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The revocalization of logos? Thinking, doing and disseminating voice

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Abstract

‘As a specific object of interest for philosophy, the human voice is grasped within a system of signification that subordinates speech to the concept’. It is in the traditional dualism between the vocal/aural and the conceptual/seen that Cavarero postulates the de-vocalization of logos, the dichotomy between embodied phonation and critical enquiry. Her remarks invite further probing of the pedagogy and creative praxis of voice: how do we conceptualize voicing? How does voice emerge from and reflect back to its discursive domains? How can we bridge the chasm between the ontology and epistemology of voice? How do we think, do and disseminate voice? In reflecting on these concerns, our overall aspiration is to propose a new paradigm for practice as research (PaR) education in Voice Studies.

Keywords

voice

voice studies

Cavarero

logos

phone

vocal praxis

dissemination

Prologue/pre-logos: The ‘Cavarerian project’

In her seminal *For More than One Voice: Towards a Philosophy of Vocal Expression* (2005), Italian cultural theorist Adriana Cavarero traces the historical processes whereby western philosophy has developed its core strategies and principles of logos at the expense of the lived materiality of the voice. Through a series of ‘close readings’ of a diverse array of thinkers and artists, ranging from Aristotle and Emanuel Levinas to Claudio Monteverdi and Jorge Luis Borges, she problematizes ‘the devocalization of logos’ (Cavarero 2005: 40), the systematic exclusion, marginalization or silencing of the experienced, contingent and intersubjective voice, of *phone*, in the realm of philosophical enquiry.

This article employs Cavarero as a productive point of departure in order to probe the role of voice in contemporary practice as research (PaR) in the performing arts. Given that I do not draw on specific case studies from her monograph, but focus on recent trends and prevailing idioms in the UK academe instead, my interests lie mainly in what I term the ‘Cavarerian project’, what I see as Cavarero’s invitation to unveil, critique and deconstruct devocalization. As far as this research is concerned, the ‘Cavarerian project’ revolves around two major axes, namely the positioning of voice against (traditional, patriarchal and Eurocentric) understandings of logos as reason and of logos as language. Cavarero’s line of enquiry seems to necessitate further probing of the pedagogy and creative praxis of voice: how do we conceptualize voicing? How does voice emerge from and reflect back to its discursive domains? How can we bridge the chasm between the ontology and epistemology of voice? Ultimately, how do we think and do voice? Even

though this discourse seeks to chart the underlying principles that fertilize the core concerns around, and approaches to, voice, this study recognizes that answers to these questions can only be explored fully in practice. Therefore, in examining how institutionalized scholarly activity engages with the voice through the lens of Cavarero's analysis, this article wishes to investigate the interface between theory and practice in the emerging field of voice studies.¹

In light of the above, this article extends a post-structuralist interrogation of the knowledge structures embedded in the study of voice in the current landscape of the UK higher education and focuses specifically on the significance of the dissemination of research into/for/through voice. As such, the analysis – whilst informed by Cavarero's philosophical argument and primarily concerned with a meta-narrative or metaphysics of knowledge – will be grounded in particular instances of doctoral projects and their respective publication (and/or assessment) formats. This exploration will follow closely the two axes of the 'Cavarerian project', mainly concentrating on logos as language/dissemination. The overarching aim is to argue for a non-hierarchical, less-predictable model of dissemination that allows for the phonic element of the voice to reclaim its space in epistemological approaches to voice-related research.

Devocalizing research: voice versus logos as knowledge/research

Unpacking Platonic metaphysics, Cavarero denounces the privileging of thought as the internal, unexpressed and therefore uncontaminated by experience dialogue of the mind with the self (or of the self with consciousness). Cavarero is not alone in postulating logos as coinciding with 'the mute, visible order of the ideas contemplated by pure

thought' (2005: 57). From art and education philosopher John Dewey's condemnation of a 'spectator theory of knowledge' (Quinton 1977: 3) to the recent rise of embodied cognition and somatics, arts practitioners and scholars have contested '[t]he primacy given to the sense of sight', which 'combined with the discovery of perspective as a Western aesthetic, has created distance between the position of the subject and the object' (Reeve 2011: 7). The construction of logos-as-reason on the rudiments of the metaphor of sight is evident in the etymological roots of a litany of related terms: idea (from the Greek *idein*, meaning to see and to know), theory (from the Greek *theorein*, meaning to see carefully and to contemplate) or science (from the Latin *scientia*, meaning to perceive through looking and to comprehend), are only a few examples. The constitutive presumption here is that reasoning, and by extension scientific research, involves observing from a distance, clarifying through examination or relating to the sphere of ideas. This is an endeavour that Smith and Dean assign to quantitative approaches to research, which make claims at a 'possible degree of separation between the researcher and the researched' (2009: 4). Is it possible, however, to research voice only as a measurable, distanced or objectified phenomenon?

According to the same authors, '[a]t the basis of the relationship between creative practice and research is the problematic nature of conventional definitions of "research", which are underpinned by the fundamental philosophical quandary as to what constitutes "knowledge"' (Smith and Dean 2009: 2). As outlined in the introduction, Cavarero's disputation of the mute order of consciousness from the perspective of voice could be deployed to challenge any notion of 'knowledge as being an understood given' (Smith and Dean 2009: 3). In light of these comments, and in attempting to identify where

knowledge can be said to be located in relation to voice, the traditional conservatoire training can be seen as fostering a training focused on *phone*, the embodied knowledge of vocal practice. Logos-as-reason in this instance is tacit (see Polyani [1967] 2009), muted as it were but implicit in the bodily disciplining of the vocal apparatus. In the other prevailing model of vocal education, that of the undergraduate university programme, logos appears to take precedence within units on historical and contextual knowledge of voice (opera studies, musical theatre milestones or poetics and linguistics, to name but a few). However, in interrogating paradigms of vocal knowing from a Cavarerian perspective, even established training pedagogies, with their rigorous practices of transmitting a set of canonical works (especially in the realms of opera and musical theatre), can be unpacked as complex, logocentric strategies of disciplining *phone* into voicing the logos/texts of the repertoire. From this cursory overview of the framings of voice across the undergraduate higher education landscape, it could be argued that, in order to revocalize the logos/reason of vocal knowledge, foundational paradigms of knowledge can be set up and developed, aiming at the embedding of methodologies constituent to the PaR enterprise more commonly applied at postgraduate/doctoral levels. What is at stake is not a mere silencing of logos but a project of re-imagining voicing as praxical and intimately connected to practice *and* knowledge production.

Devocalizing dissemination: Voice versus logos as language/symbol

The second (and most important for the purposes of this article) component of Cavarero's fierce criticism relates to logos as a system of signification, to the 'side' of logos that 'coincides with language' (2005: 57). In the logocentric world, which is

premised on a model of communication seen as the exchange of signs, voice, bound to the sonorous component of signifiers, ought to serve the expression of signifieds. Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure conceptualized voice as such: ‘In any case, it is impossible for sound alone, a material element, to belong to language. It is only a secondary thing, substance to be put to use’ (1959: 118). Voice in the process of signification is just a remainder, a leftover, not worthy of much elaboration outside its role as bearer of utterances. In the immaterial universe of signs, language can exist with no connection to corporeality, and signs have no need for voice to exist.² In Cavarero’s words, ‘[t]he voice thus becomes the limit of speech – its imperfection, its dead weight. The voice becomes not only the reason for truth’s ineffability, but also the acoustic filter that impedes the realm of signifieds from presenting itself to the noetic gaze’ (2005: 42). Nonetheless, what is it that voice expresses, and how so? Is any study of voice destined to investigate language? In an attempt to challenge logos as signification, this main part of the article will focus on modes of dissemination of voice-related research.

Becoming a researcher is an incremental process. The first section mapped some of the challenges with which the Cavarerian critique of logos as reason presents existing modes of knowledge production in undergraduate or conservatoire-type environments. What happens though when researchers share their knowledge on a doctoral level? Which systems of signification do they employ, activate or object to? In other words, which is the place of voice, and vocal praxis, in relation to the logos-as-language of scholarly dissemination? For Smith and Dean, the answer seems straightforward when ‘knowledge is normally verbal or numerical’; however, ‘[s]ince it is clear that a sonic [...] artwork can sometimes transmit knowledge in non-verbal and non-numerical terms, we believe

that any definition of knowledge needs to acknowledge these non-verbal forms of transmission' (2009: 3).

This section will question the presuppositions and underlying assumptions of existing modes of dissemination. It will also discuss the potentialities that a PaR approach can trigger and foster in the field of voice studies (or in related disciplines, when a voice studies approach is employed). In light of the previous analysis and outlined interests, dissemination is taken here as an umbrella term, encompassing not only the various types of public sharing, presentation and publication in the professional arena, but also the broad spectrum of dissemination during the educational process, normatively thought of as assessments.

A decisive 'rite of passage' that links these two worlds is the final assessment of a researcher and, supposedly, the very first sharing of their research in a peer-reviewed context, the viva. Mladen Dolar's analysis of this moment can further illuminate the tensions between logos and *voice/phone*. Building on Agamben's observations on the extimate connections between *bios* and *zoe* as the core organizational principle of politics,³ Dolar argues that 'the voice, in its function as the internal exterior of logos, the apparent pre-logos, the extra-logos, is called upon and necessary in certain well-defined and crucial situations' (2006: 107), such as the ritual readings of the Holy Scripture, the interrogation of witnesses in judiciary processes and elections. Crucially, in an educational system whereby a university student is mainly expected to engage with various manifestations of logos, primarily through readings, written exams or essay-type assignments, the performative 'limen' between being a student and adopting the vocational identity of the researcher is an act of voice; namely, the defense of a doctoral

thesis *viva voce*. The viva is ‘indeed simply a question of vocal display; the supposed testing and questioning of the candidate’s knowledge has very little to do with that knowledge itself, and has an entirely ritual and vocal character’ (Dolar 2006: 110). This is not a mere case of acknowledging the importance of the voice; it is a regulatory process whereby the unruly, ephemeral, I–thou character of the voice (as the equivalent of Agamben’s biological life, *zoe*) is allocated a strictly delineated space within the educational process. Voice is therefore subordinated to the main object of the examination, the thesis, the research results presented as logos-set-in-stone. To return to Cavarero, this is yet another strategy of devocalizing knowledge, even in its dissemination.

However, a PaR approach can open up fresh possibilities as it ‘offers a clear challenge to conventional thinking in its premise that the practice of performance can be at once a method of investigative research and the process through which that research is disseminated’ (Freeman 2010: 7). This challenge extends to the demarcated territory allocated to the researcher’s voice in the quasi-ritual tactic of the viva. The assessment (and therefore dissemination) of the practical component of a PaR thesis project could reposition the voice to the forefront and establish new balancing acts between the traditionally accepted logos/thesis and the voice/practice.

Having said that, it would be naïve to consider the mere presence of a musical/vocal/sound performance piece as automatically presenting logos with a challenge (or as activating disciplinary resistance, to stretch this logic to its Foucauldian limits). The exigency of disseminating research ‘in a communicable and retrievable form’ (Freeman 2010: 113) can reposition voice in relation to logos in various ways. This

section will build on Freeman's refashioning of Frayling's (1993: 2) research *into, for* and *through* art, in order to map these differing positionings and tensions from the perspective of dissemination.

A research *into/of* practice (RiP) approach addresses the practice as the object of study, with the term 'object' bearing all the philosophical complexity twentieth-century critical analysis has bequeathed us (see Böhme 1993, among others). Research projects that offer semiotic analyses of musical theatre pieces or historical and historiographic reflections on compositional processes in the format of a written dissertation, exemplify such an approach. In this instance, despite voice being the central object of study, *phone* as lived materiality remains a point of reference or material relegated to an appendix. RiP transposes the contingency and impermanence of the voice within systems of logocentric signification. Recent instances of such an approach are Experience Bryon's (1998) or Konstantinos Thomaidis's (2013) theses. Bryon, for instance, developed a critique of performing strategies and pedagogical models available to the interdisciplinary (voicing) performer, drawing on historical examples and research on deconstructionist models of meaning-making in performance. It is indicative that throughout her doctoral research Bryon's emerging methodology was conceived as *Integrative Performance Theory*, whereas during later stages of her studio-based explorations it transformed into *Integrative Performance Practice and Theory* (2014). In other words, although the doctoral project was informed by practical research and was completed by a professional practitioner (singer, coach and opera director), vocal practice was used as a necessary point of reference but the mode of submission was the conventional written thesis and the research findings informed subsequent practice. Similarly, my thesis analysed

intercultural voice pedagogies with the aim to frame the discursive bodies they produce and documented training fieldworks in the appendix. This appendix also included transcriptions of a workshop session that capitalized on the research findings and proposed a new pedagogical methodology for voice. In both instances, the lived voice was secondary to its discussion and only came decisively to the foreground, structurally, as a side project and, chronologically, as the ‘afterlife’ of the research; what was facilitated instead was logos, a study *in* voice, a critical analysis that found its most appropriate expression in a monograph-type final submission.

Research *for* performance (RfP) establishes a binary between logos and voice, and, in a way, reverses the paradigm of seeing/observing from a distance; what is being investigated/seen/observed is used as a springboard that informs the practice. Such an approach is geared towards application; a theoretical issue is studied and resolved in discursive terms and the practice exemplifies the proposed critical schemata. For example, a RfP project would encompass the theorization of the ideological nexuses embedded in a particular vocal mannerism or stylistic approach to a piece of repertoire, the deconstruction of latent ideologies through a meta- or extra-generic philosophy, and, finally, the materialization of a practical piece informed by this new knowledge; a pertinent example is Zachary Dunbar’s devising of a musical theatre adaptation of *Oedipus* inspired by his contextual research on classical theatre and methodological probing of interdisciplinary approaches. In this and similar instances, dissemination is effected both through the text and the practice, but, crucially, the practice is not emerging but predicated on and determined by traditional analysis. In other words, voice is an application of logos, it exemplifies and demonstrates the theoretical research. As

Freeman puts it, '[t]he practice *informs* the thesis without ever (despite the efforts of a fearless few) satisfactorily standing *as* the thesis' (2010: 64, original emphases).

Another example of such an approach is Chan E. Park's thesis (1995) on Korean *pansori* (particularly, its extended and reworked form of 2003). Park first investigates at length this musico-theatrical practice from a joint historiographic and ethnomusicological perspective. In noticing the dangers of current codification, she develops new musical narratives that encompass the modes, rhythms and vocal tropisms of the *pansori* lineage but derive new inspiration from recent stories and use English recitatives alongside Korean sung parts. Significantly, these new performances and scores are presented as the culmination of the project and the conclusion of the argument (Park 2003: 245–76). Her suggested model of cross-cultural/transnational performance comes as the direct application of her theoretical insights into the genealogy and aesthetics of the genre; consequently, and even though the comprehensive communication of the argument requires both strands of dissemination (thesis and practice), voice seems to depend on the needs of the theoretical research and to come as a response to its discoveries.

Research *through* performance (RtP), however, invites the practical component as a partner indispensable to the research process. The theoretical argument is not predetermined and the limits and boundaries between theory and practice are constantly negotiated. As a result, the mode of dissemination accommodates a relationship between the exegetical/written, the practical/creative and the documented in a manner that foregrounds the ineluctable uniqueness of both the project undertaken and its 'publication' and embraces the fact that the "“outcomes” of artistic research are *necessarily* unpredictable' (Barrett and Bolt 2007: 3, original emphasis). A fluid, non-

linear, studio-based, laboratory-inspired approach results in an idiosyncratic presentation/publication formula, in which the thesis cannot operate as distinct from the practical work, or the plethora of supporting media that proliferate in tight connection to RtP projects (artists' websites, reflexive blogs, audio-visual DVDs, interactive appendices and the similar).

A number of theses in the broader area of music theatre result in this idiosyncratic amalgamation of practice and research. For this discussion on the role of voice in the circulation of scholarly research, Karikis's project (2005) is a particularly useful example. The introduction states that 'the project embarks on a methodological experiment whose starting point is a "multi-vocal" approach to writing and the simultaneous employment and equal consideration of artistic practice and theory' (Karikis 2005: 10). Building on the hypothesis that voice accords presence, the thesis argues that the voice is not a representation of the self but a continuous strategy of identity-making, a listening out for the self (Karikis 2005: 126). Karikis situates voice at the very centre of his project through a series of strategies. The first half of the written submission, which corresponds to the expected literature review of a conventional thesis, is framed as the transcript of a 'domestic lepidopterist' and deploys a pseudoscientific mode of speech; on the other hand, in the second part, the thinking voice is replaced by the empirical voice as Karikis embarks on a walk in the streets of London and charts his vocal reactions to sonic events and discovers this process as constant and never fully reaching a clear distinction between the perceiving self and the environmental acoustics. To begin with, the writing is presented as a transcript and Karikis highlights the performative and contingent character of voice by coopting voicing personae rather than

writing from the perspective of an impersonal academic logos. Logos is further challenged through the use of shifting typefaces and the invention of neologisms, both of which negate the language of dissemination as a rigid system of signification and foreground its contingent and arbitrary qualities. Second, the phonic and aural take precedence over the written; the thesis is accompanied by CDs with compositions that exemplify and challenge the ruptures in the acoustic identity that the first half identifies. Further, they document the sonic events without which it is not possible for the second half to articulate its argument. Karikis also proposes a methodology according to which the text was produced by reading and voicing instead of the silent (muted, in Cavarero's understanding) act of writing (2005: 31). Most importantly, the CDs include a full reading of the text, voiced by speakers of diverse ethnic backgrounds, and this is presented as the main submission, while the text is postulated as secondary. What is significant in this case is that the vocal is pervasive and predominant, the linguistic and textual are invited to assist the practice instead of replicate, study it or apply its findings, and the mode of dissemination ('exploded' textuality, multi-vocal reading, recourse to vocal personae) is inextricably connected to the core argument on the fragmented and essentially ruptured sense of the acoustic self. This written account, among others, engages with newly composed musical pieces, sonic materials or training exercises in mutually dependent, fluctuating and dynamic symbiosis.

One must not forget, however, that this seemingly ever-expanding field of possibilities operates within the fence lines of given assessment criteria (in the case of university examinations) or models of scholarly publication, which, albeit shifting and adapting, tend to prioritize logos over vocal praxis. Haseman and Mafe are cautious in

pinpointing that ‘[a]round each creative work there is a wide field of possible interpretive contexts and it is in the exegesis that some of these can be delimited. This delimiting act, [...] is seldom comfortably arrived at’ (2009: 226). It is perhaps in the field of the ‘uncomfortable’, of that which is not either a priori prescribed or a posteriori imposed, that the emergent, indeterminate and immediate character of the voice can find its place in the dissemination of research through voice (parallel and in addition to research into or for voice). If logos is to be revocalized, to follow Cavarero, or if voice is to assume less than a ritual role, to employ Dolar, but also if one is to address the problematics of research significance in PaR projects, it is imperative to re-imagine dissemination too as a dialogic framework, a nexus of tensions between logos and voice. The final section of this article will return to and further refine this notion of tension between the practical and the exegetic.

Epilogue/epi-logos: PaR as revocalization

Yet another question needs to be asked: what is the relation between the two aspects of logos, between language and thought? Cavarero sees ‘the ideas’ as ‘the origin of both verbal language and the empirical world’ (2005: 41). ‘Thinking and speaking’, ‘the two components of logos’, are ‘arranged in hierarchical order’ (Cavarero 2005: 57). This implies that ‘[a]s a specific object of interest for philosophy, the human voice is grasped within a system of signification that subordinates speech to the concept’ (Cavarero 2005: 34). It is in the traditional dualism between the vocal/aural and the conceptual/seen that Cavarero locates the devocalization of logos, the dichotomy between

embodied phonation and critical enquiry – and this dichotomy prioritizes the sign over vocality and the idea over the sign.

In the words of Simon Jones,

[o]ur greatest challenge is to find ways – and I stress here the plural, as there may well be as many ways as there are bodies or combinations of bodies active within the academy – of *housing the mix* of performative and textual practices alongside each other. (2009: 29, original emphasis)

In this spirit, and after applying and extending the critique of logos to the study and research of voice, it is timely to ask: which is the alternative that Cavarero proposes? Cavarero, in reading Calvino, maintains that she calls for ‘a vocal phenomenology of uniqueness’ and explains: ‘This is an ontology that concerns the incarnate singularity of every existence insofar as she or he manifests her- or himself vocally’ (Cavarero 2005: 7). It is here then that the overarching intentionality of her project is revealed: Cavarero criticizes logos in order to reclaim some breathing space for the contingency, temporality, presence, vulnerability and relationality of the lived voice, which she understands as ‘not being but becoming’ (2005: 37). In a similar vein, I would recognize that perhaps the ultimate aspiration of this article is to define a place for the voice within the academy, to find a voice for voice.

At a first glance, this may sound as a valorization of practice *over* research; Bolt seems cautious, however, when diagnosing the risks ingrained in such a claim: ‘practice-only postgraduate research can disable practice-led research by confusing practice with

praxical knowledge and severing the link between the artwork and the work of art' (2007: 33–34). Research and knowledge *can* be implied in the very act of voicing, but voicing per se is not necessarily the sole enabling *a priori* of any related research or knowledge. Cavarero too does not seem to advocate a simplistic overthrow of metaphysics in favour of phenomenology; her 'project', as earlier defined, is a philosophical one after all. She rather claims 'a kind of reversal': 'to understand speech from the perspective of voice instead of from the perspective of language' (Cavarero 2005: 14) and to (re)consider how for pre-Platonic thought it was 'the *phone* that decide[d] the physiology of thought' (Cavarero 2005: 63).

For this author at least, as a voice studies practitioner-scholar, this shift in perspective is crucial in re-imagining the role of voice in research. However, Cavarero's propositions seem to imply a methodological scheme of wider interest or application. In the suggested reading of *For More than One Voice* (2005), voice is not *expressive* of logos-as-reason, but it also constructs and generates it; equally, voice is not the *facilitator* of logos-as-language, of a supposedly set-in-stone system of signification, but it participates in its shaping and construction. I read Cavarero's dismantling of devocalization as a critique of a presupposed and essentialist hierarchy between thinking, speaking and voicing.

On this basis, and in agreement with Pitches's argument that 'any claim to a singular and expert account of training [or research, we would add] methods or methodologies should be treated with considerable suspicion and skepticism' (2011: 140), I propose an approach to PaR that unfolds as a triangular continuum between logos-as-reason, logos-as-language, and practice (which, in the instance of voice studies, is, or

involves, voice). This scheme, as evident in Nelson's triangular, dynamic model for mixed-mode research, mixed-mode practices and 'theoretical practices' (2006: 18), can facilitate a multimodal, 'mixed' and emerging engagement with the voice. Extrapolating Nicolescu's triangle of the included middle (2002: 156), what I find particularly intriguing is that each point of the proposed triangular continuum can be seen as operating on a different plane where the other two points can be seen as non-contradictory; if seen as the two points of a line, for example, practice and research are either separated or draw from each other and result in each other (as in the examples of research *in* voice and *for* voice). In classical geometry, after all, each point signifies location and points in a line imply opposing directionalities. The third point can provide opportunities for inclusion, complex interaction and non-contradiction. The emerging format of Karikis's thesis, as shown, challenged the opposition of his vocal practice and (voiced) writing and offered a new plane in which the dissemination allowed for a dynamic, nascent, praxical understanding of voice.

This paradigm rejects linear trajectories from logos/thinking towards the conceptualization of practice or, reversely, from practice towards the generation of exegetical logos, and embraces the landscape of the 'uncomfortable' briefly sketched in the previous section. In the specific context of 'uniqueness' within which its PaR project operates, analysis, praxis and dissemination (including the languages and protocols of sharing at play) are equally generative 'partners'. In this light, the major challenge is to maintain each of the three synergetic parameters activated in the dynamic flow between them. If, for example, the mode of dissemination is always-already implemented, then logos-as-language is inescapably posited as immobile and hierarchically placed above

thinking and practicing. For example, if the dissemination is fixed as conservatoire-type exam, voice remains in the predetermined realm of the know-how, whereas if the assessment is always-already in writing, voice is trapped within logocentric dissemination, what Symonds has called ‘the logocentric archiving of knowledge’ (2013: 212). A flexible, contingent and unique thesis/assessment formula could maintain the inventive and unexpected dialogues between logos and practice. As a self-reflective aside, if this analysis of vocal PaR is predestined to be published as an article, can it achieve more than making a theoretical claim and proposing a schema, a desire for the praxical possibilities of a triangular continuum to be fulfilled *elsewhere*? More importantly, this scheme, which, I am aware, comes as a cadence to a rethinking of Cavarero’s work and needs further expansion to gain currency in its own right, does not only encapsulate a call for a revocalization of logos. It also points to the reverse side of the coin, that the revocalization of knowledge cannot come at the expense of the de-logosization of practice.

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Notes

¹ I have benefited immensely from discussions and research exchanges hosted by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Voice Studies, a cross-departmental research initiative that I co-convene alongside Amanda Smallbone (University of Winchester) and Ben

Macpherson (University of Portsmouth). The discourse around and critical reevaluation of modes of practice, research and dissemination of voice have been central to the development of the B.A. Vocal and Choral Studies at the University of Winchester and the validation of a new B.A. Musical Theatre at the University of Portsmouth, spearheaded by the Centre's convenors. While this article looks chiefly at logos as language, a fully developed version, co-authored with Smallbone and investigating equally logos as language and logos as reason, will appear in Thomaidis and Macpherson's *Voice Studies: Critical Approaches to Process, Performance and Experience* (2015). I wish to thank Amanda Smallbone for our ongoing collaboration on this project and the editors of *Studies in Musical Theatre* for granting us permission to publish a reworked version of this publication in the upcoming edited collection.

² In a related strand of enquiry, Merleau-Ponty, although he severs relations with traditional philosophical thought by bringing embodiment to the fore as a prerequisite for all experience, builds on Saussure's linguistics and is interested in the importance of *language* in the production of thought and the perception of the world. His suggestion is that we distinguish between the intentionality of speaking and the actual speech, the former being named *speaking word* and the latter *spoken word* (2002: 229). However, his analysis of the experienced speech, of the *spoken word*, still pertains in the sphere of abstract signification: 'the act of expression constitutes a linguistic world' (2002: 229).

³ Agamben theorizes on the interrelation between life as a biological phenomenon and the socio-political coexistence of human beings by employing the Greek term *zoe* to denote natural life and *bios* to refer to social life. This connection is extimate in that *bios*, the structured life of the *polis*, orders and marginalizes *zoe* but inevitably, the natural life of

instincts and biological needs remains at the very centre of human activity. Dolar elaborates on the concept of extimacy in seeing logos as the structured system of signification, the organized language of the social order, and *voice/phone* as the suppressed, controlled but unavoidably present equivalent of *zoe* (2006: 119–24).