.2020_SR_Mayumi) of their experiences. Bakhtin writes that when another's voice is acknowledged and assimilated, the possibilities of thought grow. In these instances, underrepresented students felt their voices were being heard and they became empowered to consider and manifest ideas outside the academic (D)iscourse (i.e., an affirmative disruption). Although many studies illuminated minoritized students' hesitancy in revealing their voices due to fear they would not be heeded or respected (e.g., Duff, 2002; Dunstan & Jager, 2015; Scott, 2008; White, 2005; White & Ali-Khan, 2013), my findings suggest that collaborating with peers from similar backgrounds lends to more open discussions about their connections and views.

Students' demonstrations of internally persuasive discourse are a significant demonstration of students' voices. Unlike an authoritative voice aligned with an academic (D)iscourse, internally persuasive discourse encourages greater flexibility in students' making meaning and exhibiting self-expressions. Bakhtin (1981) writes:

> Its creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word awakens new and independent words, that it organizes masses out of our words from within, and does not remain in an isolated static condition. It is not so much interpreted by us as it is further, that is, freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions (p. 345).

In other words, ideas and laminated self-expressions are not replicated but refined, problematized, or expanded to respond to new contexts. In line with sociocultural theories on learning, when students manifest voices representing internally persuasive discourse, they internalize and reconstruct knowledge (John-Steiner & Meehan, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). This was evident multiple times throughout the study. For instance, in talking with his peers about *Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015), Spencer

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incorporated the ideas of Carl with his own experiences to expand his appreciation and understanding of the text (8.16.20_BC3_LastStop). Additionally, Mayumi reflecting and revisiting her writing on the novel *Ghost Boys* (Rhoads, 2018) encouraged her to reexamine her initial thoughts on the theme and apply the book's message to the context of her own life (11.17.20_SR_Mayumi). These instances highlight how students were not just stuffing the "skins" of previous ideas but were actively engaged in reconstructing and expanding knowledge.

Moreover, as students incorporated more internally persuasive discourse into their voices, they created space for disruptions to occur. Dialogic interactions and the prevalence of internally persuasive discourse encouraged students to question "laminated" worldviews. As illustrated in chapter five, internally persuasive discourse challenged students' durable self-expressions and, at times, affirmed their less salient self-expressions. For example, when Imani, a Black education student, considered the voice of Bishop (1990) and peers from her thought-collective, she was encouraged to expand her suppressed views on the importance of representation in children's literature. In this instance, Imani was not just subject to academic (D)iscourse linked to White privilege but had a platform to explore the voices of her peers, scholars of color, and herself. As Morson (2004) wrote, when individuals consider and incorporate the ideas of others, "truth becomes dialogically tested and forever testable," encouraging disruptions and flexibility in thought (p. 319). However, when students' voices align with authoritative discourse, there is little room for individuals to interrogate or question self-expressions.

Dialogic classroom spaces encourage students to engage, negotiate, and assimilate diverse voices. The students in this study demonstrated an expansion of thought that went far beyond repeating information, but reconstructed knowledge to make it meaningful in its respective and changing context.

Students' Gendered and Racial Identities Guide What Voices Are Possible in Academic Settings

The ways students manifest their voices in academic settings are heavily mediated by their gendered and racial identities. An initial look at the data indicated students' race and gender influenced disruptions to their voices (i.e., affirming or challenging). However, a deeper analysis and student interviews revealed that, while the contents of students' voices shifted, how they presented their self-expressions remained the same. In looking at how students manifested their voices, it was clear power relations shaped the mechanisms students utilized to make themselves understood in academic settings. Although classrooms are often envisioned as open spaces for all students to share personal experiences and stories, this study illuminated the disparity in who gets to express what. Specifically, classrooms lend themselves to being open and welcoming spaces for white-cis students to openly reveal their life experiences and home knowledge (Gee, 1996; Michaels, 1981; Wertsch, 1993).

Many white-cis focal students relied on the potential and power of their stories to make themselves understood afforded to them by their White privilege. As this study revealed, they employed personal connections at a much higher frequency than their underrepresented peers. This could partly be explained by white-cis students' everyday

speech aligning with academia's (D)iscourse and because these students routinely encountered stories similar to their life experiences in school.

For most white students in this study, their primary (D)iscourse—defined as an individual's home identity they are intimately connected to—closely aligned to the dominant (D)iscourse of school (Gee, 1996; 2000; Heath, 1983). As many scholars attest (e.g., Heath, 1983; Michaels, 1981; White, 2010), white students' stories were more readily accepted and easy to intertwine with the academic (D)iscourse. As a result, this positioned students to utilize their personal experiences more effortlessly when exhibiting self-expressions in classrooms and provided them greater assurance that others would heed their voices. Carl especially illuminated this, a white education student, who felt others in the course would learn a lot from his experiences, seeing his story as not just relevant but "important" (2.01.2021_interview_Carl). Overall, the idea of their stories being important mediated how white cis-students exhibited their voices; this stands in contrast to their underrepresented peers, which will be unpacked further below.

Moreover, this study presents instances in which white-cis students manufactured a connection between their own lives and the topic or book considered while manifesting their voices. For example, in making connections to *Last Stop on Market Street*, Carl interjected his ideological perspectives onto materials through sharing self-stories, misconstruing the character's experiences. Past schooling experiences mediate a possible explanation for students' reliance on forging personal connections. From a young age, schools routinely prompt students to make text-to-self connections within various literature. As Amy, a White student attested, "I felt like every book had to be a mirror, we

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are always taught to find connections so that's what I did" (2.18.21_interview_Amy). The repetition of constantly seeking connections to book characters in school prompted an overidentification, namely there was always something to draw connections to.

Another possible explanation for these forged connections could be that many of these students read materials where they could connect with the characters or ideas presented. Carl maintained, he mainly grew up reading series like *The Magic Tree House* by Mary Pope Osborne and *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling. Similarly, Sarah explained she read many books in the *Junie B. Jones* series, all books that featured White protagonists from middle to high-socioeconomic statuses. In many regards, the books they reported reading growing up mirrored their lives. Consequently, as Rosenblatt (1995) and Adichie (2009) claimed, the texts an individual reads shape their views of the world and how they regarded themselves. In other words, for White individuals, like Carl, Amy, Neil, and Sarah, they viewed literature as always providing an avenue for them to connect to and see themselves in.

When these students overidentified with course material, they limited their perspective of such and asserted a level of privilege. For instance, as they focused on forming connections with book characters, plots, and scholars, they often dismissed details of another's experiences that didn't match their, and misconstrued said experiences. At times, their desire to connect encouraged them to rewrite the experiences of another so that they neatly fit their own. This was evident with Carl, who sought to identify with the book character CJ. Additionally, by focusing on connecting, students missed opportunities to explore a "window" (Bishop, 1990)—a chance to understand a reality different form their own. There is value in students not only seeking connections,

but in looking for ways their experiences differ from or complicate what they are reading. This encourages students to expand their views of what is possible and critically reflect on their own assumptions.

In this course, I intentionally presented students with diverse narratives in which authors of academic texts and story protagonists came from varied racial/ ethnic backgrounds. For many White participants, it was the first time they were exposed to a wide range of diverse narratives less connected to their own lives (Tschida et al., 2014). Though their experiences differed from the characters or authors of these texts, White students in this study still sought out connections. While many scholars (e.g., Bishop, 1990; Boyd et al., 2015; Galda et al., 2013; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Larrick, 1965) attest that students' sense of self-worth is exaggerated when presented with books that mostly mirror their lives, this study showcases possible consequences of that namely, an overreliance on personal connections or the creation of forged connections. Therefore, this study highlights the need for and importance of diversifying classroom libraries to heighten students' awareness of the "multicultural nature of the world they live in, and their place as a member of just one group" (Bishop, p. 1).

However, for underrepresented focal students, sharing their stories opened them up to various vulnerabilities. For instance, Spencer, a transgender student, felt he'd be open to ridicule if he were to share the story behind his name with his book club. Even when instructors are well-meaning, putting forth content and procedures that acknowledge students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), underrepresented students may feel hesitant and distrust in revealing their experiences. As seen with Imani, a Black student, she felt supported in expressing her views and beliefs on the racial and

ethnic disparity in literature. Still, she did not feel comfortable sharing personal asides in course papers.

The study's findings also highlight how underrepresented students frequently considered their narratives as less transferable and understood than their White peers. Specifically, they saw their stories as less respected, believed, and heard. There is a disconnect between non-mainstream students' primary (D)iscourse, including their personal experiences, and academia's (D)iscourse (Au, 1991; Delpit, 1992; Heath, 1983). Research has examined how minoritized students within the United States alter their dialect or encompass more academic language to assimilate the discourse norms of school (e.g., Dunstan & Jaeger, 2015; Ogbu, 2004; White, 2005)., this study further showcases how students alter their voices by censoring their narratives to be considered in academic settings. Although, when interacting with individuals of similar backgrounds, there is a greater likelihood that underrepresented students will manifest their voices using their stories (Hodges, 2017; Steele, 2010).

While previous studies have rendered students as voiceless for using voices aligned with the discourse of the teacher or curriculum (Clarke, 2015; Lefstein et al., 2018; Segal & Lefstein, 2016), I demonstrate how minoritized students were agentive in using more academic (D)iscourse to make themselves understood. These students reported being intentional in citing scholarly sources and using course terminology in course discussions and writings. Specifically, they implemented it in a way so their beliefs, values, and representations of self (i.e., self-expressions) would be heeded by their predominantly White peers and instructor. For instance, Mariana, a Latina, felt like she could not give her story its due "justice" (2.19.21_interview_Mariana) and chose to

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cite sources all students had read as they were more concise and conducive to sharing. Furthermore, Imani, a Black female, explained how many saw her stories as "hearsay" (2.13.21_interview_Imani), but her ideas would be heard and believed if she cited course sources. In line with Duff's (2002) study, many underrepresented participants felt they would be "voiceless" had they not implemented these moves.

These patterns of White-Cis focal students relying on personal connections and underrepresented student utilizing academic (D)iscourse to manifest their voices endured throughout the semester, even when the contents of their self-expressions transformed due to disruptions. For instance, when course articles and children's literature affirmed Mariana's views of immigrants being underrepresented in literature, she chose to cite experts as opposed to sharing her own experiences of being underrepresented as an immigrant herself. Similarly, when Spencer concluded texts needed to be more inclusive of the LGBTQ+ community to empower students like him, he specifically avoided sharing his experiences. Instead, he made his points salient by using course terminology and quoting readings. For underrepresented students like Mariana and Spencer, their experiences were not easily transferable in academic spaces. Furthermore, telling their stories was more emotionally taxing and potentially exposing than their White-Cis peers. So, even when course materials affirmed their views, beliefs, and values, it was not something they felt they could manifest through detailing personal narratives.

This study illustrates how power relations in academic settings delimit students' voices based on their racial and gendered identities. As evidenced in this study, this has serious consequences. For minoritized students, these power relations constrained what they could exhibit. Their reconstruction of knowledge was limited to course materials and

void of their experiences, therefore limiting how they could make meaning. Had Mariana, Imani, Spencer or Mayumi felt supported in sharing their stories, they may have been able to expand their ideas and visions of what was possible. Conversely for White peers, power structures provided them with greater choice and freedom in how to manifest their voice. However, at times this emboldened them to over- and misidentify with course context, skewing their perceptions. Manifestations of voice are not just an academic endeavor in school settings, but a negotiation of identities (Godley, 2010). How students are positioned based on their race and gender have clear impacts on student meaning making and exhibitions of voice.

Disruptions to One's "laminated" Ways of Being [(D)iscourse] Lead to Shifts and Transformations of Voice

Disruptions to students' prevalent self-expressions prompted an expansion of thought and meaning making. In this study, dialogic course interactions provoked students to question and reexamine "laminated" voices, creating instability in their commonplace self-expressions. Unlike the accumulation of facts, in which students could say more, this instability encouraged students to alter how they saw the world and self, influencing a change and expansion of what they could express and, by extension, influenced their actions (Engeström, 2015; Ilyenkov, 1982). Students' heightened awareness of their pervasive voices illuminates what Bakhtin (1986) discussed as the power of witness and judgement, in that our ability to observe, we in turn change what we look upon. Similarly, Freire (1970), expounded upon how the power of naming the world induces individuals to question, critique, and thus transform the commonplace.

Students in this study engaged in a new kind of transformative agency. Engeström (2015) defines transformative agency as "breaking away from the given frame of action and taking initiative to transform it" (p. xxiii). For instance, entering the course Amy primarily saw herself as a "well-rounded" individual, who's past travels made her knowledgeable about the world. Yet, after being introduced to literature that presented worldviews and experiences much different from her own, she questioned how much she knew about the world. She "breaks away" from past actions that perpetuated her old belief of being knowledgeable of other race, or ethnicities experiences and aimed to expose herself to a broader set of stories, featuring protagonists from a wide array of backgrounds, and sought to listen and further learn from her peers' experiences.

My study contributes to the literature on how students experience "wobbles"—"a space of uncertainty" (Fecho et al., 2005, p. 175) in which the construction of new ideas throws old beliefs into question (e.g., Comber & Simpson, 2001; Morrell, 2002, 2008; Mosely, 2010; Heffernan & Lewison, 2009; Scherff, 2012; Simon, 2007; Skerrett, 2010). While Fecho suggests that wobbles are naturally occurring incidents, studies, including this one, have also noted that disruptions can be intentionally incited by instructors to foster expansive learning for students. Mosely (2010) and others (Simon, 2007; Skerrett, 2010) demonstrated how students' commonly-held views and beliefs were called into question through course projects and readings, illuminating how their voices shifted. In a similar vein, I was intentional in introducing selected texts and fostering dialogic spaces to provoke a sense of imbalance to students' set ways of thinking. As a result, students' voices shifted and there were distinct differences, in how underrepresented students made

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said shifts compared to their White peers. Disruptions to students' thinking did not just challenge but also affirmed less salient beliefs. While I could never assure the outcome of these disruptions, it led to several transformations in students' voices.

Furthermore, this study illuminated how pervasive self-expressions tied to students' epistemologies and racial and gendered backgrounds influenced shifts to their voices. "Laminated" self-expressions are frequently associated to dominant (D)iscourses associated with students' epistemologies, backgrounds, and roles. As described previously, dominant (D)iscourses perpetuate the feeling of certain words and actions being "natural." Therefore, the nature of a disruption is dependent upon the fixed frames students are breaking away from.

Disruptions Linked to Epistemologies

How students conceptualize knowledge influences the ways they manifest their voices. As seen with participants in this study, they fashioned self-expressions to resemble epistemologies linked to their academic discipline. These findings further support the ideas of White (2010) and Hyland (2008), who suggest that different colleges and departments within universities maintain and perpetuate their own discursive styles. My study adds a layer by illuminating how epistemologies connected to various departments influence each's discursive style. In the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), for example, knowledge is frequently constructed collaboratively and often, more subjectively. And yet, Amy and Neil, both from Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) disciplines, exhibited analytical voices seeking to convey a correct response. However, after engaging in dialogic spaces with students from

various disciplines these two participants took up new approaches to meaning-making, altering the nature of their voices. For instance, Neil first exhibited his voice by composing lists of his observations and perceived "facts" about literature. He took an efferent stance (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994) in line with how he viewed and presented knowledge in his STEM courses. Conversely, at the end of the course, Neil engaged in reflective writing, posing questions, and stating his reactions to literature. In doing so, he seemingly expanded what he thought, said, and did in response to reading literature.   Therefore, for Neil and Amy to become "full participants" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in this course, they had to learn and adopt the distinctive discourse patterns associated with the epistemologies linked to this course.

This finding has important implications when considering students' experiences in courses outside their preferred discipline. When students engage in a new field, they partake in a new (D)iscourse community. A students' sense of belonging and perceived potential for success are influenced by how they can adapt to the discursive style of that discipline. As seen with Amy and Neil, they felt disconnected from their peers in group discussions when they exhibited a voice in line with how they carried themselves in their STEM courses. This prompted them to alter how they made themselves understood. These findings suggest that students from CEHD might encounter similar events, like Amy and Neil, if they were to take a course in STEM. That is, they would potentially have to make shifts to their voices to be heeded by others in that discipline.   As Kutz (1998) explains, switching between fields requires students to style shift. While students are not asked to change how they make themselves understood permanently, they are asked to "add yet another style to their existing repertoire" (Kutz, p. 85). For instance,

while Neil and Amy expanded their voices to be more reflective and subjective, they did not lose their ability to also exhibit a more analytical voice. Accordingly, these disruptions broaden the ways students are able to make themselves understood, increasing the flexibility within their voices.

Disruptions Regarding Gender/ Race

In addition to (D)iscourses tied to epistemologies and academic disciplines, students' primary (D)iscourse experiences also impacts the nature of a disruption. This was especially salient in this study as students engaged in constructing knowledge around representation, diversity, and race in children's literature. Dialogic interactions juxtaposed various voices around this topic rupturing students' voices on what they were able to and/or felt permission illustrating in an academic setting. Namely, White-Cis focal students experienced challenging disruptions to their self-expressions, whereas minority students experienced both challenging and affirming disruptions.

For White-Cis focal students in the study, the introduction of voices from scholars of color and encountering statistics that revealed White privilege in literature was disruptive. For some students, like Amy, it contradicted long-standing perceptions of self being "well rounded" and for others, like Carl who later reflected on being "closed-minded," it encouraged honest conversations about their own privilege and past experiences. These disruptions invited students to be critical of and break away from past ideologies that supported unearned social advantages white individuals have over other racial groups. For minoritized students, the introduction of course materials on the importance of diversity in literature affirmed ideologies and beliefs they often did not feel

secure sharing in academic spaces. In sum, all focal students had disruptions to their voices, influencing students to exhibit views on the importance of diversifying literature, acknowledging the prevalence of white privilege, and working to create a world, even if it was just their reading world, that was more inclusive to diverse races and ethnicities.

Students' thinking regarding race, diversity, representation, and social justice needs to be prodded and disrupted, not just within literature but within their community. This is especially pertinent when considering the voices of future educators, like the four participants, Imani, Mariana, Sarah, and Carl, in this study. Their twelve plus years experiencing academic (D)iscourse—favoring (D)iscourses associated with White middle/upper-class families—and the prevalence of texts featuring White protagonists or authors in schools, downplayed and, for some, obscured students to the inequalities present in children's literature. Without said disruptions, I argue that future educators, in particular, will continue these laminated beliefs in their future classrooms, informing their actions and perpetuating such inequalities. Education courses need to prioritize students interrogating their beliefs, values, and representations of self (i.e., self-expressions) regarding representation. As Holland and colleagues (1998) attest, these self-expressions inform individuals how to act and see the world. Therefore, dialogic spaces in which students could interact with course texts, their thoughts, and peers proved to be powerful opportunities for these disruptions to occur, transforming their voices and actions within the course involving diversity.

Shifts to Voice Lead to Shifts in Actions

While disruptions call students' attentions to question the common place, they also serve as a provocation for actions (Fecho, 2011). As students' voices transformed, so did their actions, and vice versa. Manifestations of voices are how students' (D)iscourses are made visible to others and the individual themselves. While I do not believe voice is synonymous with Gee's (1996/ 2000) concept of (D)iscourse, I do see voices as being projected windows and manifestations of a student's (D)iscourses. Manifestations of voices are artifacts that give clues to others of the "kind of person" an individual strives to be in a given context. Additionally, when students publicly made themselves understood, such as course writing or discussions, they clarified not only for others but also for themselves the "kind of person" they were. As a result, their voices informed students' future actions so as to be seen as the "kind of person" they were demonstrating. For instance, Carl exhibited new beliefs on the importance of creating classroom libraries in which all children could see themselves in course discussions and writing. His voice was then an impetus for action, prompting him to seek out books to read that featured minoritized characters. His voice not only communicated to others his views, but also set the tone of what Carl had to do to take that position.

Disruptions are integral to learning. When learning is seen as the reconstruction of knowledge (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978), knowledge must first be deconstructed. What is familiar (i.e., laminated self-expressions) must become strange and examined with a questioning eye. While I am not suggesting that individuals throw their beliefs and values to the ground in a heap, I am merely suggesting that common place knowledge be subject

to question. As it these disruptions, as demonstrated in this study, lead to expansion and flexibility of what is possible.

Implications and Recommendations

Based on this study's findings, I offer recommendations for future research and practice. Recommendations for research fall into two broad categories; The first concerns conceptualizations and theories of voice. While this study furthers current research on the social construct of voice, I argue that long-term conceptualizing of voices has been neglected in education and needs a range of research to examine its social nature in various contexts. Additionally, research on voices would benefit from including more students' perspectives to further the field's understanding of what voices students assimilate, how, and why. As seen with this study, including students' perspectives can illuminate tacit power structures influencing students' voices and, by extension, meaning-making. The second broad category regards ways academic discourse impacts students' meaning-making based on their race and gendered identities. Though this study extends current research on disparities of how minoritized students are heeded in educational spaces, the field would benefit from classroom-based research on how students approach and respond to the academic (D)iscourse. I explore both these categories in greater detail below.

Implications for practice focus on ways educators can foster dialogic spaces and consider students' racial and gendered identities to promote dynamic and collaborative student voices. I first offer specific implications for literacy courses and classrooms, similar to the context of this study. Next, I propose action points for educators and

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administrators to further support minoritized students' voices. Finally, I offer suggestions on ways educators in various contexts can expand students' voices and, in turn, perceptions of what is possible.

Recommendations for Future Research

Conceptualizations of Voice

My work contributes to a growing body of research that aims to further conceptualize voice (e.g., Dyson, 2001; Freemen, Delp & Crawford, 2005; Lefstein et al., 2018; Maybin, 2006; Segal & Lefstein, 2016; Segal et al., 2016). In accord with previous studies, I found that voice is a dynamic and social construct built through various interactions (Freemen, Delp & Crawford, 2005). This stands in contradiction to studies that view voices as something to be attained or achieved (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Morgan & Streb, 2001; Zhao & Llosa, 2008). However, I also extended this work to make several unique contributions. In prior work, there were few examples of studies that examined students' voices over prolonged periods. Most studies surveyed students' voices over a day (Maybin, 2006), throughout a discussion (Lefstein et al., 2018; Segal & Lefstein, 2016), or over a few weeks (Knoeller, 2004). In contrast, my research closely examined students' voices over 15 weeks, highlighting the dynamic nature of voice. This study illuminates how students do not simply learn an idea, putting forth a singular self-expression, but, rather overtime, students build meaning through interactions changing the nature of their voices. This aligns with Bakhtin's (1981) chain of social interactions and further bolsters the argument that voice is not a viable entity, but something constructed through interactions. Future research should consider the construction of

students' voices over more extended periods to more fully understand how it develops across time and situations. Such research would further clarify voices' dynamic and malleable nature.

Currently, most studies on voice focus on textural expressions and occur within the field of rhetoric and composition and applied linguistics. This paints a narrow conception of voice and could be why many educators mainly consider it a writing trait. The field of education would benefit from additional studies that examine how students construct and illustrate their voices in various contexts, including written, oral, and multimodal genres. Such studies would further highlight how students' voices shift based on the style and social situation. Additionally, it would expand the field's understanding of ways students can exhibit their voices.

Moreover, there is exciting potential involved with creating dialogic spaces to foster flexible and collaborative student voices in line with Bakhtin's (1981) internally persuasive discourse. Many studies on dialogic interactions in education investigated specific structures of discourse (e.g., Nystrand, 1997; Samei et al., 2014; Samei et al., 2015; Soeter et al., 2008; Wegerif and Mercer, 1997), while others examined the function of an utterance and the dialogic stance taken by participants (e.g., Boyd & Markarian, 2011; 2015; Kachur & Prendergast, 1997; Wells & Arauz, 2006). This research would be further augmented by examining not just the form and function of students' voices but also the process of how students construct their voices in these spaces. Voices need to be viewed as always in-process and embedded with the immediate social construct (Lensmire, 1998).

Furthermore, the current study provides a nuanced understanding of how students perceived constructing their voices and factors mediating their voices in academic settings. Some researchers have described students' insight into their process of appealing to an anticipated audience when exhibiting their voices in a school setting (e.g., Amiccuci, 2017; Dunstan & Jaeger, 2015; Jwa, 2018). I also observed this in my study. However, I further illuminated how students' perceptions of their audience altered over time, showcasing various factors that mediated their self-expressions. Additionally, through our interviews and their pre- and post-discussion questionnaires, I learned how peers influenced their self-expressions, specifically how they fashioned their voices to anticipate and respond to their peers. Moreover, I discovered students' perceptions of how dialogic spaces influenced the nature of the voices. However, more research is needed to understand students' perceptions of how they construct their voices in various academic spaces and how their anticipated audiences influence their voices. Future studies would benefit from engaging focal participants in routine interviews in which they think-aloud their thought processes on their voice construction over time and across mediums. This study was limited to one interview per focal student, in which students looked back, months later, at pieces of writing. The field would benefit from better understanding students' perception of how they construct their voices in action, close to the time of the event. Such studies would aid in interpreting students' meaning-making process and mediating factors that contribute to that.

Influences of Students Racial and Gendered Identities

While researchers have documented white students' sense of exaggerated self-worth in academic settings (e.g., Boyd et al., 2015; Galda et al., 2013; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Larrick, 1965; Tschida et al., 2014), my study provides examples of how that manifest in the classroom; specifically, the overreliance of personal stories and manufacturing connections in exhibiting their voices. Educators would benefit from additional studies revealing nuanced ways White students profit from their privilege when illustrating their voices and how this can be disrupted. Additionally, of particular interest would be to observe what happens when the curriculum places equal focus on students forming disconnections to content in addition to connections.

Finally, researchers have illustrated minority students' hesitancy sharing in academic settings (e.g., Duff, 2002; Dunstan & Jager, 2015; Godley, 2010; Scott, 2008; White, 2005; White & Ali-Khan, 2013). This study's findings provide further insight into how minoritized students agentively utilized academic (D)iscourse to be understood and intentionally avoided sharing personal stories. These findings raise new questions concerning what moves minoritized students make to be seen as full participants, how context shapes a student's willingness to share personal asides and/or use dominant (D)iscourse, and ways classrooms foster storytelling among minoritized students. Further research needs to focus on how educators can make classrooms an inclusive space for underrepresented students to feel safe and heard in sharing their experiences. Educators would gain from seeing further examples of contexts in which students feel "more free" to share their stories.

Implications for Practice

The current study has implications for practice that promote the expansion of students' voices in academic settings. My findings suggest practical ways college instructors or K-12 teachers can create dialogic spaces to foster student voices and consider the influence students' racial and gendered identities have on their voices.

Implications for Literacy Courses and Classrooms

A key implication for future practices in literacy classrooms includes teachers being intentional about having diverse authors and protagonists in their courses and curriculum. As Bishop (1990) attests, individuals need ample opportunities to experience realities different from their own in literature to build empathy and global awareness. Additionally, it is of equal importance for students to see themselves represented in texts. Likewise, for White students, reading texts from scholars of color or literature with diverse protagonists potentially curbs the creation of an "exaggerated sense of self-worth" in which students would be more inclined to forge connections.

A second implication is for educators to encourage students to not just seek text-to-self connections but also to consider distinctions or varying perspectives. As previously alluded, when students hyper-focus on finding connections, there is a greater potential for them to misinterpret a character's experiences or author's message. However, if students learn to seek out differences or varying worldviews, as students did later in this study, their ideologies are disrupted, fostering shifts and expansions in their voices. This is not to diminish students from making connections; rather, the recommendation is

for equal emphasis to be given to students finding disconnections so as not to perpetuate a habit of always needing to connect.

Implications to Further Support Minoritized Students Voices

Next, the current study has clear implications for considering how underrepresented students manifest their voices in academic settings. Many studies illuminated minoritized students' hesitancy in revealing their voices due to fear they would not be heeded or respected (e.g., Duff, 2002; Dunstan & Jager, 2015; Scott, 2008; White, 2005; White & Ali-Khan, 2013). Educators and administrators need to be proactive in cultivating academic spaces that reduce such fears. My findings suggest that collaborating with peers from similar backgrounds in balance with those from different backgrounds allows more open discussions about their connections and views. Participating in such groups reduces stereotype threats (Steele, 2010) and encourages students to bring their "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al., 1990) into course discussions. Additionally, when underrepresented students see their identities confirmed in the scholarly sources presented in course content, they are prompted to more readily manifest their opinions and beliefs. When designing curriculum or planning course texts, educators should consider whose voices are heard and whose voices are missing. Too often, academia rests on the words of "older white men" perpetuating static structures of power. The field would benefit from diversifying its sources to include scholars from a variety of backgrounds.

Implications for Fostering Welcoming Environments to Expand Students' Voices

Finally, when considering the introduction of dialogic spaces, educators should be attuned to how students are not just learning new ways to interact but are learning new ways to make themselves understood. As we saw with participants in this study, like Amy and Neil, this took time as students needed to "adjust to the space." Students need routine opportunities to engage in dialogic spaces, such as peer-led discussion or reflection writing. These opportunities encourage students to juxtapose various voices, such as their experiences, peers' ideas and texts, to strive for more internally persuasive discourse. Dialogic interactions should invite students not just to recall course content but to reflect on and investigate it. Additionally, finding time for students to reflect on their meaning-making processes in these dialogic spaces brings further metacognition of the work they're doing.

Furthermore, in line with Canagarajah's (2015) study, I believe that instructors and teachers should not be seen as "models of authority" of voice but act as facilitators of voice. As seen in this research, when students saw me as the "model" voice, they tailored their self-expressions to mimic what they thought I would want to hear or see. Additionally, as Clarke's (2015) study illuminated, students sometimes felt they only have the right to speak if their response was "correct" according to the instructor, encouraging many to remain silent. However, when students view teachers as a facilitator of voice as opposed to an evaluator of voice, their voices have room to shift and expand. As seen with Neil and Sarah in this study, when students were less concerned with how I would grade them, they became more open to implementing their personal narratives and

responding to peers. When students view instructors as facilitators, students' thinking becomes more flexible and open to new possibilities. Additionally

As a consequence of this, I highly encourage educators to strike voice from writing rubrics. When voice is assessed as it was in previous studies (e.g., Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Morgan & Streb, 2001; Zhao & Llosa, 2008), it promotes an idea of singular, authoritative voice and does not support voices' dynamic nature.

In addition, educators need to be intentional about fostering safe, dialogic environments for students to experience disruptions. This does not mean educators asking students to change their ideologies or "laminated" self-expressions. Instead, educators provide opportunities for students to question and destabilize those beliefs to better understand their foundations. There is no magic formula for this, as every classroom, content area, and context will present different scenarios. Instead, when educators see themselves as facilitators, their role is, in part, not to shield students from uncertainties by providing all the answers but to cultivate an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable destabilizing knowledge.

Conclusion

Voice is a term frequently used in education, but one that remains elusive. School missions statements and advertisements often claim they "raise" or "promote" students' voices – yet without a clear understanding of voice these promises hold little gravity and are nothing more than a catch phrase. This study invites educators to think more critically about the term voice, and to consider structures in place that inadvertently limit or bolster what it is they are seeking to do.

Student voices are powerful vehicles for student learning. As students exhibit self-expressions, they are not only making meaning but they are engaged in identity work (Godley, 2010; Wortham, 2006). In fact, the two processes mediate one another. My study shows how power structures in academic spaces continue to delimit what students can illustrate based on their racial and gendered identities. Additionally, I illuminate the influence disruptions have on student voices, encouraging them to both expand their meaning-making and conceptions of self.

Some of my participants' words continue to resonate with me as I consider the importance of fostering students' voices and encouraging disruptions in the classroom. I think about Imani's comment to her book club stating, "It's like you have your own vocabulary and how you speak, and we learn new terminology, it's almost like you feel you're forced to add it on your own to talk about a certain topic or be understood" (11.18.20_BC3_LastStop_Imani). Her statement made visible to me the power structures tied to academia's discourse at play in my course. Additionally, I reflect on Neil's comment, who said, "I didn't realize that I had an actual voice until I really engaged in book clubs" (2.19.2_interview_Neil). Dialogic spaces encouraged Neil to break away from molding his voice to "something that would get an 'A'" to instead engage in assimilating various voices in his own construction of identity. Finally, I consider Mariana, who no longer viewed her experiences as "taboo" in literature but was affirmed by course materials to advocate for more representation of stories that reflected her immigrant experiences. Their words, among others, remind me of how voices are always in process and never finalized. As an educator, it is my responsibility to my future students to nurture this process, finding ways to both disrupt and support their voices. As

a researcher, I am compelled to investigate this process further to cultivate more equitable spaces for student voices.

The year 2020 was undoubtedly contentious; emotions were high as issues surrounding racial justice, immigration, the environment, and politics ensued. In a world where many devolve to disagreement and shouting, it becomes essential to create spaces for students to explore and cultivate their voices on these topics safely. This children's literature course introduced several of the aforementioned topics without directly bringing in headlines or current events, even though one can assume they were on students' minds. Students dealt with and evolved their voices concerning said topics in ways they weren't expecting, though children's literature. Children's literature became an entry point to create safe spaces to discuss these issues and for students to interrogate and expand their voices.

As stated by Robin Alexander (2019) in the introduction chapter, "citizenship is the exercise of voice… voice is where democracy starts, and voice what autocracy seeks to stifle" (p. 8). Even when it feels like no one can agree and the thoughts of discussing race, privilege, and social justice seem daunting, it is necessary for our democracy to thrive. I believe students must make visible their voices on these topics to interrogate, question, and potentially disrupt laminated expressions to form an equitable society. This study showed one such way to enter these discussions and create atmospheres where students can explore their voices on such topics.

All students deserve to be in classrooms where their voices are heeded, where they can embrace uncertainty, and test out various voices at play. What students

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communicate is not just a direct link to what they know; it is a window into their identity

and meaning-making process.

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APPENDIX A
Student Autobiography Prompt

Who we are today - our preferences, beliefs, and innate actions - stems from past experiences. We are a construct of our history. To help me learn more about you, and for you to perhaps learn a little more about yourself as a reader, I invite you to write a 2 - 4-page autobiography on your **experiences, thoughts, and preferences in relation to reading, specifically around children's literature**. First, I encourage you to share your reading experiences as a child. I highly encourage you to call a sibling, parent, guardian, and/or grandparent and ask them: what you liked to read as a child, if you had a special reading spot, who you enjoyed reading with, the types of book you didn't enjoy, etc. Have fun going down memory lane and revisiting your childhood memories of reading. Next, I want you to think about yourself today and **describe who you are as a reader in this present moment.** Finally, I'd like you to include a few sentences on why you chose to take this class and **what you hope to gain** from being a part of this reading community.

To help you construct this autobiography I provided some reflective questions in the box below. I am not requiring that you answer each question in your paper. These questions are meant to prompt your thinking. Additionally, you may incorporate images (i.e. photographs, draw, etc.) that help you in telling your story. If you include an image, please provide a caption that explains that image's importance.

In short you are writing a 2 -4-page reflection that shares:
- Early reading experiences and preferences with children's literature
- Who you are as a reader today
- Your motive and goals for being in this course

Childhood Question	Who You Are As A Reader Today
How do the books children read impact our larger community/ world?	What power does a story hold?
As a child, was there someone you enjoyed reading with or listening to a story from? Who? Why?	Do you prefer to read a book with others or alone? Why?
What types of books did you enjoy reading as a child?	How do you go about selecting what to read?
Did you have a favorite book, you loved to read and return to as a child?	When you finish a book, is there anything you do (or not do)? Why? *(talk to a friend, put it on a list, get a refund from the bookstore, etc.).*
Where did you get books from as a child?	What motivates/ demotivates you to read?
Did you enjoy reading as a child?	What are your reading preferences?

Student Reflection Prompts

Course Week	Literature/ Article Students Responded To	Prompt
2	*Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015)	This week compose a reading response to the book Last Stop on Market Street, capturing your thinking and/ or opinions about the book. You might: • Discuss a favorite part/ page • Discuss a connection you have to the story • Compose a book review • Reflect: How does this compare to other books you read? • Reflect: How did it feel reading this book?
3	2 textbook chapters on what is a good book and how to recognize a well-written book	Imagine you have been asked to give an award to a picturebooks for its literary merit. In choosing a book what would you look for? As you describe what you would look for I strongly encourage you to: • Provide specific evidence and/or rational for your thinking, that reflects a deep understanding of quality markers of picturebooks • Reference related course resources (i.e. articles, the textbook, picturebooks) to support the ideas you shared.
5	Assigned picturebook for book club and textbook chapter on how to recognize a well-illustrated book	Compose a reading response to the picturebook for your book club, capturing your thinking and/ or opinions about the book. Also consider discussing how the book design influences the story.
6	Articles: Bishop (1990) Dias (2018) Lin (2016)	Where do you see yourself, in the picturebooks you have read this semester? and as a child? And how do books influence readers when they act as windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors?
9	*Lillian's Right to Vote* (Winter, 2015)	Open Response: Compose a creative and critical response to Lillian's *Right to Vote.*
10	Articles: Adichie (2009) Leland et al. (2019) Multicultural YA novel for book club	Consider: • Why is representation important in children's literature? • What is the power of a story? • Respond to the multicultural novel and/or a picturebook(s) you read this week in relation to Adichie's ted talk on a single story and Leland et al. (2018)'s discussion on the importance of diversity. • Have you been influence by the repeated telling of a single-story?
11	*Refugee* (Gratz, 2017)	In light of what you read this week, respond in words, a visual, poetry, etc. to: • What is a refugee? • Has your response evolved from last week? How so? In addition, consider:

		· How are refugee experiences portrayed in children's literature? · How might the books you read this week impact children and society at large? · What is the danger of single of story when it comes to refugee experiences?
13	Children's literature and article related to issue of students' choice	After reading the article and picturebooks related to your issues in children's literature, capture and organize your thoughts in any manner on the topic (e.g. illustration, collage, poem, PowerPoint, concept web, paper).
14	*Ghost Boys* (Rhodes, 2018)	Create a **visual response** (not a summary) to Ghost Boys. · This can take the form of a collage, painting, drawing, digital art, or paper cut-out. · Include minimal text. The message should be conveyed visually not textually. · In addition to the visual response, write **3 -5 sentence artist statements** that tells about your artistic choices.
15	*Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015)	Open Response: Use this pace to respond to *Last Stop on Market Street*

APPENDIX C
Pre and Post Discussion Questionnaire

Pre-Discussion Reflection

1. Which bests describe your level of comfort sharing and discussing with your discussion group today?

Not at all	To a little extent	To some extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent

2. Explain your response above. Why do you feel that way? What contributes to your level of comfort you circled above?

3. What do you hope to contribute to the discussion today?

4. What issue, wondering, or questions do you want to raise when the group meets to discuss *[include book title(s) or topic here]*?

5. What do you hope you or your group accomplishes in today's discussion? Why?

Post-Discussion Reflection

1. Describe the overall discussion from your perspective. (High points, low points, etc.)

2. Describe how you contributed to the discussion.

3. Tell me more about your choices on what you shared to the group? In other words, what motivated or influenced you to share or contribute what you did?

4. What, if any, were the difference between how you versus others responded to the [include name of book title or topic here]? What do you think are some reasons for those differences?

5. Describe any tensions (could be productive or unproductive tension) from today's discussion.

6. What resources and tools were most helpful in your discussion today? (i.e. article, book, class resource, course concept, etc.)

Stimulated Recall Student Interviews

Part One: Introduction

1. Welcome
Ex. "Good morning. Thank you for taking the time to partake in this think aloud interview."

2. Overview of the Topic
Ex. "I've asked you to join me today to help me understand your point-of-view of how you crafted your voice in the Children's Literature course you took with me and to better understand what influenced your voice in this class. Specifically, we'll be talking about the two pieces of writing you chose to for today's interview. The information you share will help in future decisions regarding this course and similar courses. You were invited because throughout the semester you were an active class member who put a lot of thought into the ideas, beliefs, and values you expressed in this course. I want to tap into your experiences of how you chose to express those ideas."

Part Two: Stimulated Recall Training
1. Overview of Stimulated Recall
Ex. "Let me explain a little bit more about how the interview will work. Unlike traditional interviews, where a question is asked about your experiences and you respond, today's interview is asking you to think aloud as you read some of your work from Children's Literature. Thinking aloud just mean I want you to tell me whatever comes to your mind as you read aloud your paper. Specially I'm asking you to verbalize your thought process on the choices you made while constructing that piece of writing. There are no wrong thoughts, responses, or answers, so please feel comfortable sharing your perspectives."

2. Demonstration
Demonstrate to the participant how to think aloud while reading a small piece of your own writing.
Ex. "If I was thinking out loud while reading a piece of my own writing this is what it might look like. I would begin by scanning my writing, calling and sharing what comes to mind, then would read aloud my piece and interject throughout with my thinking about my choices and thought process. Let me demonstrate…"

3. Practice Stimulated Recall
Have the participant practice on a sample of their own work.
Potential prompts:
- "Please say, out loud, what you are thinking"
- "What made you say that?"
- "Tell me about the choices you made, in writing that."
- "Why did you choose to write that statement?"
- "What influenced your thinking there?"

Part Three: Stimulated Recall Read Number One

1. **Review Context**
Explain what piece of writing the participant will first conduct a stimulated recall on. Review with the participant what occurred in class before they wrote that piece, for example review course readings they were responding to, key PowerPoint slides, discussions, or content reviewed in class.
Ex. "Today you will begin by reading aloud…. I want to remind you of some of the readings and course content we read as a class before you expressed your voice in this reflective writing. For homework you read the article… In class we also discussed…."

2. **Stimulated Recall Piece One**
Ask the participant to scan over their writing and share their preliminary thinking about this piece. Then have the participant read aloud their reflective writing while also thinking aloud.

3. **Follow Up Questions**
☐ Why did you select this piece of writing for today's stimulated recall interview?
☐ On line x you wrote….what made you say that?"
☐ Tell me about the choices you made, in sharing…."
☐ What influenced your thinking in expressing your voice?
☐ Tell me about your choice of writing a (letter, paper, web, etc.)?

Part Four: Stimulated Recall Number Two
1. **Review Context**
a. Explain what piece of writing the participant will first conduct a stimulated recall on. Review with the participant what occurred in class before they wrote that piece, for example review course readings they were responding to, key PowerPoint slides, discussions, or content reviewed in class.
b. *Ex. "Today you will begin by reading aloud…. I want to remind you of some of the readings and course content we read as a class before you expressed your voice in this reflective writing. For homework you read the article… In class we also discussed…."*

2. **Stimulated Recall Piece One**
Ask the participant to scan over their writing and share their preliminary thinking about this piece. Then have the participant read aloud their reflective writing while also thinking aloud.

4. **Follow Up Questions**
☐ Why did you select this piece of writing for today's stimulated recall interview?
☐ On line x you wrote….what made you say that?"
☐ Tell me about the choices you made, in sharing…."
☐ What influenced your thinking in expressing your voice?
☐ Tell me about your choice of writing a (letter, paper, web, etc.)?

Participant Attribute Chart

Participant	Grade Level	Race/ Ethnicity Gender	Major/ Career	Motive for Taking Course	Personal Information
Amy	Soph	White Female	Biology Goal is to be a pediatric dentist	Had a friend who took this course (Callie) and enjoyed it. Wanted a break from science classes	From a small town in KY Went to a Catholic H.S. Regan is her younger sister with prosthetic arm, is her best friend.
Carl	Soph	White Male	Early Elem Ed (SPED) Minor in Film	Required course but "excited about the class" (p. 4 Autobiography) "I want to take away from this class is expanding my viewpoints about children's books and read a wider variety of books from different cultures and award-winning authors than I do when I am at work (YMCA)" (p. 4 autobio)	Grew up in Rochester, Michigan, a wealthy upper-class area without a lot of diversity, kids where he lived had a lot more than he (p. 1 TD_8.26) "family big readers" (p. 1 Autobiography) Didn't enjoy reading as a kid, but enjoys horror now especially Stephen King Likes to read one series, doesn't branch out Self-proclaimed "Potterhead" (p. 3 Autobiography) Works at the YMCA with young children Spends free time watching films and writes film reviews (10.04_MidTm) Certified film reviewer on Letterboxed
Mayumi	Senior	Asian Female	Social Work Minor in Chinese Aspires to be an international social worker with a focus on education or community development	Needed an arts and humanity credit Had two friends that took course and recommended it Want to "improve ways in which I read children books... Taking this course will hopefully equip me with skills and knowledge that I will be able to apply as a working professional (in an education non-profit social work organization)"	Family: Two older brothers, single mom No internet or computer growing up, went to local library to pay bills, or get internet access. Read a lot as a young child, preference was Dr. Seuss "my childhood was a rich and full of diverse experiences" (p.1 autobio). Family emphasized education Reading tapered off after Elem School, enjoyed reading about the Holocaust and popular series (i.e. hunger games) Today enjoys reading non-fiction ("well-written biographies, psychology books, and self-help books") Wants to read more

Spencer	Soph	White Male Transgender	Social Work Minor in Political Sci	Needed an arts and humanity credit, was mostly taking STEM classes so saw this course as a break. After reading syllabus, excited for course and began to read ahead. Wants to "be a social worker that primarily focuses on community organizing and activism" (Auto, p. 2)	Works at Diversity and Equity Center at UofL (role: secretary) Noted that he experienced a lot of trauma when he was young and his memories as a child were negative, violent, or mundane. Shared he grew up in poverty (8.26.20_TD._p. 1) Frequently went to library as kid, mom supported his reading. In M.S. enjoyed series and Epics as a way to escape the real world, today mainly reads nonfiction on social issues Feel like her lost his love for reading.
Imani	Soph	Black Female	Elementary Ed. ECE_BSR	Required for major	Expressed concern that she has a reading disability. Did not like reading aloud in class through K-12, and expressed that when she reads she struggles to comprehend what is going on. From a young age sought out and still does books that featured African Americans "I grew up around gangs and violence" (Autobio, p. 2)– likes to read books on that so to better understand her surroundings. Throughout the course mom was sick and in the hospital. Family is very important to her today (9.23.20_TD) From Lexington, KY
Sarah	Soph	White Female	Early Elem Ed. ELBD_BSR		Enjoyed reading as a kid but after 4th grade when reading became "pushed upon" her she no longer enjoyed books Oldest of five siblings Lots of older cousins she received books from Grandmother owns a tiny book store Enjoys action and mystery books Originally went into nursing at another school, but dropped out to come to Louisville to become a teacher. (10.14_TD) Taking 18 credits this semester (partly to make up for the time she lost going to nursing school) (10.14_TD)

					Works 40 hours a week (10.14_TD)
Mariana	Soph	Latinx Female	Elementary Ed Mod & Sev Dis	Required for major (biggest reason), however also hopes to discover new books that spark interest and broaden understanding of child lit so to help future students. Wants to be a special education teacher	Born in Columbia, came to the US in preschool. Parents only spoke English at home, learned English though watch TV and reading. Went to a prominently white elementary school with white teachers. In high school felt students were more diverse and appreciated the IB curriculum, had more freedom in how to do projects. Enjoyed reading in Elem School, came to "dread" it in Middle school and stopped. Feels she overanalyzes books due to IB English Was denied scholarships since she is not citizen or permanent resident. Worked for Global Game Changers – an after-school program for kids at "high risk"
Neil	Sen	White Male	Electrical Engineering	Wanted to take a literacy class to get back into reading	Grew up in Ashland, Kentucky Family members worked in schools Enjoys science fiction and fantasy In middle and high moved award from reading to focus on STEM In college tried to get back into reading but can't find a genre he enjoys. Likes to read alone, doesn't like book clubs in which there is a deadline. Dislikes reading online

APPENDIX F
Code Map: Reorganizing Initial Codes into Themes

Sharing My Story
- Forced Connections
- Sharing personal stories/ connections
- Future occupation: Influencing interpretation
- Academic Major: Influencing interpretation
- Racial identity: influencing interpretation
- Describing reading-self
- Personal Values
- (trans)gender identity: influencing interpretation
- Needing to tell my own story first
- Having something to share
- Previous experiences: influencing perceived identity

Leaning on Scholarly Sources
- "Sounding scholarly"
- Sharing other's stories and/or experiences
- Tailoring voice to prompt
- Choosing a writing format of least resistance
- Experiencing tension with prompts (???)
- Referencing articles
- Referencing instructor
- Anticipating instructor's response

Peer Support
- Describing group tension
- Acknowledging group diversity
- Welcoming and accepting peer's ideas
- Hearing peers "confirms my ideas"
- Hearing peers "furthers my knowledge"
- Reflecting on voice being heeded
- Anticipating peer's response

Current Events
- Referencing BLM protest
- Referencing elections
- Referencing COVID-19 Pandemic

Disruptions About Value of Children's Literature
- Considering theme
- Considering literary elements
- Needing to connect to learning from the text
- Viewing children's literature as meaningful
-
- Viewing children's literature as relevant to self
- "Cute"
- Revising voice: Children's Literature

Disruptions Regarding Representation in Children's Literature
- Rethinking the status quo on representation
- "Fitting to me and what I believe"
- Reexamining past representation of self
- Seeing self in course texts (mirror)
- Revising voice: Representation
- Challenging Disruption: Representation
- Affirming Disruption: Representation
- Changing Actions

Disruptions Concerning Meaning Making Processes
- Communal benefit
- Individual benefit
- Having something to teach the group
- Wanting to pose a question to learn from the group
- "Adjust to the space"
- Feeling valued
- Changes in voice presentation/ format
- Academic major: influencing writing format

Miscellaneous
- Furthering other's ideas
- Concealing ideas due to peer's response
- Showing hesitancy to share own story
- Describing influence of reflective writing
- Class Environment

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Lauren Fletcher

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction	University of Louisville Louisville, KY	**December 2021**

Literacy, Languages, Community, and Culture

Dissertation title: Manifestations of Students' Voices: Examining Shifts, Academic Demands, and Identity Work in How Students Make Themselves Understood
Advisor: Amy Seely Flint, UofL

Master of Education in International Education	Endicott College Leysin, Switzerland	**2013**

Specialization in English Second Language Instruction

Bachelor of Arts in Elementary & Special Education	Keene State College Keene, NH	**2010**

Work Experiences

Higher Education Teaching Experience

Instructor- General Education Course	EDAP 245: Children's Literature	Fall 2019 – Spring 2021

- Taught two sections, 50 undergraduates total, to develop a culture of children literacy that values and capitalizes the community's and students' diverse backgrounds.
- Fostered student learning through active learning and culturally sustaining pedagogy.
- Collaborated with local community member to engage students in opportunities to work with local school districts, libraries, and small business bookstores.
- Led students in reviewing current research from diverse scholars to guide them in selecting high quality and diverse literature and to implement reading instruction to students from diverse groups.
- Used both in-person and a hybrid format to instruct this course using online platforms like Blackboard.

Graduate Teacher Assistant	EDTP 320/ EDTP 603: Methods for Teaching Reading/ Language Arts	Spring, 2019

- Supported faculty in creating curriculum and assessments for a teacher education course on literacy research, methods and assessment for undergraduates and graduate students.
- Guided students in planning, implementing, and assesses research-based reading instruction with students in their current placement.
- Led a weekly graduate-level reading/ discussion circle on research-based writing instruction.
- Prepared interactive engagements and presentation slides for most class sessions.
- Graded student final papers.

Research

Editorial Assistant   Summer, 2019 – Winter, 2020

- Assisted editors of the anthology *Reclaiming Literacies as Meaning Making* (Whitmore & Meyer, 2020), a compilation of chapters on research about manifestations of meaning making in literacy learning.
- Worked with authors and publishers to coordinate and keep track of production process, keeping databases and spreadsheets up to date.
- Proofed and edited manuscripts.

Program Evaluator   Summer, 2019

- Managed a program evaluation for the Kentucky's Center of Performing Arts' Hybrid Arts Academy, a professional development program for teachers on integrating literacy and the arts in preK-8 classrooms. The program was based on Brown University's Art Literacy Project.
- Conducted a literature review on hybrid professional development programs.
- Collected qualitative and quantitative data on participants' experiences and their final product, a teaching unit, from the program.
- Presented findings to the Senior Director of Education and Community Arts and local officials.

Graduate Research   Fall, 2018 – Summer, 2019
Assistant

- Explored young learners' literacy identity development within critically oriented and culturally relevant practices.
- Collected qualitative data throughout a school year in a first-grade literacy classroom.
- Analyzed data through grounded theory framework.
- Supported first grade classroom teacher in inquiry-based curriculum and portfolio assessment.
- Examined how visual arts strategies mediated undergraduates' response to an emotionally-challenging text.
- Collected and transcribed focus group interview data from undergraduates.
- Presented findings at national conferences.

Workshops

Co- Facilitator   University of Louisville Faculty Reading Circle   Spring, 2021

- Guided a small group of faculty and staff members to deepen their knowledge of learning theory and cognitive psychology by reading and discussing the book, *Small Teaching Online: Applying Learning Science to Online Classes* (Darby & Lang, 2019)
- Co-led and designed monthly online interactive sessions for group members to reflect on and expand their understanding of online and hybrid teaching.

Co-Facilitator   Kentucky Striving Readers   Fall 2018 – Spring 2019

- Co-managed and led a one-week institute for early childhood and elementary teachers to learn new strategies for designing a comprehensive and engaging literacy curriculum funded by the Kentucky Department of Education
- Conducted classroom visit and consultation with seven of the participants over the course of a school year
- Co-facilitated three follow-up workshops based on the needs of the group such as workshops on action research and creating literacy invitations with trade books.

K-12 US Teaching
Experiences

Grade Four Homeroom Teacher	Camden Station Elementary School *Crestwood, KY*	Aug, 2017 - Jun 2018
Grade Four Homeroom Teacher	McKay Elementary School *Beaverton, OR*	Aug, 2016 - Jun 2017

K-12 Teaching International Experiences

Grade Three Teacher & Team Leader	The International School of Azerbaijan *Baku, Azerbaijan*	Aug, 2014 - Jun 2016
Grade Two Homeroom Teacher	Brent International School *Subic Bay, Philippines*	Aug, 2010 - Jun 2014

Publications and Presentations

Journal Articles

Fletcher, L. (in production). "To Imagine I almost said no": Exploring the transformative change in reluctant reader of challenging text, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy.* http://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1207

Fletcher, L. (2021). Let's Chat about CHAT: Illuminating Undergraduates' Literature Discussion with Cultural Historical Activity Theory, *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 29*(63), 1-11. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2021.100498

Whitmore, K.F., Chisholm, J.S. & **Fletcher, L** (2020). Fostering, activating, and curating: Approaching books about social injustices with the arts, *Language Arts, 98*(1), 7-19. https://library.ncte.org/journals/la/issues/v98-1/30812

Journal Articles Under Review and in Preparation

Flint, A.S. & **Fletcher, L**. (under review). "What do we know": Pedagogy that cultivates communal responsibility in one primary grade classroom, *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*

Chen, X., **Fletcher, L.**, Castagon-Dystart, D., Popp, J., Holyoke, E. & Rose, C. (under review). "Are we practicing what we teach?": A Multi-Institutional collaborative self-study of teacher-educators' culturally sustaining pedagogy and activism, *Journal of Teacher Education*

Fletcher, L. & Holyoke, E. (under review) Reading the Word and World Through Activism: A Critical Content Analysis of Children's Literature*, The Reading Teacher.*

Research Presentations

Fletcher, L. (accepted) *Telling My Story: Impacts of Racial and Gendered Identities on Students' Voices.* American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Diego.

Fletcher, L. (accepted) *Let's Talk About Representation: Challenging and Affirming Disruptions to Preservice Teachers' Voices.* American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Diego.

Fletcher, L. (accepted) *What Mediates Manifestations of Student Voices?: A Case Study of Undergraduates' Voices in a Children's Literature Course.* Literacy Research Association's 71st Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Fletcher, L. & Holyoke, E. (accepted) *Reading the Word and World Through Activism: A Critical Content Analysis of Children's Literature.* Literacy Research Association's 71st Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Fletcher, L. (accepted) *Ensuring All Children's Experiences Are Represented in Literature: How to Create A Diverse Text Set.* National Council of Teachers of English Annual Conference, Louisville, KY.