Unearthing the Tubers and Shoots of Thought, Talk, and Praxis:

A Historiography of Classroom Discourse in Theory and Practice

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation submits as its project a history of dialogue in the classroom, from early recitation practices to the era of the teacher as a “sage on the stage,” the subsequent role of a participating observer or “guide on the side,” and more refined teacher roles as well as sharper definitions of discussion and dialogical practices (King, 1993, p. 30). For this research, I adopted a conceptual methodology, using Foucault’s critique and Deleuze and Guattari’s assemblages and rhizomic structures, to inform the mapping and dynamic of the historiography. In terms of practical methodology, I collected over 650 theoretical, empirical, and instructional works related to forms of classroom discourse. By mapping the territory of research on discourse in the English classroom, this work noted trends in the method, manner, and focus of research. Several critical shifts might be suggested regarding theory, research, and practice in relation to dialogue: in practice, first, a shift from quantitative, monological positions to more dialogical, polyphonic stances; and second, from research examining teacher questioning and evaluation to that focused on student responsiveness. In theory and research, this review suggested several noticeable trends in research methods: first, that classroom practice lags behind the theoretical imagining of the dialogical; second, that scholars have increasingly relied on Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories in the pedagogical frames of their research on discourse in the classroom; and third, that scholarship has shown a greater interest in international sites of study.
Overall, although scholars have made strides in conceptualizing the dialogical classroom, greater interventionist studies and instructional works are needed to bridge the gap between theory and practice.
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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family, as broadly and widely as such a term can be defined. This includes immediate and extended families, replete with darting, eager intellects; my family of friends whom I have relied and depended on and who have witnessed my change and growth over the years; the family of the classroom and my former students, who continue to inspire me with their talent and charm. My family of colleagues and scholars—with each, there was some table, real or imagined: some were dinner tables, others were dining or conference tables, and still others were imaginary tables around which each of us sat face to face in the intersection and confluence of chatter and intellectual flight.
Acknowledgements

The three areas of human culture—science, art, and life—become united in the personality, which joins them in unity. . . . Art and life are not one, but they must become united in the unity of my responsibility.

—M.M. Bakhtin

I would like to thank the community at Teachers College—the scholars, teachers, and fellow students—who have made these past 3 years worthwhile. Foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Bob Fecho, my advisor, who shepherded me through the process at breakneck speed without sacrificing quality. “All we’ve got is the humble prose of living,” wrote Bakhtin, and I cannot help but consider your own humble prose of action as an educator and a person, and the depth and compassion of your work in and out of the classroom as well as on the page. I am forever grateful to you for your mentorship and advising. I would also like to thank those on my committee for their time and dedication. To Ruth Vinz, who in a few words unlocked new lands for me to map and unearthed new tuberous thoughts to examine. And to Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz and Marjorie Siegel, who offered such joy and vision to the field of education. To Eugene Matuzov, who agreed at a conference in Shanghai, in the restaurant of the Howard Johnson Hotel, to be on my committee: I am so grateful for your expansive mind and generous spirit. I was and am honored to submit this work to you. At that same conference, I met, Jayne White, who, after hearing my brief presentation on a historiography of dialogue, suggested it had the makings of a dissertation. Thank you, Jayne, for your inspiration and suggestion; indeed, here is that dissertation.

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his verve and intellect; and to Ernest, whose charge to ask how one must change both the field and the state of education will stay with me forever.

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C. G. G.
Dear reader, gentle reader, let us go then, you and I, and wander and wonder for a bit, as reading and thinking is an errant task. Like any wandering, it will not follow any single, linear path; it may amble like country creeks or wind about like root systems under earth. Strands of ideas may extend themselves through time and thought, others may fall into silence only later to reappear. You may nod in recognition, “Yes, you wrote of that earlier, and now I see how these two ideas, so distinct in my mind then, are now indeed intertwined.” Such is the to and fro of engagement, the roots of discourse, and the tuberous shoots of thought itself.

My hope in studying the historiography of discourse is to travel the tangled rhizomic pathways of three essential movements: the movement from thought to praxis and how ideas theorized about discourse transform through non-government institutions into practical application; from thought to thought, as scholarship extends or constricts itself through citation and academic discipleship; and finally, how theoretical work, research, and instructional publications interconnect in an essential tangle.

Here, the metaphor you will follow is the tangle of plant systems, not the arboreal structures of hierarchy found in linear narratives; it is the pathways of various roots and tubers I will lead you through. So, I invite you to abandon the time line and forgo the hierarchy of genealogy. Say adieu to the book of history and its regular beat, as its marches through years and eras of “and then, and then . . .”

But fear not, dear reader. All is not chaos. Within these pages are all the components of a more traditional dissertation: the introduction, an extensive literary review, and most certainly a method. But the method of the rhizome, the tracking of roots, provides a more collage-like approach. For I follow one root and its shoots, then another, and yet another. Thus, the
dissertation unfolds rhythmically and cyclically to reveal a conceptual work, one held together by the shared dynamic of the tuberous shoot.

As you read, you may note that throughout this composition, my shoes are off, my trousers rolled, my bare feet planted, and my hands free, free to dig here, there, and wherever I roam to unearth the tangle of root systems. Consider this dissertation an assemblage, each chapter forming one strata resting upon another. Yet even as the strata are layered, they remain interconnected each to each, travelling, winding, disrupting, and interrupting themselves through such terrain. These are the roots and tubers of thought—of scholars thinking and rethinking; of academics discussing and writing about discourse practices; and of praxis and the various methods through which thought and talk are transformed into educational practices.
I - TABLE TALK

A world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time. (Arendt, 1958, p. 52)

Arendt’s metaphor for the interrelation and segregation of all things—the table that unites and divides—not only refers to the material world and its objects, but also to what she deems as “thought things.” Like the world of objects, shared thought things serve to both unify and mark distinctions as each of us encounters them.

Arendt’s metaphor conjures a table, and it is around such a table that dialogue begins. For many, it was the dinner table, what a former student of mine once wisely noted was merely an “elevation of the ground” in human evolution (Tresnan, 2011). For many, the dinner table was the site of familial engagement, storytelling and laughter, and argument and reconciliation. For others, the table was a site of sustained discomfort, silence, avoidance, and little ease. There may be little musing or talk, but rather some thumbnail sketch of the day or a checklist-like accountability for chores. For others, the dinner table had entirely dissolved. How many tables across the country might be variations of such a theme?

School is often viewed as a curative for the failings, large and small, of the home. But the classroom in high school and the first years of college can be a site of absentia. Talk in the classroom may not always be invited, but rather suppressed in favor of lecture halls and Power Points. In other classrooms, discourse may be answer-driven. And among many students who know the answers, there may be no need to respond. Some may turn away from the classroom and toward other sites where they may find needed recognition and response, perhaps through extracurricular activities or social conversations with peers.
Ideally, teachers construct sites of engagement; though each classroom may not have a table, the thoughts generated between teachers and students and among students materialize Arendt’s table. Yet not all such classrooms encourage such practices. Often classrooms may be silent study halls or some animation of a fill-in-the-blank exam. Arendt (1998) warned that “[w]ithout being talked about, the world would . . . [be] a heap of unrelated things” (p. 204). Thus, to make sense of the world, one must, quite simply, talk. A study of teacher talk and dialogue in the classroom may shed some light on where the discipline has emerged from, its current state, and where, instructionally, educators may venture. More pointedly, the history of classroom talk unearths the epistemological interconnection between thought, talk, and action in the world.

My Past Research in Dialogue

Prior to my graduate work at Teachers College, I was a classroom instructor in high school English for over 12 years. As a teacher, I sought to vary my methods, trying out various forms of discourse, from Socratic to targeted questioning to seminar-based discussions. At Teachers College, my interest in dialogue continued, as many of my research projects involved mapping dialogue in the classroom—my own classroom and those of others—in colleges, high-performing private schools, and failing public schools. One early research project centered on introducing the Harkness method of discussion into the college writing course I was teaching. The Harkness method disrupts hierarchies of discussion by leveling the teacher-student relation; in such a practice, the teacher no longer leads discussion, but rather curates and notates it. Students are invited to listen and contribute in an ongoing conversation where ideas weave and build off of one another.
I introduced this same method to a private school classroom in New Jersey. Studying Dickens’s novel *Great Expectations*, the class practiced ways to map, notate, and reflect on the discussion. Last spring, I notated the recitation practices and responses of students in a low-performing school in Brooklyn where the class population speaks varied home languages, including Spanish, Urdu, Bengali, and Arabic. Working with the teachers in that school, I encouraged dialogue in each classroom, even amid the challenges of varied home languages in the classroom.

Certainly, it may be easier for teachers to lecture in order to deliver information in the most efficient and compressed manner; in fact, often students desire this—to be told what to think or deliver the answer. But do such lecture practices activate the “thought things” that Arendt writes of? The sort of thinking that may relate the world of “things” to human subjects? Such questions undergird my inquiry into the history of teacher talk and discourse.

**Statement of the Problem**

Why examine the history of teacher talk and discourse? What might such an examination of research and theory yield? Histories of the field of English education have noted that the mission of English education served varied ideological objectives: to cultivate literary appreciation; to build “sympathy and tolerance”; to achieve competency in literacy; or as a gateway to social change (Applebee, 1974; Scholes, 1998, p. 17). In fact, such diverse goals were considered a “patchwork of traditions, of conventions, of purposeless gropings” (Eaton, 1919, p. 309). Despite such wanderings in mission, certain early theories that touted the importance of dialogue in education were echoed in later scholarship by educational theorists. For instance, the work of John Dewey and the progressive movement, which centered on democracy in education, found a new voice in the writing of Paulo Freire. Arguably for both,
dialogue was central to the democratic project in education. At his 90th birthday party, Dewey once insisted, “democracy begins in conversation” (as cited in Fesmire, 2014, p.172). Hence, for Dewey, the source of the well of equity began in the classroom with the interrelation through discourse. Freire too linked dialogue and democratic values, arguing that dialogue’s presence is contingent on love: “Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people” (Freire, 2012, p. 89). With each scholar thus foregrounding dialogue’s inherent connection to democratic values, the question to be posed is this: why has a comprehensive examination of classroom dialogue in its varied forms and methodologies not yet been drafted? The project of this study on dialogue studies was to address the gap in such meta-research. My aim here is to deliver a complex, interwoven understanding of research, practice, and instruction regarding education dialogue from its inception to today.

**Research Questions**

What happens when one studies research practices within one field of study, such as classroom discourse? How might one come to identify the interrelation between studies in theory, practice, and instruction? Further, when mapping a historiography of research over time and space, what conclusions might one draw about shifts in and the interrelation among theory, empirical studies, and instructional techniques?

Additionally, how might one disrupt a history of research as merely a chronological sequence of academic work? To that end, how do dominant discourses of thought subordinate other practices? How then do those subordinated practices of discourse find traction, theory, supportive research, and instructional pedagogies to shift practices in the classroom? Last, how might one decenter the investigation of research to consider global sites of investigation?
Rationale

This research for my dissertation was to make sense of the history of scholarship in the field. A field of research is often a messy and large place. The aim of this study was to construct a historiography of research on dialogue and, in doing so, to offer the following: to conceptually consolidate, sequence, and map the work of scholarship of classroom discourse through time; to reveal the topography of such research, marking shifts as the landscape changes; to serve, through the aggregate nature of the work, the community of researchers in the field; and to provide, however modestly, a narrative, both historical and contemporary, as a context through which researchers and educators can situate their work and practice in the history of pedagogy.

Significance of the Study

To date, three large-scale foundational works in the history of English education are arguably those of Applebee (1974), Myers (1996), and Scholes (1998). Each takes a critical view of the development of pedagogy in the classroom, while situating the classroom in either the historical-political context of the time, as with Applebee, or the sociological context, as with Myers. I would like to briefly address each work here as a context for the significance of my study before considering studies that have specifically focused on dialogue in the classroom.

Applebee and the History of English Education

Applebee’s (1974) foundational work on the history of English education in the United States mapped out intersecting movements and countermovements from its initiation through the development of the secondary school English classroom. In his work, Applebee explained that the focus of education in history was a battle between the what and the how. Curriculum changes notably addressed the what, that is, what is taught. Reviewing the appendixes in Applebee, one can note the shift in the popular texts of the curriculum eras: for example, the era between the
Wars until 1934, the time of progressivism, was a time of great popularity of Victorian poets, such as Tennyson and Browning; the subsequent years of the Depression brought an interest in the Romantic poets; and last, the postwar canon added American writers, such as Poe, Frost, Franklin, and Thoreau, to the mixture of Victorian and Romantic works.

To this what of English education, Applebee also delivered a history of the why. For instance, Applebee noted how governmental anxieties in the age of the Cold War and Sputnik led to performance tracking in high school classrooms or how the “feudal” overlording of the College Board, first identified by scholar Frederick Newton Scott in 1901 (F.N. Scott, as cited in Applebee, p. 58) came to fruition as the Board exerted its power through entrance exams.

According to Applebee, changes in the how of pedagogy, or the manner in which students were instructed, occurred dramatically after and as a result of the Dartmouth Conference. But while Applebee’s work, published in 1974, examined shifts in research toward methodologies of instruction, and while it touched upon recitation and lecture practices, the scope of the work ended its survey just as shifts in methodologies were changing in classroom practice in the 1970s.

Myers’s Theoretical Mapping of Literacy

Myers (1996) tracked how the structuring tenets of education formulated varied ideas of literacy, be they experiential, growth-related, or analytic, to arrive at the current view of a translational or critical literacy. Of the three historical works presented here, Myers came closest to tracking the historical shifts in instruction in the classroom, as he provided evidence that the role of the teacher was a response to the sociological needs of the time, be they oratory, signatory, recitative, or analytic. The argument in those chapters—thorough, generous, methodical, and vast—shifted the paradigm of the student from the empty vessel (p. 57), tabula
**resas** (p. 72), or code-breaker, to the versatile, participant-observer, and metacognitive subject of their education. For the latter, teachers were no longer the drill sergeant or all-knowing “translator” of the text, as with Biblical exegesis, but rather facilitators, witnesses, responders, empathizers, and mode, style, speech, and event-shifters of their own.

While Myers was generous to each mode of education historically, he nonetheless mapped an argument for systemic change in how both the minds of students and educators alike have changed and, accordingly, how our patterns of educational practice must follow suit. Myers’s attention to epochs of change are useful in contextualizing the history of education, but while his work tracked instructional patterns in the classroom, he gave less attention to ideologies or practices counter to the dominant practice.

**Scholes’s Postmodern View of a Discipline**

Scholes (1998) contended that the rise of the discipline contains within it the “seeds of a fall” (p. 1). Viewing a discipline in need of change, Scholes called for reform in the discipline, particularly at the college level. He argued for the importance of theory and all histories to be taught alongside literature, an emphasis on the production of writing, and the study of texts high and low, including advertisements, television, and film. His call then was for new modes of curriculum. In many ways, he addressed what Applebee could not. Writing 20 years later than Applebee, Scholes formulated a critical history that aims for reform. As such, he ended his work with a cautionary warning: “What will happen to English students and the old paradigm of literary history remains to be seen, but the choice seems clear: adapt or dwindle, ending, perhaps, with a whimper” (p. 178). Writing at a time of the theoretical shifts of postmodernism, Scholes anticipated changes in the curriculum that have made their way into college seminars and common core standards alike (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2010).
These standards now include “low” forms of literature, such as science fiction and graphic novels (p. 57). Scholes’s work, while forecasting changes in curriculum, did not, however, address itself to modes of instruction.

Thus, while these three histories are essential to an understanding of field, particularly in how they map historical turns and the interrelations between vying forces within the field, they provide only glimpses and shards of research on the practice of discourse in the classroom. This dissertation works within a subset of that tradition, tracking the practice of discourse in the classroom through research.

**Histories of Classroom Discourse**

Scholars who have studied classroom discourse have provided useful reviews; yet these writings remain either chapters within greater works or theoretical pieces of a larger project not yet written. Some were critical reviews of early research (Alexander, 2008b), or a contextualizing survey of research that tracks the shift from recitational contracts to conversation and the dialogical (Nystrand, 1997), or a grand trajectory of the theoretical (Burbules, 1993), thereby classifying, qualifying, defining, and considering the rules, moves, and failures of dialogue in the classroom. Though Alexander came closest to a comprehensive study, there exists no current critical view on the genesis, evolution, and current state of classroom talk. Furthermore, past works have not fully illuminated the interrelation between theory, research, and instruction as it may or may not materialize in the secondary school classroom. The aim of this work was to provide an overview of the theory, research, and teacher instruction of various forms of classroom discourse. While I do not propose that such a review is complete or comprehensive, I hope to synthesize and consolidate various threads of scholarship into one work, thereby conceptualizing a history of classroom talk and marking, however tentatively,
theoretical turns in pedagogy, shifts in empirical research, and the consequence of educational instruction in implementing new practices in the classroom.

**Aims of Research**

Other works trace the history of composition and the study of literature, though few, if any, full-length works propose a history of research that integrates the empirical, theoretical, and instructional aspects in the classroom practice of discourse. There exist histories of recitation, background on debate practices, and, more recently, much talk theoretically about dialogical classrooms. But no work has tracked the initial ongoing and current practices, continued research, both objective and interventionist, as well as the history of educational tools for the classroom instruction. My aim in my dissertation was to explore the following research topics:

- The history of classroom discourse from recitation to the dialogical;
- The history of theoretical investigation of discourse—from teacher talk to student response, from external to internal “wonder,” and from “answerability” to response;
- The movement from positivism to postmodern states of uncertainty, unknowability, and tension as it manifested in classroom practice;
- The interrelation of theory, empirical research, and teacher education;
- The rise of empirical scholarship in education grounded in the theories of Bakhtin have contributed to postmodern discourse movement;
- The dominant forms of classrooms discourse through history as well as counterforms, however concentrated, such as Socratic discussions, conversation circles, structured academic controversy, and the Harkness method.
Concerns, Cautions, and Biases

As I am writing a narrative of history, I have several concerns: first is the interpretative turn: that is, to make my mark on history by identifying some turn or effect linked to some cause. While the history of classroom discourse is situated in time and aims to avoid strictly adhering to “eras,” the work does acknowledge shifts in theory, study, and, instruction. Second, my hope is to eschew grand narratives that, while easily understood, nonetheless run the risk of reduction or distortion. For instance, it may be convenient or even feel natural to envisage how immigrants in the United States followed some smooth narrative of rags to riches or, in the very least, to the middle class, by disregarding those easily left out of the narrative: those whose schooling and opportunity based on race, culture, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation were denied access to the pathways laid for others. Thus, the danger in the desire for narrative coherence may lead to a rush to judgment for some grand historical statement. To do so may be to disregard anything that may trouble or contradict that clean narrative.

To that end and to actively link my purpose to my methodology, I first use Foucault’s critique, which argued that history often hinges on sites of power, and to unearth counter-narratives that may have been disregarded. My objective, while tracking dominant forms of teacher talk and discourse, such as lecture and recitation, is to consider counter-methodologies and practices such as seminar and dialogical discussion, which, though not as widespread, are nonetheless foundational practices with their own genealogies of discourse.

Second, I used the work Deleuze and Guattari to illuminate assemblages of research that suggest a rhizomic dynamic in the development in the academic discipline, one that disrupts linearity of time, coherence, and singularity of space. My hope is to thus reveal the geographies
of work on classroom discourse from academic institutions and other countries beyond the cluster of research in the United States and United Kingdom.

**Outline of the Dissertation**

The dissertation offers a historiography of classroom discourse that attempts to balance carefully the concerns of chronological reduction and formulating “eras” for the easy sake of a sketch of history against poststructuralist impulses which question easy connections between historical cause and effect. Chapter II first situates the work in the context of historiographies before it frames the study with Foucault’s critique to note how dominant forms of discourse and study may be linked to power structures and how subordinated practices which, though not dominant, are nonetheless significant. Additionally, this chapter introduces two key theoretical ideas by Deleuze and Guattari—the rhizome and assemblages—as a means to understand how scholarship develops and elaborates itself through non-linear pathways. Chapter III frames the history of discourse with the current state of communication and a review of key terms before introducing early forms of classroom discourse in the United States, beginning with lecture and recitation and up to the Dartmouth conference of 1968. Chapter IV traces the rise in the influence of three figures of discourse and the practices associated with their influence in the classroom: Socrates and the renewed interest in the Socratic method, discussion, and debate; Freire and his interest in discussion as a democratizing force in classroom hierarchy; and Bakhtin, whose work in dialogical practices came to influence research and practice. Chapters V and VI follow the extension of those theoretical ideas into the praxis of the world: the varied offshoots of institutions and training programs formulated around the ideas and methods of Socrates; and how Freire’s and Bakhtin’s ideas have become translated into school reform. Chapter VII returns to the operations of the theoretical and how ideas extend themselves into the word, offering a meta-
analysis of studies in education that have used Bakhtin’s work as a theoretical frame over the past 40 years to note both the intensification and globalization of educational research attached to Bakhtinian ideas and concepts. Chapter VII aims to consider three interconnected modes of research— theoretical, empirical and instructional—in classroom discourse to offer a theory of how these three modes of inquiry and reflection project toward a futurity of change, reflect the current state of discourse, and intercede to materialize theory into emerging classroom practices. The last chapter, Chapter IX, considers how the dissertation itself comes to form an assemblage of strata upon strata of rhizomic structures, including those that consider the extension of thought in scholarship; the extension of theory to praxis; and the interrelation of theory, research, and instructional literature in the extension of thought in pedagogical territories. This last chapter also comes to identify trends in the history of discourse itself over the past 40 years.
II – METHODOLOGY: TELLING IT CROOKED, SUBJUGATED PRACTICES, AND NOMADIC MAPPINGS

Framing this work is the conceptual methodology of writing a history of research, or a critical historiography. To do so is, in fact, to deliver a form of knowledge. So I would first like to contextualize how history has been presented and how the postmodern turn has shifted such schemata. This then sets the backdrop for the featured poststructuralist theorists, Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari, who most inform how I conceptualize this history of discourse.

**Historiography**

Briefly stated, traditionalists have insisted that histories are unified, coherent, linear, and a representation of truth. This notion has long since been dispensed, as with other tenets of the Enlightenment and humanist eras (Spiegel, 2009). Related notions, those touted by positivist science, were the belief in the capacity of the rational mind, the human subject as center of inquiry and knowledge, the certainty of objective truth, and the progressive nature of history. Structuralism challenged many of these positivistic assumptions, while poststructuralism dismantled the underlying structures of language and myth. My methodology employs the work of poststructuralist theorists Michel Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari and their ideas of critique, rhizomic structures, and assemblages to consider how I may construct a history of classroom discourse. But first, I would like to consider reflections on how history has been constructed and recent notions of the inescapable narrativity of historical discourse.

My project is to map a historiography of classroom discourse through scholarship since the advent of the English education classroom. Such an undertaking raises certain questions about methodology. How does one construct a history? What does one include or exclude from the discourse? How does one in the process consider dominant and subjugated histories? How
does one bracket eras? Does history adhere to chronological temporality? Or cyclical or rhythmic structures? Is history a narrative? If so, then what is the writer’s relation to the events presented?

Such questions are, in fact, common to historical discourse and the discipline of historiography, a consideration of how histories have been and continued to be written. Indeed, many writers have investigated the philosophical issues related to the writing of history (Fukuyama, 1992; Rancière, 1994; Sim, 1999; Taylor, 1984; Thompson, 1971). A brief history of historiographies and the philosophical positioning of constructing histories from the Enlightenment to the postmodern era situates the methodology of this proposal. To understand the postmodern stance in my method, one must first recognize how postmodernism questioned and supplanted traditional narrative discourses. Thus, I begin my frame of historiography with the rise of rationalism and Kantian Enlightenment.

**From Rationalism to Positivism**

As defined by Kant, the culture of Enlightenment dictated that man has emerged independent from a self-imposed prison of irresolution and cowardice of thought. “Sapare Aude! [dare to know],” he proclaimed from late 18th Century Konigsberg. Offered as a motto of the Enlightenment, he directed his audience, “Have the courage to use your own understanding.” In doing so, he thus marked the emergence and rise of Rationalism as a guiding force of his century.

As if from the guiding hand of philosophy and the dominance of the rational mind, science followed suit with the epistemology of the “fact.” Mathematicians August Compte and Emile Durkheim, often credited with the movement known as positivism, upheld the use of quantitative methodologies, empirical observation, data gathering, and systematized, objective analysis. According to positivists, facts spoke for themselves, and it was merely the
responsibility of the researcher to disclose the objective truth revealed by those facts (Sprague, 2010). The dominance of scientific methodology had its influence on disciplines, as it had on the rise of realism in the novel and, of course, history. In history, the movement emerged to turn the depiction of history into a science.

**Positivism and Its Influence on Historiographies**

In charting the history of how history was recorded, White (1980) delineated three traditional methods of the annal, chronicle, and history proper. The annalist often noted the extremity of occurrences, ordered by date, leaving gaps wherein no activity was marked, often characterized by stasis. As a result, the annal had no finality, as it merely catalogued events until the present; nor did it attempt to gather or group events into some thematic narrative. Instead, events were only grouped insofar as they have an effect on the human subject; as such, annals often depicted wars, invasions, or rough weather conditions.

In contrast, the chronicle delivered a narrative, understood within a hierarchy of importance, which was overseen by the guiding hand of a subjective chronicler, who often made his or her presence known. Critics of the chronicle found fault with this self-conscious lack of objectivity.

White (1980) set both the annal and the chronicle against the historical narrative, which involved itself in the “discourse of the real” (p. 23), or with some acknowledgment that the real was, historically speaking, “the object of desire” (p. 24). In opposition to the chronicle, the historical narrative adopted a position of revealing the narrative that was underlying history, though not completely visible to the human agent. Admitting the limitations of achieving both truth and closure in this third mode, White concluded that the historical narrative gave “the odor of the ideal” (p. 24). It is this odor of the ideal that was called into question.
Debunking the mythologies of historical narratives was the work heralded by French theorists of the 1960s and early 1970s, such as Braudel, Furet, and Le Goff, who charged that the subjectivity of historical narratives was unscientific. Known as the *Annales* group, this movement of scholarship was inspired by the restraint of the annalist (White, 1984, p. 7). Braudel (1980) notably disavowed narrative historians who circumscribed their history around “exceptional beings” imbedded in “dramatic accidents”; challenging the heroic narratives, he argued, “[W]hen they speak of history, what they are really speaking of is the intercrossing of such exceptional destinies, for obviously each hero must be matched against another. A delusive fantasy, as we all know” (p. 11). For such theorists interested in transforming history into a science, to tell the “story” of history was to falsely deliver the “mythical or ideological.” For the annals group, “[g]etting the story out of history was therefore a first step in the transformation of historical studies into a science” (White, 1987, p. 169). Still, even the aim for greater scientific method in historical studies and “objectivity” raised an additional set of problems in historiography.

**Positivism in Question**

There were, of course, some dangers to the “exactitude” of science and the pursuit of truth. Baudrillard (1998) reminded us of Borges and his often-cited short story in which cartographers make a map of the world that is the exact size of the world:

In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitiessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no
Borges wrote as a historical imposter, questioning, through hyperbole, whether the Enlightenment and the professed power of the rational mind can ever reveal an objective truth.

Despite critiques such as those of Borges, the positivist, critical epistemology held reign over ideas about history, which sought to reveal the “truth” of historical events.

Only in the wake of the modern era and its thinkers were such assurances questioned. Benjamin (2006) notably wrote on the failings of historicism, particularly those of 19th century historian Leopold von Ranke, who sought to view the past as “the way it really was” (p. 398, footnote 7). According to Jenkins (1997), the construction of “proper history” which has persisted throughout the 20th century and adhered to by professional historians adopted methods that were “realist, empiricist, objectivist, documentarist, and liberal pluralist” (p. 9). Further, in form, “proper history” adhered to “a non-rhetorical, commonsense, communication model” (p. 16). With postmodernity, however, scholars began to question and dismantle key features of “proper” history.

The Postmodern Turn and History

In her Presidential address to the American Historical Association, historian Gabrielle Spiegel (2009) identified the epistemological fallout from the linguistic turn: one that begins with Saussure and culminates in the aporia of Derrida. This aporia—or instability or “undecidability of language”—caused tremors among the disciplines (p. 7). Among historiographers, there was a decidedly poststructuralist anxiety in which each felt lost and adrift, filled with the existential angst of the post-Holocaust world. They were “deported from meaning, their resident permits withdrawn, expelled from a lost paradise . . . deported from a self that ought to have been that of another” (Fesco, as cited in Spiegel, 2009, p. 7). In effect,
poststructuralism had, through its linguistic dismantling and its skepticism of infinite “substitutions,” forged a crisis of interpretation, an “ironic . . . even despairing view of the world” from which one must emerge (Applebee, as cited in Spiegel, p. 9). So how might one use postmodernism and its skepticism to review the construction of history?

In this spirit of the postmodern approach, I would like to offer a brief rupture in this narrative, a rupture to map a similar history through the use of metaphor. The subsequent section is a triptych of three angels, providing yet another approach to the turn from modern to postmodern stances.

Cross-Disciplinary Perambulation #1: Three Angels of Modern and Postmodern History

In the Modern era, Benjamin (1969/2007) wrote notably of history; this is a history of dark times, not one which delivers coherence and chronological logic, but a massive collision of incoherence. To do this, Benjamin referenced a painting by Klee, one that he owned, titled “Angelus Novus”:

A Klee painting named “Angelus Novus” shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixed contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned towards the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees on single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress. (pp. 257-258)

For Benjamin, history is some catastrophic view to the past wreckage as we are blown blindly into the future. We attempt some failed reconstruction, but it is of no use; it is “wreckage upon wreckage.” The modern view of history is an inchoate mass of destruction, disorder, debris, and dust.
Years later, filmmaker Wim Wenders employed a similar angelic symbol to script a history of Berlin before the falling of the wall in 1989. In his film Wings of Desire, angels who walk the streets and perch atop a fallen city are witnesses to a living history. As angels, they overhear the everyday thoughts of those around them. Each has a knowledge of its vicinity, a partial, localized knowing, part and parcel of what some theologians would call omniscience, or the totality of knowing or knowledge. Presumably, by listening in on the thoughts of others and gathering subjectivity upon subjectivity, such an angel might assemble some truth of that moment in history. Yet is such a collection a history? Is a history a map of thought in effect the size of all thought? Or is some framing of events needed? Some critical stance as to what might be foundational or crucial to knowledge? Wenders’s film views current history as a vast archive of ethnographic witness.

Consider another response to history, this from Tony Kushner (2013), from his work Angels in America. In this work, a young Mormon wife has a vision, a dream of the ragged ozone torn from human agency and abuse. In her dream, she imagines its repair in an act of astounding hope and grace:

I dreamed we were there . . . the ozone, which was ragged and torn, patches of it threadbare as old cheesecloth, and that was frightening. But I saw something that only I could see because of my astonishing ability to see such things: Souls were rising, from the earth far below, souls of the dead, of people who had perished, from famine, from war, from the plague, and they floated up, like skydivers in reverse, limbs all akimbo, wheeling and spinning. And the souls of these departed joined hands, clasped ankles, and formed a web, a great net of souls, and the souls were three-atom oxygen molecules of the stuff of ozone, and the outer rim absorbed them and was repaired. Nothing’s lost forever. In this world, there’s a kind of painful progress. Longing for what we’ve left behind, and dreaming ahead. At least I think that’s so. (pp. 284-285)

Kushner’s view of modern-day atrocity, with limbs “akimbo, wheeling and spinning,” creates a repair to the damage we have done. As a metaphor for history, Kushner recalls Benjamin’s angel staring into the wreckage upon wreckage. Here, hope is not lost, even amid the context of the
AIDS crisis. There is a painful progress as one gazes upon history, and even as we long for all that is lost, we continue to dream and imagine futurity. Kushner’s American angels are not the battered Angel thrust blindly into the future, for Kushner imagines the uses of history, as dire and catastrophic as it may be. His movement forward is a sort of conscious awareness of all that has passed, not by confusion or wreckage, not with as some archive of every thought like Wenders’s, but with a critical eye that turns itself forward. As we dream ahead, this pedagogical view of the conscious awareness of past history that may be of greatest service in building the future of dialogue in the classrooms.

**Postmodern Market Corrections**

Many narrative forms in the traditional construction of history, such as time, coherence, objectivity, and universality, viewed through the postmodern correction, may offer an alternative methodology, one that is open-ended, localized, contingent, self-questioning, and multi-perspectival. Further, the postmodern stance self-consciously reclaims narrativity and narrative forms of fiction from the shackles and pretense of “objectivity.” What follows is a review of such features and how each may methodologically inform a construction of the history of classroom discourse.

**Universality.** For Benjamin (2006), historicism mistakenly viewed history as universal. Just as there are multiple languages, he wrote, so too are there multiple histories. To consider a universal history is akin to the “universal” language of *Esperanto*, a foolish endeavor. Benjamin’s view of history recognized that the messianic idea of the past, emerging from Judeo-Christian tradition, was indeed a “universal” narrative. According to Benjamin, Marx secularized such a narrative, in a turn from historicism to historical materialism, in how he transposed the messianic struggle of the proletariat in its quest for revolution and a classless society. Kuznar
(2008) exposed the overgeneralized nature of such universal narratives, such as those of the Enlightenment and Marxism, while postmodernists were skeptical of universal narratives. Such narratives were indeed part of the continued discussion of “grand narratives,” questioned by both modern and postmodern theorists (Benjamin, 1969/2007; Jameson, 1991; Lyotard, 1979).

**Questioning grand narratives.** Another notion overturned by Benjamin (1969/2007) was that of the narratability of history and a critique of what constituted the “epic” moment, which was admittedly difficult to question. Historians suffered from an “empathy with the victors,” something the historical materialist viewed with skepticism and even “horror” (p. 407). Even the Annales group questioned grand, victor narratives (Braudel, 1980). Such an argument came to climax with the work of postmodernist Lyotard (1979), who defined the “postmodern as an incredulity toward metanarratives” (p. xxiv). In fact, Lyotard advocated for the use of smaller narratives to avoid making broader claims (Best & Kellner, 1991, p. 175).

**Challenging “objectivity.”** Nineteenth century historians eagerly adopted narrative as a form of discourse to contribute to political communities rather than making a science of history (White, 1984). Such a form adopted narrative strategies and subjectivities. But with the rise of science and its method came an interest in realism in the novel and “objectivity” in history. Such a stance, however, came under fire by Barthes (1989), who countered that such discourses with claims to realism only perpetuate falsehood, since they presume to merge the signifier, or the representation of the event, with the referent itself. He wrote, “in ‘objective history,’ the real is never anything but an unformulated signified, sheltered behind the apparent omnipotence of the referent” (p. 139).

**The paradox of “objectivity” in historical narratives.** The ostensible “objectivity” in historical narratives is nothing more than a narrative conceit, akin to the omniscient third-person
narrative stance of the realist novel. Historical narratives in the realist mode are, as White (1980) noted, not so much as a form but rather as a “manner of speaking about events” (p. 7). As a result, structural theorists pinpointed the irony that such narratives feature little to no “narration.” For the purposes of clarification, structuralists further distinguished narratives from discourse. The narrative, for example, is framed by “objective” grammatical habits that unfold in the third person, using the pluperfect and preterite tenses. As White argued (1980) citing Genette, narrative hangs on the “It,” “was,” and “were.” By contrast, discourse, self-consciously aware of its subjectivity, depends on the “I” and “here” and “now.” As if to further confuse the two, structuralists illuminated the narrativization of discourse, wherein the narrator remains grammatically and ideologically suppressed, as the events appear to speak for themselves (White, 1980). In discourse, events do not speak—they are spoken. Poststructuralists aimed to reclaim the subjectivity of historical narration, arguing that history is contingent, local, and a collection of subjective observations, rather than proffer some invisible hand of “truth” (Habermas, 1984).

**Periodization.** As one establishes some distinction between the modern and postmodern, or between the Enlightenment and other eras, postmodernists began to question the “periodization” of eras. Are such eras a construction by the cultural critic or historian? Are they discreet? For Jameson (1983), eras and periods of thought are not “a radical break,” but rather “the restructuration of a certain number of elements already given: features that in an earlier period or system were subordinate now become dominant and features that had been dominant again become secondary” (p. 123). Thus, as one charts out history within prescribed eras of structuralism and poststructuralism, I am mindful that elements of each may indeed appear in the historical threads of the other.
**How time necessitates emplotment.** By claiming the methods of narrativity, some theorists debate whether the hand of the historiographer imposes or reveals narrative forms. White (1984) argued that hermeneutic philosophers envisaged narrative as a “manifestation in discourse” of a “structure of time” (pp. 7-8). Therefore, to adopt a narrative approach to history is not to impart an external structure, but rather to release the structure that underlies life itself. White situated Ricoeur as a key influential figure in arguing for the truth in narrativity. For Ricoeur, the “truth of narrative is based on a notion of the narrativistic nature of time itself” (White, 1987b, p. 171). Thus, the discourse of history and narrative are one and the same. Historiographical emplotment is “a poetic activity, but it belongs to the (Kantian) ‘productive imagination’ rather than to the ‘reproductive’ or merely ‘associative’ imagination” of a fiction writer (p. 173).

**A turn against postmodern skepticism and the return of poetic forms.** In his discussion of grand narratives, Lyotard (1979) was insistent on his skepticism of narrative tropes. Calling tropes into question, he argued how such narratives cloud the truth with fictional methods: “The narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative elements—narrative, but also denotative, prescriptive, descriptive, and so on” (p. xxiv). Rancière (2017), however, countered this argument against narrative, as he emphasized that fiction itself was not divorced from the real world, but rather inspired by it.

Rancière’s argument employed Aristotle to challenge Plato’s notion that poetics and the poetic form are merely the circulation of illusions. He argued narrative tropes, so consistent in stories, were reflections of patterns underlying the world; as envisioned by Aristotle, they were the deliberate elaboration of “intelligible structures.” With fiction as a sort of philosophical
proof, Rancière summarized a key distinction for Aristotle, that is, “the superiority of poetry, which confers a casual logic on the arrangement of events, over history, condemned to presenting events according to their empirical disorder” (p. 32). He continued that with the Romanic age and the aesthetic revolution, language was immersed in a coded language system, much like that of historical and social worlds. As such, “testimony and fiction” resided under the same “regime of meaning.” In summary, the poetic “story or history links the realism that shows us the poetic traces inscribed directly in reality with the artificialism that assembles complex machines of understanding” (p. 34). Such reclaiming of poetic form and truth in historical narrative begs the question: Can one compose a history without revealing the embedded narrative and poetic formulations within?

**Linearity challenged.** Ermarth (1992) suggested that linear ideas about history have been supplanted by rhythmic ones. Employing various crises of the postmodern—that of the subject, object, and sign—to contextualize her work, she offered a rhythmic temporality to supplant the linear one codified by the modern: “In post-modern narratives, time is repeatedly disrupted. So why then does history and historical accounts adhere to linearity?” (p. 213).

Ermarth called for a “discursive reformation, not to deny that ‘before’ precedes ‘after,’ but to open an expansion of “starting points” (p. 213) and “routes” (p. 214). The challenge to prior hegemonic structures revealed their “contingency” and “fragility.” According to Ermarth, Rhythmic time centered on questions of “parataxis on the move,” where the lack of coordination and subordination were representative of an epistemological stance. In this way, history tried to pull away from forced connections of causality or hierarchies. In its place, for Ermarth, was the rhythmic sequence which “forks and reforms, exfoliating, proliferating details and thematic threads” (p. 212).
Counteracting the crisis in representation. In fact, the debate that anything bears any casual relation to any other event was one of the hallmarks of poststructuralism (Hall, 1985). After the linguistic turn, debates, under the influence of postmodern theorists such as Derrida, had an exertive power over ideas of “necessary correspondence”; that is, they questioned how one could make the presumption that some practice, state, or event may correspond to some prior ideology or practice. Discourse theory, such as that explored by Foucault, took an even more skeptical stance with the phrase “necessarily no correspondence,” suggesting, according to Hall (1985), that “nothing really connects with anything else” (p. 94).

Against this dissolution of causality, Hall argued that discourses and events often overlap, adding, “the analysis of one set of discourse formations constantly reveals the overlay or the sliding of one set of discourses over another” (p. 94). In response to such disconnection, he proposed a third formation, that of his linguistic reversal “no necessary correspondence.” This reformulation suggested that while there is no guarantee of correspondence, that is not to say one may not exist. This counter-balance to the crisis of representation is integral to a project that attempts to balance the quick conclusions of causality against a network of possible sites of influences that carry practices and academic discourses forward.

Coherence questioned. As Taylor (1984) noted, the narrative structure of Western history took its cue from Christian narrative. Taylor interrelated Christian typology and history, since “the historian and believer insists that history is a coherent process whose rationale is comprehensible” (p. 68). Yet when religion is pulled from the narrative, can history wrest itself from such a narrative arc? Hegel and Marx secularized the historical narrative, yet it seems, according to Fukuyama (1992), to have a similar structure of coherence. Fukuyama argued that Hegel and Marx both viewed history as a closed system, a “single, evolutionary process” (p. xii)
that would end in a societal structure that would fulfill man’s core, be it Hegel’s liberal state or Marx’s communist state.

Kellner (1989) envisioned that historians might tell the story crooked, a reaction to the positivist notion of “getting the story straight.” Since the straightness of any story was a historical convention, his crooked investigation revealed the complexities and constructions that undergird histories, looking at primary and secondary sources. Straightness and coherence then are more about aesthetic, narrative conventions than they are about “objective” truth. As Kellner acknowledged, crooked histories had become more prevalent at the time of the publication of his work. Where to begin? Where to end? To what extent does one use metaphor or figurative language? Such questions began to challenge the method and manner in which histories were told.

A sense of no end. Much like the Judeo-Christian “end” in theological fulfillment, Fukuyama (1992) viewed history as ending in its own end—not the end of life itself, but rather the end of an institutional progression since the state of the state would function statically. Yet Fukuyama’s position was overturned by the writing of Sim (1999), who wrote of the “end of endist” thinking, a stance shared by postmodernist Baudrillard.

Baudrillard (1992) claimed that history is not inherently purposeful. History need not go anywhere; in fact, history continues without end. Against this frame, he offered the rituals of societies who frame their worlds, not with “ends,” but rather with ceremonious recreations of their origins. To such societies, he wrote that the Christian “model of linearity must have seemed entirely fictitious, wholly absurd and abstract to cultures which had no sense of a deferred day of reckoning, a successive concatenation of events and a final goal” (p. 7). By dismantling such
linearity as Baudrillard did, a historian may perform what Jenkins (1997) referred to as “an end to endism” (p. 34).

**Reviewing Postmodern Historiography**

Thus, a postmodern view of historiography aims to fulfill the following:

- to move toward a local, rather than grand universal truths;
- to balance the history of victors against those who are not typically represented;
- to eschew standard narratives that distort, rather than illuminate, a “truth”;
- to invite multiple, sometimes conflicting threads of history:
- to seek neither tidy coherence or completion; in short, to tell it crooked;
- to subvert the progressive articulation of history through time;
- to engage with alternative concepts of time, such as rhythmic time;
- to employ narrative, poetic forms, inviting subjective forms to illuminate, as art does, the greater “truths” of history.

**Narrative Cautions**

While historiographers may adopt narrative strategies in the post-postmodern era without impunity, White (1984) reminded those engaged in the discipline that histories emerge from particular political-social orders. In fact, he pinpointed that the state often sets the subject matter of discourse for the conception of history, thereby delimiting and producing a history that serves the state’s purposes. Foucault (2013) went further to state that the institution will develop a mechanism to sustain its own power structure, be it an institution of education, psychiatry, or prison. So while my aim was to construct a history of scholarship using Rancière (1994) and his triadic methodology of scientific, narrative, and political methods, I wish to emphasize that I am
cognizant of and sensitive to prior narratives that have been glorified and imposed on educational history.

For instance, consider the institution of education in the United States: the construction of educational history, one may opine, has in some ways served the political-social order. Educational histories adopt narratives that serve some political end, and I offer three examples as cautionary reminders: first, the failing inner-city school narrative, for instance, serves some end to reinforce embedded ideas of racial difference, even perpetuating performance divides to maintain hegemony (Bowles & Gintis, 2011); second, savior or hero narratives, common narratives in films about education, can be dangerously adopted by researchers only serve to perpetuate a colonial frame that renders students as undisciplined “savages” and teachers as missionary saviors (Emden, 2016); and last, narratives may falsely characterize students as untamable beings who cannot be rescued by even by well-meaning teachers, as with a 1-year account by Boland (2016) in a “tough” urban school in New York City. In all, such stories emerge as fast narratives—popular, digestible, comforting, and extreme—that maintain, for some scholars, dangerous misconceptions and presumptions about education. Such narratives build an assemblage of mischaracterization that indeed keep failing schools failing, and outsider students further on the outside.

Poststructural Orientations Framing Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari

The epistemological leaning of this critique emerges from both cultural studies and postcolonial studies under the umbrella of poststructuralism. If structuralism debunked high culture to examine the popular image and text, then cultural studies sought to unearth all that has been effaced, erased, or silenced. In conceiving a historiography of dialogue, a “critique” as per Foucault, this work aimed to pull from theorists who have pushed against dominant narratives of
history and fiction to give voice to the voiceless. In reconsidering the representation of women in history, for instance, Scott (1983) contended that female agency has less to do with highlighting prominent women in history than it does through “the exposure of the often silent and hidden operations of gender which are nonetheless are present and defining forces of politics and life” (p. 156). Likewise, Spivak (1990), responding to the publication of Hirsch’s *Cultural Literacy* which codified a canon of Old Masters in literature, argued to both expand the canon and dethrone canonical methods. She devoted her writing to, as she named it, the “rest of the world” (p. 790). To this end, she catalogued the “others” and considered the “reverse side” of narratives (p. 787). In the end, Spivak aimed to balance American nationalism with globalism. We, the people, she wrote, must not merely decolonize the world through the study of the world, but do something more extensive, asking more pressing questions such as “how can models of reasoning be taken as culture free?” (p. 794). In mapping a historiography of classroom discourse, this work aimed at redressing the imbalance of past narratives, which have often focused on classrooms in the United States and the United Kingdom. Thus, one objective is to globalize the history, trying to tease out more international threads of influence. For example, this critical historiography casts its eye toward international sites of scholarship and study, such as international conferences and anthologies that cull the work of scholars outside the United States and Britain, particularly after 2000. The methodological stance for the study was decidedly postmodern and the two key-figure theorists, Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari. I used Foucault to identify a tactical approach to balancing dominant and subordinated narratives; and I used Deleuze and Guattari to illuminate the dynamic of how one may map history.
Foucault, Power, and Eventualization

Foucault (2007) identified the “historical hold” of 19th and 20th century history as characterized by three key features: positivist science; the development of the State, bolstered by some rational account of history; and last, the “stitching together” of the first two—that is, that scientific positivism will come to play an essential role in maintaining the power and production of the state (pp. 50-51). Indeed, Foucault tethered the project of the Enlightenment and the rise of the rational mind to the development of “excesses of power” and “governmentalization” that reason itself had justified. (p. 51). The critique against positivism, objectivism, and rationalization, he pinpointed, had been mounted by everyone from Hegel to the Frankfurt School to Husserl, who identified the crisis in 1936 as concerning “the relation between knowledge and technique: from episteme to techne” (p. 52). For Foucault, critique illuminated the mechanisms of such power in what he awkwardly deemed, by his own admission, eventualization (evenementialization): he wrote that what he was attempting to unearth was

the links . . . the connections . . . identified between mechanisms of coercion and elements of knowledge . . . the interplay of relay and support developed between them . . . such that a procedure of coercion acquires the very form and justification of a rational, calculated, technically efficient element. (p. 59)

In education, for example, it may be that the early history of research in the classroom, guided by the positivist hand of science, yielded results that only maintain, rather than question, the methodologies of the classroom. To this point, the quantitative methodology of enumerating questions and responses over the course of any given class period in its techne produced a form of knowledge that, despite its very critique, only reinforced positivist methodology. Phrased another way, the facts gathered to denounce classrooms, predicated on the battery of questioning, paradoxically only reinforced the positivistic method of right and wrong answers. The adherence
to such a methodology maintains Foucault’s *puissance*, or power structure that will, in turn, reinforce such methods to maintain its own hold.

Foucault’s project shifted the mode of inquiry from knowledge and legitimization to power and eventualization. How did we get here? And what are the power structures that have been supported by various methods and modes of inquiry? Thus, the writing of a history of education must involve, as Foucault urged, an archeology, strategy, and genealogy operating on multiple, simultaneous planes that defy reductive closures. For my project, I wish to consider three planes of research—theoretical, empirical, and instructional—and the various powers that eventualization has supported.

**Foucault and Critique**

Foucault’s (2013) notion of critique demands that the scholar review both dominant and subjugated forms of knowledge construction:

Subjugated knowledges are, then, blocks of historical knowledges that were present in the functional and systematic ensembles, but which were masked, and the critique was able to reveal their existence by using, obviously enough, the tools of scholarship. Second, . . . I am also referring to a whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual knowledges, as insufficiently elaborated knowledges: naive knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity. (p. 7)

Thus, to follow the history of discourse is not merely to examine the pedagogical hegemony at any given moment or in any given country, but to consider subjugated or emerging practices as well. Though recitation may have been the dominant form for years in the United States, for example, there were simultaneous, ongoing practices in schools, both public and private, that can be enfolded into the historiography of discourse.

**Subordinated practices in discourse studies.** Not all such subordinated practices have been studied formally, as with the Harkness method, dialogical practices, or even debate
practices in prison communities, as with the 2015 Bard Prison Initiative Team that won against the team of Harvard undergraduates. Similarly, debate clubs and book clubs, outside the classroom but under the purview of the school system, may also be considered within the constitution of school discourses. Moreover, if such adjuncts and offshoots of the classroom both inform and are shaped by classroom discourse, then might one also consider the “low practices” and literacies of online discussion groups, such as fanzines and social networks in which political discussions are ongoing? Such forms, spun out of new technologies, liberate discourse from the walls of the classroom.

To Foucault’s work, which reframes the parameters of exploration, I add the postmodern work of Deleuze and Guattari—for if Foucault asked scholars to review the courses of power and eventualization, Deleuze and Guattari revealed various modes of how such systems of knowledge and practice evolve, both in economics, biology, and, of course, in literature, sociology, and history.

**Deleuze and Guattari, Assemblages and Rhizomes**

Reviving the work of key leaders of American pragmatism, widely considered to be outdated, Rorty (1982) maintained that James and Dewey were “not only waiting at the end of the dialectical road which analytic philosophy traveled, but are waiting at the end of the road which, for example, Foucault and Deleuze are currently travelling” (p. xviii). Rory’s insight into how early inroads in psychology and education find materialization years later in postmodern thought only supports how some modes of thinking, out of vogue for decades, can reinstate themselves years later as an epistemological force in critical thought. Such is the case, as noted by Rorty, in the dialectics of the work of Deleuze and Guattari.
Two key formulations by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) are assemblages and the rhizome. My intention was to apply these ideas to scholarship and its history. In doing so, I hope to reconceptualize the traditional notions to formulations that embrace an understanding of multiplicities.

**Traditional formulations and radical reformations of the book.** Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote that the dominant form of the book, including books of scholarship and critical theory, is the “root-book,” classical, binary, and guided by the “law of reflection.” The book’s object is life itself, and its aim is to represent that life, that object, and that history. The danger for Deleuze and Guattari is that books may be tied to the tracing, the “tracing of the previous book by the same author, a tracing of other books however different they may be, an endless tracing of established concepts and words, a tracing of the world present, past, and future” (p. 24). Such root-based thinking, replicated again and again, is a “system of thought [that] has never reached an understanding of multiplicity” (p. 5).

Against this traditional formation, they offered another view of the book, one that enfolds patterns of multiplicities into its project. They described such work as a combination of stable articulations and ever-morphing sites of interest, which is crucial to understand writing a history of discourse, or any history to be sure. Deleuze and Guattari argued, “in a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation of segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification” (p. 1). For Deleuze and Guattari, the book, in so far as it “how it is made,” is an “assemblage,” and this assemblage is essential to how we understand its very nature. Thus, writing about “historical writings” and research, which are themselves multiplicities, is an “assemblage,” which has no referent “object” or signifier other than other assemblages. By this logic, works on history reference other works on history, rather
than “history” itself, if there is such a thing. Thus, one proposition is as follows: This history of discourse is in many ways a meta-history of data, an assemblage of other assemblages. This understanding of assemblages is key to other concepts, such as the rhizome. First, it is valuable to address their delineation of the assemblages and its potential bearing for how one may view and map educational scholarship.

**Assemblages as both vertical and horizontal axially.** Deleuze and Guattari conceived of assemblages, or *agencement*, as contingent on both horizontal and vertical axial planes. As such, assemblages are characterized both by territorialization and deterritorialization. The horizontal is comprised of the linguistic interconnection between content and expression. Speaking of language in much the same manner of Bakhtin (1986), who conceived of utterances forever in a chain of past utterances, Deleuze and Guattari noted that “all discourse is indirect” as there are “all manner of voices in a voice” (p. 77). In its conception, language is “a map, not a tracing” (p. 77). Likewise, a map of history may operate with a particular dimension of multiplicity, with “strata, molecular chains, lines of flight or rupture, [and] circles of convergence” (p. 22). Deleuze and Guattari delineated such flights and convergences in their mapping of horizontal and vertical axis in their tetravalent model, one with bonds casting out in multiple directions at once.

**Applications of the horizontal axial assemblages in education.** Taking the idea of axial assemblages, one may examine education history as assemblages in very much the same way one might view, as per Deleuze and Guattari’s example, the feudal assemblage in the Crusades:
We would have to consider the intermingling of bodies defining feudalism: the body of the earth and the social body; the body of the overlord, vassal, and serf; the body of the knight and the horse and their own relations to the stirrup; the weapons and tools assuring a symbiosis of bodies—a whole machinic assemblage. We would also have to consider statements, expressions, the juridical regime of heraldry, all the incorporeal transformations, in particularly, oaths and their variables... the collective assemblage of enunciation. On the other axis, we would have to consider the feudal territorialities and reterritorializations, and at the same time the line of deterritorialization that carries away both the knight and his mount, statements and acts. (p. 89)

Can one apply this example about the Crusades to education? To do so, one might consider the interrelations and intersections of the “body” of administration and the student population; the “body” of the head or principal, administration, teachers, and students; the “body” of the teacher, student, and new technologies such as the computer to their practice; and the entirety of tools available or not available for students and teachers in the classroom—from pens and pencils, to movable desks, to projectors, to computers and phones with internet access. Further, to this, one might add “the collective assemblages of enunciation,” such as educational missions, pedagogies, legal or scholastic restrictions, guidelines, and rules. While the horizontal axis involves how such territories are mapped and remapped, a deterritorialization, or vertical axial relation, carries such practices away from their initial mapping, much like the mounted knight.

**Assemblages of the vertical axis in education.** Deleuze and Guattari (1987) used an atomic metaphor of the tetravalence, an atomic structure that allows greater complexity and shapes as it forms and bonds in multiple ways. Scholarship then can be seen as covalent in its growth and expansion. From one scholar may come the work of others, as a scholar is an “influencer” not merely in the vertical chain as an intellectual mentor to those rising in the field, but also in a horizontal discourse of mutual exchange among colleagues.

Let me here provide an example of the rhizomic dynamic in scholarly publication. A scholar may unite with and share space in an anthology that both focalizes as it widens the circle
of the scholastic map. Within an anthology, for example, on classroom discussion, one might group work in a section based on the Bakhtinian idea of *internally persuasive discourse* or IPD. Though IPD formulates some coherence, the juxtaposition of scholarship with the section may reveal the divergent ways scholars may use such theory. For instance, some may consider moments of conflict within internal dialogues; others may study how authoritarian discourse comes to affect each student; still others may examine cultural influences; while still others may examine IPD and early childhood development. Thus, while the section focalizes around a similar idea, each scholar’s work operates rhizomically, pulling outward into directions of divergent interests, like offshoots reaching in varied directions of exploration.

**Assemblages and the rhizome.** By disrupting the binary and static, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explored a model of multiplicities that is based on patterns of nature. “Follow the plants” (p. 1), they wrote. It is this horticultural model that provides some insight into how to disrupt the binary root-to-branch hierarchical model of historical action. The rhizomic structure is found at work in the natural world, as with bulbs and tubers like the ginger root, and in the animal world, exampled in the pathways made by burrowing animals or rats as they “swarm over each other”; in addition to the biological and environmental, rhizomes are structures realized in political, social, and economic realms. It is this presence of rhizomes in social worlds on which I would like to elaborate further.

**Rhizomic structures in the world.** Deleuze and Guattari (1987) understood American literary history and aimed to decenter the tree-like paradigm of roots and branches that serve analogically to visualize cause and effects. To problematize this paradigm, they argued that while America is not “immune from domination by trees or the search for roots,” rhizomic structures, nonetheless, are the “route” through which “everything important that has happened
or is happening . . . the beatniks, the underground, bands and gangs, successive lateral offshoots in immediate connections with an outside” (p. 19).

One can easily see the rhizome at work in social media sites, for example, such as the gathering of new friends on Facebook, or the errant pathways of Pinterest or Tumblr. While some sites rely on algorithms to establish patterns, modes of canaling through the terrain, unique to each user, can move in unexpected, singular directions. They loop and interconnect to each other, as electronic burrows that spiral outward only to find reconnection later in space and time.

Such media interconnections, as I have outlined, are a more popular example of recent various search engines and citation mapping, which provide a complex map of the intersectionality of thought across disciplines. This phenomenon of rhizomic structures will certainly inform the meta-research on the influence of Bakhtin’s ideas on educational research in Chapter VII.

**Rhizomic structures in scholarship.** Strands of research may indeed emerge from a corona-like center of one scholar’s work, as she or he oversees the shared interests of emerging scholars. Of course, there are many potential mappings of scholarship, many of which expand outward to intersect with others, which themselves are ever expanding. Take, for instance, the collision of dialogical and Socratic discussions. This dissertation traces various threads of practice that, at first, distinguish these two methods: dialogical practices, for instance, focused on the generation of wonder and inquiry, whereas Socratic discussion is centered on the pursuit of some known truth. Later, Socratic discussion became predicated on questions driving toward epiphany. Later still, Socratic questioning was transformed into a more dialogical practice with Philosophy for Children. Thus, as terms and practices collide and overlap with each other and
practices become revised, edited, redefined, each circle’s center of definition shifts. Terms and practices are not static, but rather shift in their conception through human agency.

**Rhizomic structures at conferences.** Conferences bring academic sub-communities together in collective presentation and, at times, critique. Bakhtinian studies have indeed been under the initial bifurcation of philology and critical theory/literary studies. As educational scholars began to use Bakhtin’s ideas as their theoretical frame, the resulting grouping was both adjacent to and, at times, in conflict with other groups. While there was overlap, there was also tension. Still, the use of Bakhtin to frame discussion in the classroom and humanities education on the whole has increased dramatically since 2000. Conferences thus became a seeding site of study that later yielded collections of research, which themselves were offshoots of those initial gatherings and presentations. The resulting works often revealed the traces of rhizomic pathways, in their introductions and their citations, of the directional influence from such conference work.

**Methodological Summary**

My intention in this methodological section was, first, to establish the backdrop of postmodern historiographies and how the postmodern turn effectively reframed how some have come to construct histories. Second, I wish to place in the foreground two poststructural thinkers and their ideas, linking each to how I intend to use each in my historiography of classroom discourse. If Deleuze and Guattari formulated a theory for the growing map of the terrain of scholarship on discourse, Foucault first exposed a dynamic of dominant and subjugated discourses that propels or inhibits such expansion, as institutions of power sustain themselves through the control of thought. The aim, then, was to map varied sites in the history of classroom discussion, tracking both macro and micro movements in theory, practice, and research. The
hope is not to give way to a presiding practice of discourse, but to reveal that the practice itself is inherently tied to power structures that seek to sustain themselves.

In the end, Deleuze and Guattari lamented that histories themselves are often written from a fixed point of view. They claimed that what remains absent is some anti-history or nomadology. Can such an anti-history assemble itself in heterogeneity and multiplicity, “rather than a world to reproduce” (p. 24) as with a tracing? They have asked for a nomadic approach to the assembly of such works, and it is with this nomadic spirit that I have designed my methodology for my historiography.

**Design and Methodology of Literature Review**

In tracing the trajectory of orality in the classroom, the methodology of this research was to gather the disparate strands of orality: the lecture, recitation and the IRE, Socratic discussion and seminars, debate and dialogue, dialectics, and dialogical practices in the classroom today. The aim was thereby to present a history of shifts and turns, starts and stops, theory lurching forward and practice lagging behind. The method of gathering information began by identifying key scholars who wrote about orality in the classroom—namely Alexander, Applebee, Burbules, Nystrand, and Matusov—and subsequently examining their research citations. I began with Matusov, whose aggregated bibliography of resources on dialogue served as an entry point. I then consolidated the citations from key works by the remaining scholars to construct a citational lineage, thereby tracing each scholar to a scholarly grounding as one would follow along the upmost branch of a tree to its trunk. Alexander, Burbules, and Nystrand delivered useful research on the history of recitation and surveyed empirical data. By moving through each researcher to his referenced works, and reading each of those studies, I developed a trajectory of the history of orality in the classroom and the positionality of the teacher in relation to it.
Epochal Divisions in Historiography

Though such temporal divisions are artificial, I divided the journal research into eras of study, starting with the first 70 years of the previous century until the Dartmouth conference of 1966 and its aftermath. I then considered each decade thereafter, noting key moments in publication history, such as Cazden in 1988. Of note within this timeline is the recognition that both theory and research increased dramatically at the turn of the 21st century.

Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) mapped out three periods in the history of thought: traditional, modern, and postmodern. Each era has had specific effects on thinking, thought, literacy, and the teaching of literature. Yet eras of thought, like historical movements, can be deceptive, as it is convenient to view such periods as distinct, each emerging from the last as if by turn of day. Virginia Woolf (1950) once famously stated that literary Modernism was born “on or about December of 1910” (p. 4). Yet Woolf, with great care and suggestion, offered not a claim to define an era, but a concession that teetered between the expanse of “on” and “about.” Just how much latitude does “about” afford? Some theorists (Best & Kellner, 1991) have argued that the Modern movement began after feudalism and the “Middle Ages,” yet art historian and literary critics may pinpoint the birth of modernism with, for example, the publication of Dubliners in June of 1914 or with Picasso’s Les Demoiselles D’Avignon in June of 1907. Though dates and works and events have been seismic, establishing some long-agreed-upon “shift” or “turn,” such turns may be called into question as one considers histories. In fact, Best and Kellner (1991) considered postmodern history as a form of archeology, distinct from that of Foucault’s, in that one may search for “sediments and layers” as they have “accumulated historically” (p. 5). Thus, the trace of some thinking today may have some subterranean source
decades or eras prior. I would like to offer a literary image to this conception—one that helps to conceptualize how one may disrupt simple linear structures of history.

**Cross-Disciplinary Perambulation #2: Underground Currents, Fountains Swift, and Vaulting Fragments**

In thinking about the historical turns and movements and countermovements, I recall a poem commonly taught in high school, both historically and currently: Samuel Coleridge’s “Kubla Kahn.” This indelible poem, this auditory jewel, is set in Xanadu, where that “sacred river” Alph runs through caverns. Underground currents, which could point to the subconscious, now in my mind help me to visualize the undercurrents of less dominant strains of history riding under the surface of a dominant hegemony and authoritative discourse that have determined history. Remember that sacred river Alph? Lines later, the river erupts through the earth in a geyser:

> And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,<br>As if the earth in fast thick pants were breathing,<br>A mighty fountain was momentarily forced:<br>Amid whose swift and half intermittent burst<br>Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail, (l. 17-21)

In fact, it is this image of the subterranean, ever-present underground which, with some great force, erupts into visibility, that seems an apt analogue to the emergence of new theories. Critical race theory, feminist studies, and queer theory paved the way for postcolonial studies and the conceptual rebalancing of how we view the world. As a result, thinkers who fell out of vogue, like Freire, once famously never taught in the Harvard English Education department, are now extensively cited as a touchstone of theory in educational discourse. Theorists who touted plurality and multi-voicedness, like Bakhtin, have gathered greater prominence in both literary and educational theory. Louise Rosenblatt, once derided and unrecognized as the New Critics seized control of interpretative discourses in colleges, returned to republish her foundational
work *Literature as Exploration* in its 4th and 5th editions in, respectively, 1983 and 1995, as teacher researchers employed her theories of transactional readership as a base for their own research (Rosenblatt, 1938/1983/1995). Or consider Jayne Adams, whose work with immigrants and second language learners in the United States in the 1920s remained submerged under the dominant forces of quantitative educational standards. Such cavernous sacred streams of Adams, Bakhtin, Freire, and Rosenblatt in history have found eruptions in thought later in educational history, defying the notion that a historical era is discreet.

Indeed, such historical eras, as Foucault (as cited in Best & Kellner, 1991), wrote, are not radical shifts, but include “overlapping, interaction, and echoes” of others (p. 44). Such interactions between eras, or as I would suggest movements—that is, as one movement continues, there well may be a less recognized countermovement riding underneath the surface. Thus, one aim of this critique is to mark possible turns and eras, while unearthing countermovements and forces that may only come to eruptive and influential force later in history.

**Geographical Considerations of Branches of Theory and Research**

Although time serves as an organizing structure, place serves also to group scholars, sites, and trends within the topic of talk. Therefore, while my frame of examining research was at first chronological, I began to note how theorists, researchers, and publications were geographically segregated or integrated. For instance, scholarship in the United States centered on the work of several key figures, such as Cazden, Paley, Tannen, Burbules, Nystrand, Applebee, Adler, Matusov, and Fecho, each whom was tied to various universities in the country. Simultaneously in the United Kingdom, another group of scholars—Britton, Mercer, Alexander, Biesta, Wells, and Wegerif—continued their work in both theory and empirical studies. A third branch of study emerged in the 1980s in Russia and the Ukraine, with Bibler founding the School of Dialogical
Culture (SDC). Thus, while this review moves chronologically through a threaded discussion of various oralities, it considers these three countries as sites of primary interest in the exploration of the field.

With this tripartite focus of study, I investigated their convergence and moments of contact, as well as growing pockets of study that lay outside of these three sites, such as Northern Europe, Australasia, and the Middle and Far East. Searching “Bakhtin” in the abstract field of the Education Full Text database (EBSCO) and Taylor & Francis Online yielded studies grounded in dialogical pedagogy from the past 20 years, many of which were international and some of which were cross-disciplinary in mathematics and science. This preliminary database of approximately 200 journal entries provided a snapshot of empirical work led by theorists and researchers. These results fill out current research trends, though only a fraction is included in this review. A more complete analysis, specifically of Bakhtin’s theoretical influence on recent international studies on classroom dialogue, is forthcoming.

The methodology also considered the work of three theorists, namely Socrates, Freire, and Bakhtin, who undergird many of the practices, thereby forming a theoretical triumvirate of influence. In tracking the development of orality in the classroom, I concentrated on Bakhtin and his influence on educational research. To that end, I developed a list of educational journals that featured research using variations of Bakhtin’s ideas. Such research yielded additional results, particularly regarding international research in recent years.

In summary, my method traced an intellectual lineage in history from the references of key writers (Alexander, Matusov, and Nystrand) who gathered early studies on the classroom. On this basis, I added the work of scholars in the United States, the United Kingdom, the Ukraine, and Russia, and subsequently included those whose work was inspired by Socrates and
the writings of Bakhtin. A preliminary database of scholars in education, using Bakhtin in the theoretical framing, yielded over 650 journal articles from over two dozen educational peer-reviewed journals. From them, I selected those that are most relevant to the English language classroom. In creating a history of research, I worked with major works by key scholars whose work sits upon the shelves of my library. To add to that stack of research, I collected journal research on lecture, teacher talk, and discussion, which I filed at first by “eras”: From the inception of English education to the Dartmouth conference and then by decades (1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010s) thereafter. These binders, binders of talk, sat upon my shelves, atop my writing desk, and sometimes sprawled out on the floor. In this way, I constructed a sub-library that was material—in books and assemblies of articles on the shelves about me. This materialistic organization structure stood in contrast to my broader research work on Bakhtinian research, which was housed in Endnote, formulating an electronic archives of educational work influenced by this scholar.

**An End to Methodology Without End**

Admittedly, I am a product of my educational history, though trained in the traditional methodology of New Criticism in high school and college. My seminars in college adopted the postmodern stances of questioning, which have formulated my ontological and epistemological stance with this work. So too have the scholars in English Education at Teachers College questioned various dominant narratives. Therefore, while I write a historiography of classroom discourse, I become reflexive that I construct a narrative interpretation of history, as I am balancing various forces that aim toward hegemony. Thus, do I consider research in public schools? International sites? Do I consider discourse outside of the English classroom in art, music, and history? How do I enfold the work of elite private school educators in their training
and practice of discourse? How do I weigh theory against research studies, and observational studies against interventionist studies? In the end, my hope is that this historiography is a history-in-the-making, much like Miller’s (2000) view of English as English-in-the-making. This idea of “in-the-making” or under construction is a deliberately postmodern and even existential approach to educational theory. With such fluidity comes “in-the-making.” In his autobiography, Miller wrote that the self remains “unfinished”; in education, how does the teacher construct meaning? Do we rely on one singular, unified telling or do we seek alternative narratives as “a means to grapple with multiple versions of an English teacher, teacher educator, researcher, curriculum theorist, [and] writer” (p. 39)? Might the same be true of constructing a history? For history itself is a slippery beast. Even as it is mapped and tagged, history itself outruns its own tracks. Doubtless, other scholars may have much to say and add to the construction of the history even as it is set down. Therefore, this work is merely one utterance in a chain of utterances. It is set into the world as an action of thought, to be examined, discussed, countered, re-examined, and revised. Like the self, it is a being becoming. It is a history in-the-making.

Summary

Thus, this history of classroom discourse in the end takes as its stance a postmodern approach in so far as it questions varied techne, or the apparatus that produce knowledge. My philosophical and theoretical frame eschews a positivist stance; instead this work takes its cue from both Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari to establish a critique as well as a mapping of history. My aim in reviewing the research in the field was the following:

- to identify both the method and the power that such methods serve in educational research;
• to identify shifts in methodology in classroom analysis that may affect how one may map educational history;

• to locate multiple planes and plateaus, both dominant and nondominant, to consider the assemblage of educational history of discourse in the classroom;

• to broaden the conversation to include international sites of research and inquiry; and

• to push outward, however slight, to the practices in the most elite and most vulnerable in classroom research about discourse—from Harkness to prison debate.
III - THE WHY, WHAT, WHO, AND THEN OF CLASSROOM TALK

Peripatetic—from the Greek “to walk” and “wander.” Though the Peripatetic school is notably ascribed to Aristotle, one might imagine the wanderings of another sage 2,500 years ago beneath an azure sky, before a snow-capped mountain, and under the shade of olive trees in the agora. There idly walked a pug-nosed elder and a group of young Athenian men dialoguing not so idly about justice, good, and beauty. Such an image, of ambling limbs and the circulatory wonder of philosophy, has come to be inextricably linked to the idea of the Socratic dialogue. Might we think today of a professor inviting a student to walk and talk with her across the grassy quad of a university? “Walk with me,” she says, gesturing to her pupil to follow: an invitation for dialogue, as if to say outright, “Talk with me.” Although such idealized imagery of education persists, some scholars have raised the issue of whether people have indeed been talking to learn.

Lofty academic talk about talk, however, oftentimes does not result in its implementation in the classroom. Tracing the development of talk in its various patterns in English education—from lecture to recitation through discussion, debate, and the current interest in the dialogical classroom—can help scholars understand not only how empirical studies and applications may have lagged behind the reach of theory, but also how each is needed as a check and balance for the heuristic goals of the classroom and its students. Furthermore, such an exploration of research in theoretical, empirical, and instructional work offers a number of preliminary threads of discovery within theory, research, and practice, including the following:

- In theory: (a) classroom practice significantly lags behind the theoretical imagining of the dialogical; and (b) there is an increasing use of Bakhtin in pedagogical frames of discourse in the classroom, particularly after 2000.
• In empirical studies: (a) there is an emergence of international research on dialogical theory in the classroom; (b) the dialogical is used not only as a practice of pedagogy, but also in the development of scholarship; and (c) there is a movement in scholarship, inspired by theory, from the external mechanism of teacher questioning to the internal dialogical process of student thought and growth, in particular through internally persuasive discourse (IPD).

• In practice: there is a shift, however initial, localized, and emergent, from the quantitative classroom to the dialogical, from a monological to polyphonic stance, from external to internal observation, from a focus on teacher actions to student’s individual responsiveness, and from examinations on external utterances to the internal discourse of each student.

Such conclusions are preliminary and by no means conclusive; rather, they serve as an opening to the pursuit of greater talk about talk, and to more detailed research and instructional works in the field. Yet before presenting such a review, it may be a helpful reminder to discuss why such a critical history is relevant to the field of study.

**The Why: Why Examine the History of Talk?**

*Why examine the history of teacher talk and discourse? What might such an examination of research and theory yield?* Histories of the field of English education note that its mission served several initial traditions, be they of literary appreciation, literacy, “sympathy and tolerance,” or as a gateway to social change (Applebee, 1974; Scholes, 1998, p. 17). In fact, such varied goals were considered a “patchwork of traditions, of conventions, of purposeless gropings” (Eaton, 1919, p. 309). Despite such early wanderings in mission, certain early theories in the tradition found a voice in later scholarship. The work of Dewey and the progressive
movement, for instance, which centered on democracy in education, found a new voice in the writing of Freire. Arguably for both, dialogue is central to the democratic project in education. Dewey once famously said that “democracy begins in conversation,”¹ and Freire (2012) further linked dialogue and democratic values inextricably to love: “Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people” (p. 89). Thus, Freire extended the project to underscore the crucial importance of the liberation of the oppressed as well as the core values undergirding the nature of equity.

To set the context for such an investigation and argue for the value of a critical history of discussion, this study first situates popular discourse, which some consider to be embattled contestation and intellectual reduction (Tannen, 1999), as the context into which the history of educational talk is situated or against which it may counteract. Before reviewing the history of education, this paper presents the state of discourse today.

**The Shift in Public Discourse**

The starting point of these reflections was usually a feeling of impatience at the sight of the “naturalness” with which newspapers, art and common sense constantly dress up a reality . . . in the decorative display of what-goes-without-saying, the ideological abuse which, in my view, is hidden there. (Barthes, 2013, p. 10)

In his work *Mythologies*, Barthes (2013) wrote of the “ideological” abuses of public discourse that “dress up reality”; in fact, he wrote that such abuses were attacks to “common sense.” Do such attacks to “common sense” change habits of mind and discourse? Cultural critic of language Deborah Tannen (1999) noted that public discourse is predicated on metaphors of battle and war. Though Tannen did not mention the work of Lyotard (1979), his writing on ordinary discourse and the use of game strategies, inspired by the work of Grice, cannot help but phrase itself in militant diction (italics mine):

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¹ According to Fesmire (2014), Dewey spoke these words at his 90th birthday party.
In the ordinary use of discourse—for example, in a discussion between two friends—the interlocutors use any available ammunition, changing games from one utterance to the next: questions, requests, assertions, and narratives are launched pell-mell into battle. The war is not without rules, but the rules allow and encourage the greatest possible flexibility of utterance. (p. 17)

Lyotard’s ordinary embattled gaming between friends anticipated the grander public discourse of Tannen. According to Tannen (1999), fights are inherently more interesting to the public, a phenomenon known as the Coliseum effect, and this drives what and how information is delivered: “Because of the belief that fights—and only fights—are interesting, any news or informational item that is not adversarial is less likely to be reported” (p. 31).

So great, in fact, is the appetite for opposition and contest that some manufacture a falsified “other side.” Tannen (1999) wrote notably of Holocaust deniers who are given air time on news shows with the justification that every issue has two sides. She viewed this “two-sided faith” as dangerous when incontestable facts, such as the historical reality of the Holocaust, become debatable. She concluded that “being legitimized as the other side in a debate is exactly the credibility that Holocaust deniers seek” (p. 38). The resulting habits of discourse legitimize falsehood rather than validate the truth. Furthermore, the oppositional stance as the only positionality in discourse constructs an “argument culture” (p. 7). Tannen’s call for dialogue rather than debate remains prescient and, in fact, recalls other writers in history who have noted the essential role of discourse in times of political instability.

Theory in Times of Turmoil

Educators might remind themselves of scholars who thought, spoke, and wrote about language and discussion in times of great political turmoil and confusion: Buber wrote during the rise of totalitarianism, as did Fromm and Arendt, in its wake. Bakhtin participated in intellectual salons during the rule of Stalin and lived to see many of his intellectual and artistic peers be
executed, even as he was sentenced to political exile for years. In the post-totalitarian regime of Czechoslovakia, political dissident Václav Havel (2015) clandestinely circulated *The Power of the Powerlessness* in *samizdat* across prohibited borders to numerous readers. About those living under a regime that spread lies as truth, he wrote, “They must live within a lie. They need not accept the lie” (p. 31). In response, Havel recognized the need of a *parallel polis*, or second-culture *talking and communicating*, however furtively, in opposition to the oppressive regime. Imprisoned for teaching peasants in Brazil to read, Paolo Freire too knew that not only literacy but also dialogue was crucial to knowing the world: “I engage in dialogue because I recognize the social . . . process of knowing . . . an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing” (Freire & Macedo, 1995, p. 379). Real dialogue—not chatter, nor silence, nor vitriol—is indispensable to fulfill the democratic ideals of education.

From as early as 1992, artists, cultural critics, and essayists have noted that society finds itself in a “post-truth” era (Keyes, 2013; Tesich, 1992). According to the editors of *Oxford Dictionary*, the usage of this term spiked in 2016, with a dramatic 2,000% increase compared to the previous year. Given the occurrence of Brexit in the United Kingdom and the election of Donald Trump in the United States, *Oxford Dictionaries* announced that “post-truth” was its international word of the year (Schuessler, 2016).

Not only journalists but also academics, scholars, and teachers may indeed take guardianship over authentic discourse and truth, in which case educators may find themselves on the front line of questioning false discourses. In considering the future of teacher talk, discussion, and dialogical discourse, much may be gained by looking at the history of scholarship on the history of talk in the English classroom. Prior to such a review, it may be useful to define the many and varied terms related to classroom discourse.
The What: A Review of Terminology

Indeed, such a scholastic glossary of oral communication reveals a quick, miniature history of teacher talk and shows how scholars came to debate, refine, and redefine the terminology of discourse. Below is a brief review of terms I used throughout this work. Though even the term *definitions* flies in the face of the elasticity of language proposed by Bakhtin, my aim was hereby to air the flexibility of meaning among a collection of scholars, while seeking some form of clarification within the open field of orality in the classroom.

**Conversation:** Conversation can be open, without any fixed or predetermined end-point (Nystrand, 1997), and is intended to convey feelings or deliver information (Alexander, 2008b; Wegerif, 2007).

**Discussion:** Alexander (2008b) distinguished between discussion and dialogue, viewing discussion as solution-driven and consensus-building: “Discussion . . . [is] the exchange of ideas with a view to sharing information and solving problems” (p. 186). Bohm (1996), however, noted less of a cordial agreement than a competition, given that discussion shares its etymological roots with percussion and concussion, and therefore possesses a sparring nature. Discussion, he wrote, is “like a ping-pong game, where people are batting ideas back and forth and the object of the game is to get points for yourself” (p. 7).

**Dialogue:** In contrast to discussion stands dialogue, which occurs between teacher-class, teacher-group, teacher-student, or between students, and entails “achieving common understanding through structured and cumulative questioning and discussion which guide and prompt, reduce choices, minimize risk and error, and expedite [the] ‘handover’ of concepts and principles” (Alexander, 2008b, p. 186).
Dialogue is a chain of questions that generate other questions; as such, dialogue is open and part of a chain that both regresses and anticipates its futurity through answerability (Bakhtin, 1986). For Bohm (1996), in dialogue, “no one is trying to win. Everybody wins if anybody wins” (p. 7).

**Dialogical:** For Bruner (1996), the dialogical is “mutualist and dialectical” where “understanding is fostered through discussion and collaboration” (p. 57).

**Dialogism:** An epistemology in which “consciousness is otherness” (Holquist, 1990/2002, p. 18) and which involves a “multiplicity in human perception (p. 22).

**Discourse:** Bakhtin (1984) wrote that discourse is “language in its concrete living totality” (p. 181). In educational theory, discourse has come to be defined by scholars, most notably by Gee (1996), who use the uppercase to distinguish this term. He wrote that Discourse is “a socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions, and artifacts, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group of ‘social network’” (p. 131).

**Debate:** As noted by Tannen (1999), debate is part of argument culture and often forces oppositional sides, which she characterized as *agonism*, or contest—that is, “an automatic warlike stance” (p. 8).

**Dialectic:** Nikulin (2006) charted the overlap and difference between the dialectic and dialogues, in particular with Socratic dialogues, which can employ dialectic reasoning; that is, “the refutation of a proposed claim by demonstrating the viability of its opposite” (p. 14). This is known as “aporetic dialogue,” which is a subset of dialogue and is by its very nature dialectic. Though it shares a similar
mode of inquiry as dialogue, the dialectic is finite in its reasoning (Nikulin, 2010, p. 5). In 20th century logic and argumentation, Toulmin (2008) adopted dialectic methods in his schema for writing the argumentative essay—itself a written manifestation of oral cultural patterns. Bakhtin (1986) delivered a directive recipe as to how to construct a dialectic: “Take a dialogue and remove the voices . . . remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, [and] cram everything into one abstract consciousness” (p. 147).

**Rhetoric:** From a Bakhtinian point of view, rhetoric is a dangerously monological, authoritarian discourse. Russian formalist Victor Vinogradov (as cited by Emerson, 1983) made the crucial distinction between rhetoric and the dialogical: “In rhetoric there are the unconditionally right and the unconditionally guilty; there is total victor, and annihilation of the opponent. In dialogue, annihilation of the opponent also annihilates the very dialogic sphere in which discourse lives” (p. xxxviii; Bakhtin, 1984).

**Socratic discussion:** This term is adopted as a process of inquiry in pedagogical practice, but the method is often a distorted variation on the practices exhibited in Socrates’ dialogues. Definitions vary from the open practices of dialogical inquiry in small classroom settings to the more monologically-driven techniques of law professors in lecture halls who drill students on casework. Socratic seminars, a variant of Socratic discussion, involve small group discussions centered on a shared text, while Socratic circles refer to a classroom practice featuring an inner circle of discussion with an outer circle of silence, observation, and notation.
**Teacher talk:** This is a broad term yet not as overarching as discourse. Teacher talk references a teacher’s oral position and contributions, be they directives, lines of questioning, follow-ups or evaluations, or instructional discourses. Heath (1978) noted that, as with other institutional discourses (of doctors, for example), the talk of teachers operates by a set of rules that may be modified. Teacher talk, she noted, often adheres to the tripartite structure (similar to initiation, response, and evaluation, commonly known as IRE): it is initiated by a question, followed by a response, and ends with a certain “positive evaluation” (p. 7). Others have classified teacher talk as actions of telling, controlling, stimulating, and rewarding in one of three categories of action: content, organization, and discipline (Sinclair & Brazil, 1982, p. 25).

**The Who: An Early History of Classroom Discourse**

I would like to begin my work with three key figures of great influence in education. The first are highly influential teachers C.T. Copeland and William Lyon Phelps at, respectively, Harvard and Yale, often cited by historians and critics as two influential practitioners of literary appreciation. Each of these teachers became highly influential in terms of the method of teacher-student interaction in the classroom. To this Ivy League pedagogy, I would like to add M.M. Bakhtin and the Dialogical Circle, which serves as another mode of pedagogical engagement, one that has become of greater interest in the classroom today through dialogical pedagogy.

**The Curator-Aesthete: C.T. Copeland**

Scholar C.T. Copeland, who was also a theater critic, used the same critical approach in cultivating good writing as he did in reviewing drama. In 1922, the *Cambridge Tribune* wrote of Copeland’s habit of holding a salon for writers from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. fireside:
Students in his classes came and read their pieces aloud to him while he sat in a rocking chair in a little room high up... When he hated the manner and the substance, he would rock violently and groan. American literature would be much more sentimental than it is if it were not for the persuasive quality of Copeland’s moaning. (Young Versifiers Turn to Harvard Professor, 1937).

With Copeland, the educational profession was more of a literary review, a nascent variation of the poet’s roundtable in future MFA programs. In such settings, writing is workshopped and critiqued before a classroom of peers and before the master poet teacher. Ransom (1937) wrote of figures such as Copeland as “curators, and the museum of which they have the care is furnished with the cherished literary masterpieces... their own obvious regard for the masterpieces is somewhat contagious, and contemplation is induced” (para. 24). Hence, Copeland was an exaggerated manifestation of the Committee’s charge of appreciation, as the teacher is the arbiter of taste and the students are passive witnesses to it.

**William Lyon Phelps, the Teacher as Preacher**

Similarly, this practice of review, critique, and refinement of taste came to dominate the classroom of Yale. At Yale, William Lyon Phelps was known for passionate lectures and recitations, often regarded as a part teacher/part preacher. The spiritual cast to his recitations placed him, according to Scholes (1998), as a bridge figure between New Criticism and philology, during a time where it was possible to “profess literature with evangelical fervor” (p. 14). A Baptist minister, Phelps saw no tension between his calling to church and classroom. Moreover, the classroom demographic mirrored the man for at the time, as Yale was overwhelmingly Protestant and male; Phelps was teaching to a ‘congregation’ made “in his own image” (p. 15).

Thus, students were ready to learn by witness, passively receiving impressions from towering figures of authority, be they spiritual or aesthetic. On the one hand was the aesthete
who cherished masterpieces and curates good writing; on the other, a teacher reified as preacher
guiding a population of willing congregants. These models, models that segregate the art from
the student reader, models that elevate the teacher to a position of religious or aesthetic privilege,
mapped out a very specific model for English education—one that seemed inspired by the
structures of the church or the turn-of-century British aesthete, who curated “taste.”

M.M. Bahktin, a Member of the Salon Circle

The hold and influence of the circle on the education of young Bakhtin cannot go
unstated. His participation in a circle of artists, intellectuals, and educators became the basis of
his education. The circle was thought to be formed by Matvei Isaevich Kagan who, educated in
Germany, was heavily influenced by neo-Kantian philosophy. The Kantian circle—first
established in the town of Nevel and then relocated to Vitebsk—was focused beyond the
philosophical to the aesthetic. In addition to Bakhtin and Kagan, members included Pavel
Nikolaevich Medvedev, Lev Vasilievich, Ivan Ivanovich Sollertinskii, Valentin Nikolaevich
Voloshinov, and, later, even artist Marc Chagall (Brandist, 2002). The circle as it came to
emerge was a series of salon-like gatherings in which all topics were discussed. With varied
political and theoretical stances, Bakhtin found himself questioning the formulations of others as
he did his own. The effect of the figure of the circle is crucial to the image. That Dewey’s work
had emigrated to Russia in the first decades of the century has been documented (Mchitarian,
2000). The circle became a means of struggling with a polyphony of voices that seemed very
much to mirror Dostoyevsky’s novels, set pieces which Bakhtin would later describe as
polyphonic. In the circle, discussions had no closure, but instead, as philosophical discussions
often do, demanded each participant to reflect, reconsider, revise, and balance the words of
others against the ideas of their own. In this Kantian Circle, later known as the Bakhtinian Circle,
was a practice of pedagogy that gave birth to theories which now serve both literary and educational positions.

In summary, these three figures formulated a constellation of the stirrings of modes of discourse. They presented the educator in various positions: as curator-aesthete, an extension of the 19th century reviewer; as the missionary, aching to convert students to some moral, intellectual process or thought; and last, as the encircled dialogic figure, amid and surrounded by the interconnection of ideas.

The Then: Early Forms of Classroom Talk

Early records of classroom observation have indicated that classrooms were dominated by “oral examination” methods, or the recitation method of student-teacher interaction (Burstall, 1909). The recitation practice thereby involved delivering test-like questions that served to demonstrate that students retained factual knowledge of what they had read. Conducted by Stevens (1912), the first formal and influential study of classroom speech revealed that teachers spoke 64% of the time, and that over 80% of class time was devoted to recitation. Stevens further noted that the dominance of questioning curbed “intellectual power,” thereby allowing only for the demonstration of “verbal memory or superficial comprehension” (p. 22), driven at a “break-neck speed,” at an average of two questions per minute (p. 7). He warned that the “teacher who has acquired the habit of recitations at the rate of from one hundred to two hundred questions and answers per classroom period of forty-five minutes has truly assumed the pace that kills. It is deadly to the nervous organism that maintains it” (p. 17). In its method of observation and recording, Stevens’ work inspired additional studies that replicated similar results (Barr, 1929; Colvin, 1919; Miller, 1922; Monroe & Carter, 1923). Among these studies’ findings are the fact that teacher talk dominated the class, which was crowded by rapid-fire, information-based
questions, and that few, if any, “genuine thought questions” were asked and answered in classroom discussion. Ironically, even while educational thinkers have critiqued such pedagogies, these patterns of classroom practice continued, particularly in secondary schools (Stevens, 1912).

In fact, though college educational practices shifted from recitation to textual decoding in the first half of the 20th century (Myers, 1996), research during this time indicated that instructional practices in high school classrooms were characterized by a battery of fact-based questions, a low percentage of “thought-based questions,’’ and teacher talk. Bellack’s (1996) study, which is more nuanced and detailed than studies prior to it, revealed similar patterns of classroom instruction: teachers spoke between two-thirds and three-quarters of class time and devoted the majority of that time to asking and answering fact-based questions. Hoetker and Ahlbrand’s (1969) review confirmed this, testifying to the “remarkable stability of classroom verbal behavior patterns over the last half century . . . despite the fact that each successive generation of educational thinkers . . . has condemned the rapid-fire, question answer pattern of instruction” (p. 163).

Such rapid-fire questioning was in line with the pedagogy of the time, which, under the influence of Piaget, viewed the child as a “lone scientist who develops cognitively by interacting with stimulating materials” (Alexander, 2008b, p. 11). Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) broke recitation down into its constituent parts of initiation, response, and follow-up (IRF): a triadic structure that was later amended by Mehan (1979), who replaced the neutral “follow-up” with the more judgment-laden term “evaluation,” thereby coining the commonly known acronym IRE. Theoretically, a shift in the understanding of dialogue occurred under the reemergence of the work of Vygotsky, who noted the importance of peer and cultural engagement: “Cognitive
development also requires it to engage, through the medium of spoken language, with adults, other children, and the wider culture” (Alexander, 2008b, p. 11). Such horizontal classroom methods, known as “scaffolding” and the zone of proximal development (ZPD), in which learning was bridged by a “more capable peer” or teacher, were considered to be crucial ideologies of practice (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). However, these working groups of the early 1980s were empty practices, as there remained a “rarity of autonomous pupil-led discussion and problem-solving” (Alexander, 2008b, p. 14). Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, and Gamoran (2003) confirmed these limitations in practice when noting that the habit of discussion was a mixture of lecture and “one-sided” IRE discourse.

Nonetheless, research practitioners examined and expanded the range of possibilities of the IRE. In her chapter titled “Discourses as Scaffold,” Cazden (1988) marked movements within the IRE that broadened cognitive leaps, thereby reconsidering how the evaluation element of the IRE, rather than the flatter or paraphrased student commentary, may invite students to reflect more deeply about subjects under discussion. To this end, teachers could form an uptake question: a question based on student response that prods students further into inquiry. In theory, if not in practice, such endeavors opened the door for dialogical relations to develop in the classroom during the 1980s.

**Managing the Transmission of Information to the Student**

In the classroom, dialogic practice was still years from away from having any foothold in classrooms. For many years, the paradigm of the English classroom was a corporate model in which teachers served as chairmen of the board, making decisions and guiding meetings (Burstall, 1909). In line with this capitalistic analogue was Freire’s (2012) notable critique of what he described as the “banking model” of educational practice. Within this theory, knowledge
functions as a fixed, transmissible substance, which, like goods or currency, can be exchanged in transaction (Freire, 2012). Concurrent with the corporate and banking model was a religious mode of instruction, wherein the teacher, much like a priest, served as a performative mediator of the word of the text, in effect becoming “a sage on the stage” (King, 1993, p. 30; also see Applebee, 1974). Such models codified practices of teacher-student engagement for many years.

As prescribed teacher roles and practices dominated the classroom, scholars questioned teacher pedagogy. Researchers focused more on how information could be more effectively transferred to the student by “chunking” ideas or activities that were broken down and “scaffolded” (Bruner, 1996; Cazden, 1988; Miller, 1956). Theoretically, these breaks from tradition questioned methods that centered on data transmission and teacher talk.

During this time, teacher research was also influenced by emergent studies in theory, the humanities, and social science. Teacher research shifted from a consideration of the teacher to that of students, and their active responses to the teacher and each other. In classroom talk, scholars noted that students benefited from their own talking and classroom interaction (Britton, 1970). Talk was an instrument for “reshaping experience” (Barnes, 1976, p. 84): a give-and-take between teacher and student (Flanders, 1970). Other researchers extended their investigations to consider teachers’ reflective practices and their influence on discourse. Using ethnography of communication influence from the work of Guffman and linguistic theory, Heath’s (1978) early work focused on the “fossilized” aspect of teacher talk in the classroom, and aimed to reveal possibilities for explicit and meta-reflective lines of questioning. Focusing not on liberating the active thinking of teachers but of students engaged with each other in thought was the work of Vygotsky (1978) in his theory of sociogenesis. This theory revealed that student-to-student relations were essential to growth, implying that cognitive growth “is more likely when one is
required to explain, elaborate or define one’s position to others, as well as to oneself” (p. 158).

With Guffman and Vygotsky, theories came to support the work of researchers examining the classroom. In the next decade, three key figures emerged to initiate a dramatic shift in the field of discourse studies in the classroom.

**Reflections on 80 Years of Practice**

Such a review of classroom discourse over time provides an example of a dominant pedagogy as it persisted in the high school classroom. The IRE/IRF, though increasingly interrogated and revised, was nonetheless the dominant practice of the time. The hierarchical structure of questioning, the teacher response as “reward,” and the volume of questions asked and answered suggests how the method itself might presume a certain epistemology, one more informational rather than dialogical or puzzling. Further, the reification of the “E” in IRE, or teacher response, too suggests that questions are fact-based and thus operate in binary thought and knowledge systems, setting the right answer against the wrong. The first years of educational practice consolidated an authoritative method of discourse, formulated from the origins of the orator and pulpit. In the later part of the 20th century, some pedagogies began to shift to a more mediated position of teachers as inquisitors, as living examinations, or as paradigms of New Criticism, a practice students carefully observed so that they might replicate it. Teachers were questioners or exemplars of practice. But it was the postmodern era in which theory adopted a multiplicity of strategies for reform.

The postmodern theories of the 1980s brought changes to scholarship, cracks in the stony monument of theory and practice: First and foremost was the rise of post-positivist, postmodern thinking which began to question ways and modes of knowledge. Both Derrida and Foucault broke down modes of thinking to consider how systems of knowledge were constructed and
propagated. In educational theory, three figures in the 1980s—Socrates, Freire, and Bakhtin—reemerged as pedagogues of great influence over classroom practices. Their theories and the implementation of those theories in various instructional practices are the focus of the next three chapters. I situated their work as pedagogical disruptions to dominant discourse practices. Chapter IV investigates the theory and extension of practice of these three figures. Chapters V and VI consider how theory, particularly theory that hopes to reform authoritative practice, makes its way into the classroom and world. This trio of chapters then considers how subordinated practices do or do not extend themselves into the world.
IV - AGENTS OF WONDER: SOCRATES, FREIRE, AND BAKHTIN

Wonder is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder.

—Plato, *Theaetetus*, 155c-d

For one of the necessary requirements for correct thinking is a capacity for not being overly convinced of one’s own certitude.

—Freire, 1988, p. 34

These are the knots or points of wonder: puzzle of the word; puzzle of the number; puzzle of the phenomena of nature; puzzle of moment of history; puzzle of consciousness; and puzzle of the objective implement.

—Bibler, 2009, p. 39

In the wake of Bakhtin, educational philosopher Vladimir Bibler (2009) wrote of “knots of wonder” and, in doing so, reformulated how we could envision an educational method centered on not merely confirming facts, but also engaging in the complexity of puzzlement. Knots are difficult to untie, as they take time, thought, and multiple approaches. Knots contain us in the uncertainty of which Freire wrote, and knots are, in effect, a physical representation of wonder. Wonder, unresolved and sometimes unresolvable, is a suspended state of contemplation, replete with contradiction and paradox. Such is the intractable knot of wonder.

Yet much of the history of English education has not been founded on the ether of philosophical inquiry, but on the hard ground of response, set answers, and certifiable truth. Not surprisingly, short-response and multiple-choice tests have provided, through an act of backward engineering, the oral discourse of the classroom. In effect, the battery of questioning common to classrooms across the country is the oral equivalent of the written, short-response test.

Yet with the rise of poststructuralist philosophies and post-positivistic methods in the 1970s and 1980s came a greater interest in the process, rather than the product, of thinking. This
meant not the answer per se but the puzzle, and not answerable facts but ponderous questions—
the Gordian knots of philosophical inquiry.

Three figures relevant to classroom discourse and inquiry, Socrates, Freire, and Bakhtin, came to
the foreground in the 1980s as pedagogues whose theories dismantled the traditional
makeup of the school. Shifting from the known to the unknown, from states of certainty to
modes of discourse and complication, each scholar’s work generated his own rhizomic extension
in practice. This chapter reviews the work of each scholar and his key ideas, the roots of
something to come. The subsequent two chapters follow those ideas through scholarship and
institutional formulations, such as nonprofits and nongovernment organizations as well as
instructional training programs and publications, to trace just how those theories extend
themselves into the world.

Socrates, the Midwife-Inducing Aporia

The Socratic image of the educator is often sourced to Socrates’s self-identification as a
midwife to the “offspring” of ideas that lay within his conversant. By his admission, Socrates
was the son of a midwife and, as such, claimed to practice the same art: one that may “supervise
the labor of the mind [and] . . . apply every conceivable test to see whether the young man’s
mental offspring is illusory and false or viable and true” (Plato, Theaetetus, 150b, 1-4). This
metaphor was further elaborated by Socrates in a dialogue in which he claimed to be “barren” of
knowledge yet “responsible for the delivery” of the ideas of others. This educational process,
also known as maieutics, induces the birthing of ideas by causing aporia, a perplexity akin to
labor pains, to interrogate the validity or falsehood of the offspring (Matthews, 1999).

As is commonly known, Socrates was a historical figure whose words went unpublished
until his student Plato scripted work in which those and ideas were enacted in the form of
dialogues. Further complicating Socrates the philosopher is that Socrates, as he appeared in Plato’s work, was a theatrical construction. Much has been written to distinguish the two and how Plato may have shaped the dialogues to his own image of a philosopher (Vlastos, 1999).

The dialogues have become an indelible part of education in content as well as method. Yet the method practiced by Socrates in the Platonic dialogues was not necessarily the method that has found its way into Socratic discussions or Socratic circles. In fact, Socratic practice in schools may be best understood as a corruption of the method and appropriation of the name. This is not to say that the contemporary method known as “Socratic” is without value, but rather that much has developed and been practiced in the classroom under the general umbrella of Socratic questioning. With that frame, I wish to note the distinction of what occurs in the dialogues from what is suggested in its varied forms as a method for classrooms today.

**Differentiating Elenchus From Eristic Methods of Questioning**

Vlastos (1999), the classical scholar, marked the *elenchus* versus *eristic* method of questioning in the dialogues. The eristic method is characterized by verbal melee, a set of methods for winning arguments—something that would have been taught by the Sophists, whom Socrates decried. This eristic method, predicated on the use of rhetorical devices, had less to do with truth seeking than it did with winning an argument. The modern-day practice of debate, with its interest is speed and flourishes of rhetoric, might be the comparable equivalent today.

Distinguished from the eristic method is elenchus, which, according to Vlastos (1999), is “first and last [a] search” (p. 39). Vlastos offered this definition:

Socratic *elenchus* is a search for moral truth by adversary argument in which a thesis is debated only if asserted as the answerer’s own belief, who is regarded as refuted if and only if the negation of this thesis is deduced from his own beliefs. (p. 39)

Thus, the elenchus method is one in which an existing belief is examined and interrogated not exclusively by the instructor, but by the one who holds that belief. However, what is key for
Vlastos (1999) was that Socrates, rather than his subject, had the more active hand in the birth of an idea. In fact, he wrote that “it is wrong to assume that Socrates gets the opponent to draw the consequences that contradicts the thesis. It is Socrates who draws it; the opponent has to be carried to it kicking and screaming” (p. 37). The image here evokes Socrates’s admission of his role as midwife, pulling from the individual, however pained and reluctant, some epiphany. Such epiphanies lie within us all, according to Socrates, as we all have the capacity to know the good, the just, and the beautiful: it is a “Socrates,” however, who must extract it.

**Modern Scholarship and Socratic Questioning**

Modern educational scholars have questioned whether Socrates was indeed “Socratic” at all (Hansen, 1988) and whether his method and trajectory of questioning were subverted by his own practice (Houratinian-Gordon, 1990). To this end, Rud (1997) presented the argument that the Socratic method differs vastly, varying from “dialectical examination of philosophical issues of justice, the good, and the line . . . to the use of questions by a teacher” (p. 2). Misconceptions of the Socratic process centered on the idea of open-ended questions and responses (Fishman, as cited by Rud, 1997, p. 2).

Faithful to Socrates or not, one “Socratic method” positioned the professor as a central figure, most notably embodied by the 19th century dean of Harvard Law School Christopher Columbus Langdell, who presided over a large auditorium of students with a line of questioning “to challenge individual students on their mastery of the assigned reading and their on-the-spot analytical thinking” (Courchesne, 2005, p. 25). As noted by Rud, a 20th century incarnation of such a figure was the fictional depiction of law professor Kingsfield in the film and subsequent television show *The Paper Chase* by actor John Houseman. Incisive, unforgiving, and relentless in his questioning, Kingsfield became an exaggeration of the Socratic method. For Rud, who
interviewed lawyers on their experience in law school, the infliction of pain from such inquiries was “sadistic” (Suber, as cited by Rud, 1997, p. 9). Some scholars have gone so far as to identify the law school classroom as enacting “ritualized combat” (Guinier, Fine, & Balin, 1997, p. 58). Less to do with inquiry than the delivery of a certain studied or known fact, the method enacted a distortion of the Socratic method itself.

The Application of Socratic Questioning to Literary Analysis

The particulars of Socrates’s work, his relationship to his students, and topics of discourse may have become lost on contemporary educators, who merely employ Socratic questioning pedagogically. Is literary analysis, for example, the same intellectual process as philosophical inquiry? For the New Critics, the method of questioning and reflexivity may fall easily under the guise of formalist technique, one that operates with a set of hypotheses and evidentiary support to make true the claim. However, such scientific methodology, for Plato, might be merely a veil of pseudo-methodology to mask what is the inherently deceptive art of fiction. Plato was, after all, notably distrustful of art as representation of truth, as he viewed drama a falsified representation of reality. For this reason, the application of Socratic methods, those used in the pursuit of philosophical truth, onto the practice of literary interpretation, would be a sort of slippage in the mind of a Platonist. That being said, what was true for Plato may not, in the end, be true for Plato’s Socrates.

For the purpose of this dissertation, I am less concerned with the corruption of methodologies crossing disciplinary studies than I am with the fact that they do. Thus, the industry of Socrates in the 1980s and Socratic questioning reemerged on the singular shoulders of Mortimer Adler and the Paideia Proposal and the effects, replications, distortions, and iterations have come to influence, in the name of Socrates himself, classroom discourse and the
dissemination of tip lists, circulated on the internet, on how to manage the “Socratic Discussion.”

In the next chapter, I elaborate on the vast network and iterations of Socratic discourse in the classroom. First, though, I would like to review the ideas of two other scholars whose work, along with that of Socrates, had great effect on dialogue: Paulo Freire and Mikhail Bakhtin.

**Freire’s Epistemology of Dialogue**

Freire (1970/2012) introduced dialogue as “an encounter between men,¹ mediated by the world, in order to name the world” (p. 88)—a world that from that very process would be “transformed and humanized” (p. 89). Writing from a distinctly Marxist perspective situated in the oppressive political regimes that aimed to silence the voice, Freire described a taxonomy of rights and beliefs in relation to dialogue: Humans are “not built in silence,” he wrote, and dialogue is both the “right of everyone” and “an existential necessity” (p. 88).

Freire’s (1995) “necessary” epistemology combined varied strains of political, philosophical, and religious thought: from Marxism’s liberatory teleology to Christianity’s concern for the poor. His proposal established a liberatory, democratic, educational model, in which dialogue “characterizes an epistemological relationship” (p. 379). From this came “the dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student” where “education is neither a gift nor an imposition . . . but rather the organized, systematized, and developed ‘re-presentation’ to the individuals of the things about which they want to know more” (Freire, 1970/2012, p. 74). This vision of a dialogical teacher-student relationship is easier to state than it is to define. Hence, it may be helpful to take some time to situate such a concept into Freire’s larger project. Freire questioned: How can we *know* without the other, without some confirmation, clarification, or contradiction from others?

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¹ Citations from historical texts are sometimes gender insensitive. I have maintained the integrity of the citation here with “men.”
Freire and Intersubjective Dialogue

For Freire and Macedo (1995), dialogue is a form of epistemology: “I engage in dialogue because I recognize the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialogue presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing” (p. 379). Dialogue unlocks a larger conceptual relation of the inherent intersubjectivity of thought. Freire (1998/2001) deconstructed linguistic theory to consider how “thinking” is not practiced in isolation, but in dialogical communication with the other:

Thinking correctly is . . . something that belongs essentially to the process of coparticipation. If, from the grammatical point of view, the verb to understand is “transitive,” in relation to a correct way of thinking it is also a verb whose subject is always a coparticipant with the other. (p. 42)

Here, Freire asked the reader to envision the verb to understand as transitive, which is easy enough to do since one always understands something. However, Freire’s view is that each subject acts as he or she is acted upon, and each compels understanding as he or she understands. Figure 1 visualizes such a non-linear, continuous structure, independent of the sentence, a closed circle of one acting upon another acting upon one, in which the end and start are one and the same and unfinalizable.

Figure 1. The grammar of intersubjectivity
Dialogue Between the Teacher and Student

Such claims about the interconnection between subjects have much to bear on the teacher-student relationship. Freire was keen to disrupt the hierarchy of traditional pedagogies to reveal a more authentic relation in education. The banking model, as he deemed it, reified the teacher as “the depositor” of knowledge, as it simultaneously degraded students as “depositories.” To extend Freire’s grammatical argument, the teacher is subject, the lesson is the direct object, and the student becomes the indirect object, receiving the object, the “lesson,” as transmitted by the teacher. Critical of this hierarchical model, Freire (1970/2012) denounced how “students patiently receive, memorize and repeat” information provided to them (p. 51).

Instead, Freire reimagined the classroom configuration of power, imagining interrelational, dialogical relations between teacher and learner. To materialize this relationship, he coined the term *dodiscência*, or teach-learn. Freire (as cited in Gadotti, 2017) noted that learning is not the object of teaching, since “whoever teaches learns in the act of teaching, and whoever learns teaches in the act of learning” (p. 25). As if to reconfigure the classroom with this circumference of activity, Freire adopted the term *culture circle* rather than lessons. To be sure, the circularity of the image disrupts the linear, unilateral notion of a lesson delivered. Instead, the pedagogical image becomes mutually qualifying, continuous, and circular.

Freire and Humanization

Eschewing the role of teacher as all-knowing and the pretense of teacher as facilitator, Freire viewed the dialogical teacher as an advocate, an instigator of critical consciousness for freedom and liberatory effects. To that end, Freire (1998/2001) wrote of a “universal human ethic” within any dialogical exchange (p. 25). Such an ethic would not dehumanize, hinder human development, or thwart or suppress intellectual curiosity.
One essential concept in this regard was *humanization*. Predicated on the practice of dialogue, *humanization*, a process of becoming more human, occurs through dialogical praxis, in which praxis is the singular combined effect of reflection and action, two interrelated elements of transformational learning. Language, for Freire, must be true, liberatory, and lead to praxis: action in the world to transform the world.

With authentic dialogue, action operates in tandem with reflection because action without reflection, identified as “activism,” results in hollow actions in the world; in contrast, reflection with action leads to the “unauthentic word,” “idle chatter,” or *verbalism* (Freire, 1970/2012, p. 88). True dialogue is predicated on love and ballasted by courage and commitment. Additional characteristics of dialogue posited by Bakhtin are worth mentioning here. They include faith, curiosity, openness, contingency, and love.

**Faith.** In dialogue, Freire (1970/2012) envisioned a horizontal relationship with others, replacing the suppressing hierarchies of the banking model of educational practice. As such, dialogue demands both humility and faith:

> Founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence. . . . Whereas faith is an *a priori* requirement for dialogue, trust is established by dialogue. (p. 91)

Faith is a precondition of dialogue, while curiosity is an element that sustains it.

**Curiosity.** Curiosity is key in the dialogical questioning between teachers and students. It is curiosity that transforms passive learning into activity. Freire wrote the following:

> What is really essential in this process is that both the teacher and the students know that open, curious questioning, whether in speaking or listening, is what grounds them mutually not a simple passive pretense at dialogue. The important thing is for both teacher and students to assume their epistemological curiosity. (p. 81)

Curiosity also ensures futurity of exploration. Learning is not final, but continual.
Openness. Freire wrote that as beings, we are unfinished and continuously in a process of ontological development. Given that, we can, even in dialogue, be open to the thoughts and subjectivities of others. Freire (1998) stated that the “person who is open to the world or to others inaugurates thus a dialogical relationship with which restlessness, curiosity, and unfinishedness are confirmed as key moments within the ongoing current of history” (p. 121).

Contingency. There is no singular method for any given situation since each situation may require and demand some amended application of these principles.

Love. Like Socrates, Bakhtin, and Vygotsky, Freire (1970/2012) considered the acquisition of knowledge to be inherently tied to the other, adding that it is a “restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (p. 72). Such dialogue is democratic, and Freire claimed that several preconditions are needed for dialogue to unfold, which include modesty, humility, faith, hope, courage, and the greatest precondition of all, love:

Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love of the world and for people. . . . Therefore, love is the basis of dialogue and also the dialogue itself. . . . If I do not love the world—if I do not love life—if I do not love people—I cannot enter into dialogue. (pp. 89-90)

While Socrates and Bakhtin may have theorized about love itself, they did not tie the act of engagement in dialogue to the other as an act of agape or even as love of the other. Socrates considered himself to be a midwife to innate ideas, making them explicit in cognition and pulling them to the exterior with language. Bakhtin’s responsivity claimed that each utterance anticipates a certain response. Freire, however, mapped out the context for entering into a dialogue, the end of which is heuristic, democratic, and shaped by love. Distinguished from Socratic discussions of prescribed, fixed outcomes, Freire offered a method of situated pedagogy that was critical, globally conscious, and democratic.
Bakhtin’s Background and Context

Bakhtin’s writing had great influence on diverse disciplines both in and outside of education. Schooled in philology at the Universities of Odessa and Petrograd, Bakhtin associated himself with an influential group of scholars, artists, and writers, later known as the Bakhtinian Circle, who engaged in salon-like dialogues that Bakhtin (as cited as Hirscckop, 1999) characterized as “difficult” and a “revaluation and testing of all previous knowledge” (p. 47). Under the oppressive regime of Stalin, such dialoguing among academic and creative communities was dissolved, as many of their members were executed or exiled, as was the case with Bakhtin. His work over the following years, some of which was written in exile, focused notably on literature but also branched out to linguistics, sociocultural theory, and aesthetics. Translated into English in the early 1980s, Bakhtin’s works established key ideas relevant to language theory and philosophy, most notably with his dialogical theory.

Bakhtin’s Early Education

According to Clark and Holquist (1984), the early education of Mikhail and his brother Nikolai, autodidactic and self-directed, nonetheless anticipated the dialogical relationships about which Bakhtin would later write. Not surprisingly, the young Bakhtin brothers were intellectually advanced. From as early as 11 years of age, Nikolai studied Kant. Later, the family hired a private tutor, who introduced the boys to classical literature, helping them enact scenes from *The Iliad* while also guiding them through German language and literature. Following that, the boys read other works, among them the works of Marx, the philosophy of Nietzsche, and the writings of Baudelaire. For young Mikhail, Nikolai was equal in intellect and served as “an honorable opponent” or “other” to his own (p. 17). Mikhail and his brother would often spend hours arguing over politics, language, and literature.
Such debates seemed understandable, as the brothers were notably opposed in demeanor and personality. Mikhail, contemplative and reflective, was cut from a different cloth than his brother Nikolai, who was impulsive, vain, and extroverted. Despite, or perhaps as a result of, such differences, the brothers’ ongoing discussions formed what some scholars claimed was the basis for a methodology of ongoing dialogism. Clark and Holquist (1984) imagined the brothers as a version of the Corsican twins in Dumas’s story, separated at birth, who nonetheless remained psychically interconnected throughout their lives. This literary metaphor is easily applied to the brothers Bakhtin, when at the age of 15, Bakhtin moved with his family to Odessa, leaving Nikolai behind in Vilnius to finish his last years of schooling. For the younger brother, the departure of Nikolai was both an opportunity for self-definition and a profound psychic gap to be filled. Still, the influence of the dialogical nature of their relationship would persist for years to come in each brother’s academic pursuits.

**The Dialogical Krug**

Given Mikhail’s dialogical relationship with his brother, it came as no surprise that he found his way into intellectual discussion circles in the years that followed, often surrounding himself with a diverse collective of artists, poets, writers, philosophers, and biologists to continue this method of discourse. Circles of discussion, or *krugs*, had been a foundational part of Russian intellectual and cultural history among the *intelligentsia* since the 1830s (Brandist, 2002). Though Bakhtin encountered the Formalist Circle at the University of Petrograd and their circle, OPOYaZ, the Society for the Study of Poetic Language, he was more drawn to the Religious-Philosophical Society of Petersburg. After his years in the classics department at Petrograd University, Bakhtin, escaping the harsh weather and food shortages after the Revolution and the withdrawal from World War, moved in 1918 to Nevel. A relatively small
town of 13,000 south of Petrograd, Nevel was nevertheless a site of intellectual fervor. It was here that the Nevel circle, of which Bakhtin was a part, formed. Included in this group was Valentin Nikolaevich Volosinov, a friend from University, the eccentric Les Vasilievich Pumpiansky, and classical pianist Maria Veniaminovna Yudina. As Clark and Holquist (1984) reported, these relationships were personal as well as philosophical: “Yudina and Bakhtin, who were close, took long walks around the lake together and engaged in philosophical discussions. They had in common not only a love of philosophy but also an immersion from childhood in German culture” (p. 41). However, it was not Yudina but Matvei Isaevish Kagan, with his doctorate in philosophy from Germany, who naturally filled the void left by Nikolai. The intellectual life practiced by the circle was not merely one of parlor games and drawing room debates, though each had its place. The circle lectured publicly before music concerts or at literary readings. Together, Bakhtin and his circle staged a children’s production of Oedipus the King with a cast of 500 and lectured in public forums. Bakhtin even ran a local study group on Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason. Thus, life after university was, in effect, a means of transforming intellectual life into various scholastic registers: the lecture, dramatization, debate, and dialogical inquiry.

**The Dialogical Circle**

These practices continued when several members of the circle moved 70 miles south to the town of Vitebsk, a more commercialized and populated town, the majority of which was Jewish with a mixture of Poles, Russians, and Lithuanians. The town was known as a foothold for the avant-garde, featuring Marc Chagall, who founded a local art school. Bakhtin had followed the exodus of fellow circle members Pumpiansky and Ivan Ivanovich Sollertinsky. Pavel Nikoaevich Medvedev, who would later co-write a work on Formalism in the novel with
Bakhtin, was added to this core group. There in Vitebsk, Bakhtin participated in lectures and literary debates at the local theater in which he defended various characters from the artistic works of Gogol and Tolstoy. Later, Bakhtin (as cited in Clark & Holquist, 1984) characterized these times, times of ongoing, continued discussion with engaged intellectuals as “magnificent philosophical nights of strong tea and talk until morning” (p. 55). This longing for the circle of discussion, one that later materialized in lectures and instruction, suggested how thinking, dialogized utterance, continued discussion, and public acts such as lectures and papers formulated a lively countercultural academia, outside of but alongside the institution of academia itself.

My aim with such biographical details here is a reverse tracing, to move from the theory developed, such as the dialogical, to the sociocultural context and concrete practice from which it may have emerged. Bakhtin was not merely writing about the abstraction of language, but the dialogic, heteroglossic towns in which he participated. He was not only thinking of a dialogical space, but rather giving words to a practice in which he had engaged for years with his brother, Yudina, Kagan, and other members of the circle. As Brandist (2002) observed, this practice was very much tied to culture of krug, the culture of the discussion circle.

Key Bakhtinian Ideas and Education

Working in the mode of a philosopher, Bakhtin’s theories bridged many disciplines, including philology, literary theory, linguistics, and sociology. One key idea relevant to educational practice was dialogism. Bakhtin reimagined linguistic structures from the word to the utterance to discourse as operating with greater fluidity, rather than with a fixed set of rules undergirding them. In distinction to Ferdinand de Saussure and the ideas underlying structures of grammar and language, Bakhtin introduced a counterpoint theory that at once involved the word,
utterance, dialogue, multivoicedness, and modes of discourse—all of which were inherently set into culture and context. Language was no longer a system fixed and apart from life, but very much tied to the social, political, historical, and linguistic discourses surrounding it.

**The word.** A key idea of Bakhtin (1981) relates to the elasticity of the word. He viewed the word threefold: in neutrality, as with any dictionary definition; belonging to no one; and belonging, in part, to the other. He wrote that the word “exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s contexts, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one’s own” (p. 294). The expressivity of the word is not inherent to it, but contextualized in the context among the particular speaker, the other, and the world. Bakhtin’s theory of the word helps to frame such elasticity.

This elasticity of the word, beyond verbal irony as a speech genre, is also a tension that characterizes language as the centripetal force of any given word expands outward toward possibility, whereas the centrifugal force moves inward toward definition. For instance, after the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush notably said, “Whether we bring our enemies to justice or justice to our enemies, justice will be done” (Bush, 2001). In that moment, Bush redefined justice with the rhetorical sleight of hand of *chiasmus*, the ABBA syntactical structure. The justice first mentioned by Bush, presumably litigation, is hardly the same justice implied by the second phrase, to bring “justice to our enemies.” Though the words are the same, the syntax is not. The position of justice as direct object, *something* to be brought to our enemies, suggests violent retribution, perhaps in the form of an aerial attack. Words, particularly those housed in rhetorical structures, shift meaning on the quick hinge of grammar and context. Bush’s words would not have meant what they did unless there were cries for retribution already in the air.
What Bakhtin knew all too well was how words are situated in and saturated by social and historical context. For Bakhtin (1981), words enter a
dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationship, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile. (p. 276)

Starting with the word, language is a vital, living, socially situated, and complex thing, and what is true of the word shall also be true of the utterance.

The utterance. Every utterance, be it a word or a sentence, is made with an understanding of some response. Bakhtin (1986) wished to distinguish this from the fixed Saussurean utterance. The Bakhtinian utterance is not fixed but situated in a specific sociocultural context, or as Bakhtin would state, in a speech genre: “speech genres are changeable, flexible, and plastic than language forms are” (p. 80). As such, any utterance is not exclusively an individual act, birthed from the intent and issued forth from the mechanism of language, but is tied to a variety of contexts and genres sociologically and historically; it is a “link in the chain of speech communication” (p. 84). Because an utterance is linked to other like utterances, the effect can be one of split meaning, or double-voicedness, as is the case with irony as a speech genre.

A recent instance of double-voicedness occurred amid the responses to politicians expressing their “thoughts and prayers” to the victim’s families in the tragic 2018 school shooting in Parkland, Florida. Shortly afterwards, many repeated such expressions of condolences on social media, retweeting the phrase “thoughts and prayers” as a symbol of empty rhetoric. As such, “thoughts and prayers” became a double-voiced utterance. On one hand, these words were an act of condolence. On the other hand, the same words, retweeted back to the government officials in protest, became an indictment of gun violence and the government’s paralytic response. Though
the utterance itself was the same, it was not static or fixed in meaning. The protest utterance was saturated with the context of each politician’s initial tweet, the proliferation of retweets, the past history of politicians offering hollow phrases without political action, the devastation of the recent shooting, and the cumulative effect of past mass shootings. In this way, the protest utterance exposed how empty of meaning the initial utterance was, words that barely masked the evasion of political reform. Such is the case with empty jargon, which seems akin to the face of Janus, staring in two directions at once.

**Double-voicedness, polyphony, and heteroglossia.** The last example is one of sharp political satire, in which the empty words of authority are cited and thrown back into the face of authority. Bakhtin commonly attributed double-voicedness to the genre of moments of satire, in which the imitation of a generic style is often transposed onto that of the novel. Thus, a work in its stylization may echo that of another speech genre (authoritative or legal or chivalric), all the while satirizing it. In distinction, polyphony or heteroglossia is the symphonic aspect of the novel in which many voices and points of view are struck, and though separate, operate with a collective unity akin to a musical chord (Bakhtin, 1981/2008, p. 263). The polyphony of voices and perspectives in the novel then become an apt analogue to its occurrence in the classroom in which the novel is studied.

**Authoritative and internally persuasive discourse.** Bakhtin identified two complex discourses within language, which led him to distinguish two crucial modes of discourse, sometimes united in speech acts, though at other times separate and distinct: *authoritative* and *internally persuasive discourse* (IPD). Each mode is necessary and present in people’s lives. Authoritative discourse, be it political, religious, or moral, is external and institutionalized, and as such remains fixed and unuestioned. One may consider the letter of the law, religious edicts such
as the Ten Commandments, or even nonreligious moral imperatives learned at school such as the Golden Rule. In addition, there is IPD, the voices and opinions of others that, assimilated into the consciousness self, construct internal polyphony. Such sites of internal dialogue are also the sites of and become the site of wonder, perplexity, and some negotiation, as when, for instance, in Kant’s noted example, one may muddle through the varied options as to under what conditions one may lie to protect a friend.

**Ideological becoming.** The collision of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses marked the site for what Bakhtin viewed as our ontological state of flux and becoming. For Bakhtin (1981/2008), the act of becoming had much to do with the individual situated within the heteroglossia of voices and values and the gradual, ever-changing process through which one comes into being: “Our ideological development is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions, and values” (p. 346). The choices one makes—and one makes such choices on a daily basis—formulate such becoming. Furthermore, this becoming is ideological, in the sense that it concerns the ontological formulations of abstract ideas that have meaning, such as moral formulations. For Bakhtin and his contemporaries, the word ideological, ideologija, is not laden with the authoritarian tinge that imbues today’s meaning. According to Emerson (1983), ideologija does not reflect “its English cognate ideology. . . [which] suggests something inflexible and propagandistic, something politically unfree. For Bakhtin and his colleagues, it means simply an‘idea system,’ something that means” (p. 247). If words, utterances, and the polyphony of languages involve the “idea systems” of others as well as ourselves, then our becoming is not independent from others.
**Dialogic relations.** Dialogic relations are the focused encounter of the I-with-the-other, the other whose words and ideas refract off our own, whose utterances clash and crash against those of our own. Just as dialogic relations occur among characters in the novel, so too do they occur among us in our lives.

When considered together, these ideas formulate not only an epistemology of knowing the world and how the sociocultural context of that world exerts itself through language, but also how language itself operates within the ontology of becoming. Like being, language is unfinalized, in formation, set into continuous states of dialogized relations. We can become static, adopting, for example, the fixed states of authoritative discourse set by the state or church; at the same time, we may also be fluid, in states of flux and adaptation. Bakhtin did not elevate one discourse over another; he instead identified the operational modes of each in our lives and the ways in which we unite or shift positions dependent on particular encounters in the world.

**Examining Three Methodologies of Pedagogy**

The works of these three philosophers and pedagogues, while using distinctive terms, can be viewed at once from the perspective of the teleology of pedagogy (Table 1). One can see how Freire’s ontology of education rests on praxis or some action in the world. By contrast, the Socratic method is highly relegated to the intellect and the shifting of a habit of the mind. Bakhtin’s dialogized becoming occurs under the influence of many voices that then reside in the internalized space of contemplation. All share the importance of reflexive thought; that is, thinking that does not merely adopt, but examines, debates, and interrogates ideas that are presented.

Notably, while the activity of the student is directed inward, the role of the teacher for each has slight distinctions. For some, the teacher may be considered a pest to spur the student
Table 1

Comparison of Methods Among Socrates, Freire, and Bakhtin

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<th>Role of Reflection</th>
<th>Role of the Teacher</th>
<th>Telos</th>
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<tr>
<td>Socrates</td>
<td>Critical examination</td>
<td>midwife; gadfly</td>
<td>enlightenment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freire</td>
<td>Essential to praxis</td>
<td>other; liberator</td>
<td>conscientization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakhtin</td>
<td>Internally persuasive discourse</td>
<td>honorable other(s)</td>
<td>becoming</td>
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into thought or perhaps a *doula* to help birth ideas from each student’s mind. For others, the teacher may be an emancipator to wrest each student from systems of oppression, or the teacher may be some honored other needed for our growth. One also may wonder if our end is intellectual, practical, or both. The variations among these pedagogical stances will play out in the application of such theories into their materialization in classroom practice.

In fact, the following two chapters, Chapters V and VI, investigate how these three theories extend themselves into the world of the classroom and how these iterations of practice transform, modify, adapt, replicate, and even die out, only to leave space for other methods and practices to take shape.
V - FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS: MAPPING RHIZOMES OF THE NGO

But all expansion, incorporation, growth means striving against something that resists; motion is essentially tied up with states of displeasure; that which is here the driving force must in any event desire something else if it desires displeasure in this way and continually looks for it. —for what do the trees in a jungle fight each other? For “happiness”? —For power!—


The radicle-system, or fascicular root, is the second figure of the book. . . . This time, the principal root has aborted, or its tip has been destroyed; an immediate, indefinite, multiplicity of secondary roots grafts onto it and undergoes a flourishing development. This time, natural reality is what aborts the principal root, but the root’s unity subsists, as past or yet to come, as possible.

—Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 5

Some may find the presence of Nietzsche in an educational dissertation disconcerting. After all, many of his key works and concepts have been misread, corrupted, and used to theorize grand acts of terror and genocide. However, the abuse of theory does not discount the theory itself, as many texts, some religious, have been used to promote ill-advised ends. My aim here is to revisit the tributaries and routes of the will to power to track how discourse theory and methods succeed or fail to materialize in the world.

Nietzsche’s key metaphor centers on how the humble tree of the jungle fights for claim of the forest, but this metaphor does not merely concern limbs that intertwine to form the forest’s canopy. Nietzsche instead asked us to consider the regions below the ground, the subterranean and tuberous roots, as they fight for moisture, space, and territory. As such, one may then understand Nietzsche in light of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) “radicle-system, or fascicular root,” an image animating the rhizomic root structures fighting in the soil, each aiming to extend itself into space through time. Deleuze and Guattari proposed that even as some primary roots
“abort,” other secondary roots may sustain themselves. This image serves as an apt metaphor for how the implementation of ideas in the world does or does not take hold.

Some ideas remain mere ideas, some become practices, and those practices take hold in the classroom. My question here is: How do the rooted ideas of Socrates, Freire, and Bakhtin transform themselves into pedagogy? What allows such transformations to occur? More pointedly, what prevents or restricts such extensions of practice? This is a vast project, to be sure, and thus I divide the mapping of the implementation of these theories between two chapters. In Chapter VI, the next chapter, I offer a comparison between Freire’s far-reaching work in Brazil and Bakhtin’s influence on Bibler and the School for the Dialogue of Cultures. This chapter, however, focuses exclusively on how the work of Socrates has formulated a rhizomic network of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Discourse of Socrates Extended Into Practice

The extension of ideas into institutions, in which ideas are formalized, repeated, written down, and used as training initiatives, is yet another way in which theory becomes disseminated in the world. How have practices of discussion become formalized as pedagogical practices? One may cite the empirical studies and instructional books of practice, which are addressed in Chapter VIII, but a more comprehensive and far-reaching means may be through nonprofit institutions that provide direct training to classroom teachers. Moreover, the NGO, a rhizomic structure that extends itself into varied real-world practices, shares methods that intersect conceptually and practically with multiple, concurrent root strains of instruction. This chapter devotes itself to Socratic thought and methods and the formation of various institutions inspired from it, including The Paideia Group, Philosophy for Children (P4C), and the Coalition of Essential Schools. Alongside these, I also consider the Harkness method, a method that overlaps
with the ideas of the previous scholars, but is neither inspirationally nor institutionally connected to the others.

**Adler and the Genesis of the Socratic Seminar**

Key to introducing the Socratic seminar and its instructional cognates to the classroom was Mortimer Adler, who published *The Paideia Proposal* in 1982. However, the power of this publication has much to do with the man behind it and his influence on education and curriculum for over a half a century. Adler’s work in education and general vision of pedagogy materialized in the early 1930s. As a professor at the University of Chicago, Adler influenced university scholars, as his Great Books curriculum was adopted and implemented by his protégé Scott Buchanan in his role as dean at St. John’s College with the New Books Program (Copeland, 2005). There, Buchanan established the currently famous curriculum of “100 Great Works in the Western Tradition.” Such curriculum invited what Adler described as “Socratic seminars,” or student-driven inquiries into a shared text.

**Pilot programs replicated.** Adler, with the collaboration and support of Robert Maynard Hutchins, the president of the University of Chicago, transferred both this curriculum and method to adult reading groups in Chicago in the 1930s. Later named by university students as “The Fat Men’s Great Books Group,” this discussion circle had less to do with the weight of the participants than it did with the tomes of classical text assigned (Beam, 2008). Hutchins and Adler, recruiting prominent Chicago businessmen into a seminar class to discuss Socrates and St. Aquinas, developed a model so popular in Chicago culture that it prompted one reporter in 1943 to write that “Chicago has embraced the Great Books so eagerly that bookstores can’t keep a Great Book in stock long enough for the salesgirl to learn to pronounce the author’s name” (Beam, 2008, p. 61). Inspired by his success with his reading group, Adler founded the Great
Books Foundation to bring paperback classics to adults across the country. By 1949, 50,000 adults were reading such classics and participating in book groups. Notably, this virus-like extension of the adult reading group, one that “spread” quickly throughout both Chicago society and the country, illuminates the growth and replication within the rhizomic. Here, the model of expansion is corporate, where a localized “pilot” program is tested and replicated through the administration of an NGO to greater breadth and reach. Such is the viral, rhizomic structure of which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote, and it is also, to be sure, a blueprint illustration of the capitalistic model of corporate growth.

New markets. If the first growth model expanded the program through replication, the second action was to identify and secure a new market. Here, Adler adapted his adult reading program to secondary school education. Thus, with a new market of school children, the foundation transferred this system to youth by providing books to schools and volunteers from the Junior League of Chicago to implement instruction. Two years after its inception in 1962, the program had reached 48,000 children participating in 3,200 reading and discussion groups across the country (A Brief History of the Great Books Foundation, 2018). These preliminary programs of book distribution paved the way for Adler’s grand proposal to redesign the high school curriculum at large. Once again, the model, clipped from the university and grafted onto the book club model, was transplanted to schools across the country. Here, the larger institution, the public school system, provided a network of extension for the program to extend itself territorially into another market.

Adler and the Paideia Proposal

With the publication of The Paideia Proposal, Adler (1982) focused his attention on the unfulfilled democratic ideal in contemporary education. Adler claimed the nation was on the
cusp of a new era of educational reform; his proposal, culled from leaders in educational reform, was a system to eliminate tracking and specialization. In its place, he proposed a one-track system of general education to ensure personal growth, citizenship, and gainful employment. With *The Paideia Proposal*, Adler reimagined the Socratic model as the basis, theoretically at least, for schoolwide reform. Combining the Socratic seminar, the tenets of Dewey’s active learning, and Robert Maynard Hutchins’s interest in liberal education, Adler centered his curriculum on “Great Books” of “Great Ideas” and practices steeped in Socratic dialogues to cultivate the Aristotelian habit of intellectual virtue (Roberts & Billings, 1997).

**Methodology of the proposal.** To achieve these goals, Adler’s methodology advocated a three-columned system of instruction that involved lecture, coaching, and discussion. Lecture was needed for the acquisition of knowledge; coaching, for skill-building through advisement and correction; and *maieutic* discussion as a means to give birth to ideas (Adler, 1982, p. 29). This triadic system allotted strict temporal portions for each practice: first, coaching would absorb the lion’s share of activities across all curriculum—anywhere from 60 to 80%; second, lecture, in a dramatic pedagogical shift, would take no more than 15% of instruction, a sea change from the 85% of classroom time common at that time (Roberts & Billings, 1997; Ruenzel, 1997); third, the Socratic seminar was to occupy the remainder of time, as a once-per-week practice.

While the majority of the instructional time was devoted to the teacher-as-coach model, Adler’s designated class on the practice of Socratic discussion provided greater insight into the manner and methodology of discussion. According to Adler (1982), discussion should encourage both reflectivity and responsivity to the ideas of others. In discussion, students should be “sitting around a table instead of rows,” with the teacher as “one of the participants, not the principle
performer standing up in front of the group” (p. 54). Furthermore, Adler noted that the teacher was to be a facilitator of discussion, “moderating, guiding, correcting, leading, arguing like one more student” (p. 54). As with the implicit rules of conversation, the teacher would participate as an equal. For this method, Adler laid out rules of shared inquiry in which students, well-versed in the text, would come to class ready to engage, agree, or politely disagree with each other, all under the guiding hand of a facilitating teacher.

**Critique of Adler and his proposal.** Despite the initial interest in Adler’s proposal, the work of the Paideia Group fell under criticism during the late 1980s with the rise of multiculturalism. Some questioned whether Adler’s method was a distortion of Socratic practices, as he called for debate among students in conflict, rare in the Socratic dialogues (Rud, 1997). Furthermore, Matusov (2009) critiqued several practices within the Adler system: the absolute control held by the teacher; the text as a preselected, reified object of study; and the psychodynamic of pleasing the teacher. In a bold claim, he contended, such practices impose an “institution of pedagogical violence quite similar to the slave system that surrounds Socrates’ dialogues” (p. 54). Matusov charged that “in his educational manifesto, Adler does not trust the school to make students responsible for their own learning despite the fact he claims that self-actualization and self-improvement should be the primary goal of schooling” (p. 54). In the end, Adler’s Socratic model is decidedly paternalistic, with students positioned as rudderless children in need of control and direction rather than independent sentient beings.

In addition, Adler’s proposed curriculum for schools was a part of a larger argument and debate over what constituted “culture” in the United States. The cultural wars, as they were deemed, pitted conservative pedagogies against artists and writers seeking to overturn the hegemony of culture, political, rituals, and texts that had dominated American culture. In
academia, Allan Bloom’s (1987) work *The Closing of the American Mind* ignited a nationwide debate, one that continued for decades, as to what constituted the literary canon taught at universities. For decrying the simultaneous erosion of the university curriculum and the weak minds of students listening to rock music, Bloom was criticized far and wide—by philosophers (Nehamas, 1987; Nussbaum, 1987) for his questionable classical scholarship, by one editor characterizing Bloom as yet another “pious bully . . . beating up on the young, the poor” (Rieff, 1987, p. 960), and by yet another who anointed him “Chicago’s grumpy guru” (Atlas, 1988, p. 13). Some of the criticism materialized in curriculum shifts, as when Stanford University, sparked by student pressure, redesigned the required course “Western Civilization” to feature more inclusive and diverse text selections (Hamburger, 2018).

Interestingly, Bloom and Adler were a part of the same institutional constellation of thought, both situated at the University of Chicago. While Bloom looked down on Adler as an “equal opportunity intellectual” (Atlas, 1988, para. 19), both operated within an institution of fixed pedagogical tenets:

Under the stewardship of Robert Maynard Hutchins, who began his legendary tenure as president of the university in 1929, Chicago became famous as an institution devoted to the higher learning. Mortimer Adler, recruited by Hutchins to serve as a resident intellectual guide, introduced a program devoted to the classics of Western literature, and, by the mid-1930’s, what had begun as a course (General Honors 110) defined a milieu. (para. 19)

Common to Bloom, Adler, and the University of Chicago was the shared tradition of the Great Books movement. Still, in the emerging counterculture of multiculturalism, Adler’s traditional canon found critique and resistance as he attempted to transfer his ideas to the high school classroom. Furthermore, much of the work in the initial proposal was theoretical and provided little guidance for real implementation in the classroom (Roberts & Billings, 1997). In the frame of rhizomic structures, ideas that find no grip, once aborted, are likely to be replaced
with adaptive actions—tuberous roots, if you will—that may find greater hold in academic territories.

**Sustaining Ideas in the World: Adaptation, Discipleship, and Institutionalization**

Adler serves as an example of how ideas sustain themselves in the world. One key method to do so is through adaptation. As mentioned earlier, Adler and his fixation on White, male, canonical authors found less traction for the Junior Great Books initiative in the years to come. In fact, it was a sign of multicultural times that Adler’s foundation in 1995 was gifted a grant to diversify its authors and texts from the National Endowment of the Humanities (A Brief History of the Great Books Foundation, 2018). This gift marked how Adler’s ideas, encountering a greater culture force, had to adapt or lose funding, providing greater insight into how, when, and under what conditions rhizomic patterns of extension occur in the world. This corrective is an example of adaptation to survive, a force of social Darwinism and the will to power—here, with diversity and multiculturalism as a cultural force, rather than the “canon” as institution, rooted and unchangeable.

Another route through which ideas may materialize is through discipleship. Adler’s influence can be traced, at least partially, through his own disciples in practice. Like Plato to Socrates, Adler’s followers both continued and elaborated on the practices of his work. Some situated themselves in the educational institutions such as St John’s College, which modeled its college curriculum after the Great Books movement and the seminar led by a “tutor.” Some were more direct disciples, students of Adler or teacher educators of the method, while others offered practices that were similar to, yet overlapped with, those of Adler’s. Thus, such separated methods were tangled practices, distinguished from but interwoven with the parent practice.
Of course, ideas sustain themselves through institutionalization. In fact, I consider the varied streams of discipleship and the institutions formed from them as offshoots, that is, extensions of the initial structure carried forward by others, either through NGOs, publications, training programs, or some combination of each. Distinct from an offshoot is a supplement, parallel to Adler’s method, invested in the same Socratic ideologies but not a direct extension of discipleship to be considered an “offshoot.”

Offshoot 1: The National Paideia Center

Adler first learned how an idea could be operationalized through the Great Books Foundation established in 1932. Thirty years later, he followed his distribution of canonical books to adults with the adaptive offshoot of Junior Great Books. The Great Books Foundation certainly afforded Adler some experience in establishing another nonprofit, the National Paideia Center, in 1988. Thus, one vehicle to extend theory into the world, to operationalize it, was through the formation of an institution.

The implementation of discourse training in the Socratic seminar had a slow developmental structure. Adler first proposed the reformation of schools in 1982, and such an idea emerged out of long history of adult literacy programs, literature circles in schools, and Adler’s own belief in the value of canonical literature. Culminating in his treatise to change secondary school structures with a triadic division of lecture, coaching, and classroom seminars, Adler had no immediate plan outside of the publication of his work to provide outreach to schools and training for teachers. In fact, Gray (1984) worried that the Paideia Proposal had not made good on its promises. Amid a crowded marketplace of commission reports eager for reform, Gray questioned whether the follow-up publication in 1983, *Paideia Problems and Possibility*, had any effect. Driving the reform theory was the Paideia Group, a loose collection
of 22 scholars whom some derided as “ivory-tower elitists” (p. 57). Some questioned whether such a collection of university scholars could affect systematic change across high school curriculum and methods. Gray, a member of the group, estimated that it would take a decade for any real reform to take place.

As it turns out, Gray’s concerns were neither ungrounded nor far off in his prediction. The group, in fact, had little effect on translating the largely theoretical proposal into real classroom practice (Roberts & Billings, 1997). Perhaps as a solution to such inaction and in line with past initiatives, Adler established an NGO, and with a small grant in 1988, the National Paideia Center (NPC) was formed.

**Slow growth and extensions.** Five years later in 1993, Adler hired Terry Roberts as director to helm the NPC at the University of North Carolina. Starting with 10 schools, Roberts began the outreach into classroom practice that was to evolve in the coming years. The process was slow, as Roberts and Billings (1997) wrote of the prolonged difficulty in implementing the broad reforms suggested by Adler’s (1982) work. In fact, it was close to a decade after the initial proposal that the program was introduced in classrooms and nearly 17 years later when the foundation reported that 80 schools in 10 states had implemented the program. The aim of Roberts’s work was not a broad treatise of reform, but rather a system to provide classroom teachers with practical guidelines for the classroom. Though it took many years to implement, at long last receiving a grant in 1999, the NPC was enlisted to train teachers in 97 public schools in North Carolina.

In terms of curriculum, Roberts represented a younger generation of scholarship. As such, his view of a canon for high school was decidedly different than that of Adler’s. Robert’s “new” Paideia updated the curriculum of instruction to include a greater diversity of suggested
authors for discussion, notably citing Walker’s *The Color Purple* as a modern “classic” to prompt the higher-order discussion of the Socratic seminar.

**Offshoot 2: The Coalition of Essential Schools—How Paideia Informs a Theory of Rhizomic Development**

Such critique and reform of method suggest that one manner in which thought and practice are sustained is through some form of responsive mediation. What is true with the individual, who may reflect upon one’s ideas in light of classroom discourse to decide on a course of thought and action, is also true of formalized organizations. When reflective and adaptable, organizations prevent themselves from becoming a monolith of method or adhering to a set of practices that may become soon outdated for the era.

The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) was another offshoot of Adler’s work, realized by educational reformer Ted Sizer, a member of the Paideia Group and former headmaster of Philips Andover Academy (1972-1981). According to NPC director Terry Roberts, Sizer’s organization was “a step-son” to Adler’s work which, initially comprised of 12 schools, had ballooned to over 100 (as of the 2015-2016 report). Sizer’s unique approach and varied pedagogical strains of influence, from Andover to Brown to Harvard to Adler, are crucial when one considers how the philosophy of CES informed pedagogical practices. For instance, Lead Teacher of Science Elizabeth Cardine noted that adoption of the Harkness discussion in a physics classroom was inspired by the practices of Eagle Rock School, a CES affiliate school (Carter, 2006). She wrote the following:

I first heard about Eagle Rock School at a CES conference, and soon after scheduled a professional visit the following spring . . . [in] 2004 or ‘05. I didn’t get to witness a Harkness [discussion] but heard enough description of it that I felt confident giving it a go on my own. I couldn’t find much in the way of documentation online for such a practice, but soon evolved into my own sort of protocol, keeping in mind the essential elements. It is one of my favorite forms of structured discourse, but we use many diverse forms at our school—as a laboratory of democratic practice (members of the First
Amendment Schools project), we try to give our students multiple means of practicing discussion explicitly. (E. Cardine, personal communication, February 8, 2018)

Here, a practice stemming from Adler and Socratic discussion evolved into something related yet distinct, as it merged with the corollary practice of Harkness discussion. As may be common with classroom teachers, practices are adopted, tested, modified, and reintegrated into classroom method. The assumption, then, that any instructional practice is adopted purely or exclusively from theory to classroom practice may not, in effect, be the case. Cardine learned of the practice from other teachers at a conference, which she subsequently tested in her practice.

As an institution, CES is an example of an organization that did not sustain itself outside of the force of its founder. In March of 2017, with 33 years of instituting school reform and 8 years after the death its founder, CES was disbanded by its board, leaving the website and its resources available to CES centers, schools, and other nonprofit organizations. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote, some offshoots may die off, only to be supplanted by new practices.

**Supplement 1: Socrates, Philosophy for Children (P4C), and the History of P4C**

While I acknowledge offshoots as direct disciples of Adler’s practice that extend, detail, and revise the project of the Socratic seminar, I would also like to propose the supplementary practice. By supplement, I consider an existing, corollary practice that is simultaneously propagating itself into pedagogy and the training of teachers. Connected to Adler through the nominal pedagogy of Socratic questioning and inquiry is the work of Matthew Lipman, a professor of philosophy and founder of Philosophy for Children (P4C).

Founded in the mid-1970s by Lipman, the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) began to produce training programs to instruct professors of philosophy in how to train teachers to conduct discussions of critical and philosophical inquiry. Using children’s stories to conduct complex critical thinking skills or “philosophical novels” and
“communities of inquiry,” Lipman sought to debunk Piaget’s idea that young adults only think concretely rather than abstractly. Instead, Lipman argued that philosophical ideas, such as fairness or truth, could be readily understood by an 11-year-old. His first pilot study found significant development in reasoning skills and intellectual skills that were transferable to other subjects. With this promising start, Lipman, with Ann Margaret Sharp in 1974, founded the IAPC or Philosophy for Children, later coined by students informally as P4C (The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children [IAPC], 2018).

**From theory to praxis.** What is most compelling about the theories undergirding P4C is its translation into praxis. An extension of the Socratic method of inquiry, P4C encouraged students to reason through stories scripted to engage with philosophical issues, related to justice, beauty, truth, goodness, and the nature of reality. In practice, Lipman, Sharp, and Oscanyan (1980) mapped out some ideals of what constitutes a good discussion:

> A good discussion is cumulative, each contribution is in effect of a line of force or vector that converges upon others and is orchestrated with the others. Whether there is complete agreement or disagreement at the close of the episode is relatively unimportant; what matters is that the contributions from each participant relate to and reinforce one another as each participant learns from what the others have said . . . and as each successive contribution to the discussion reflects the successful increments of understanding that that participant has amassed. (p. 112)

A discussion for Lipman is a convergence and accumulation of “vectors” or “lines of force” that are “orchestrated with the others.” Such inquiry is open-ended rather than finite, not seeking consensus but rather a multiplicity of perspectives.

To implement his vision, Lipman published a series of curriculum stories; the first, *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery* in 1970, had a limited print run of 350 copies. Lipman wrote *Harry* from the point of view of a fifth grader for a fifth-grade audience, and the work muses on the nature of thinking and thinking about thinking, which Harry concludes “allows us to understand
ourselves better” (as cited in Pritchard, 2018, para. 31). This model of student-centered stories that mark the philosophical in the quotidiant became the frame for Lipman’s future curriculum.

Subsequent ethics primers followed, each written to a specific age and titled and centered around students of each age group, including Lisa (1976), Suki (1978), Mark (1980), Pixie (1981), and Kio and Gus (1982). Lisa, for example, centers on an incident that asks students to consider the principle of “returning in kind,” the philosophical idea of reciprocity, and whether it is conditional or absolute. Lipman, offering a conundrum to explore in his story, scripted both the scenario of a promise of repayment for a gift received and a retaliation in response to a prior offense. The work questions whether both are justified in making things even. This scenario was written by Lipman for 10-11-year-olds to open up a discussion, and the remaining works, each written to a singular grade level, invite similar though age-appropriate queries for students to ponder.

Part of the success of P4C was the combination of theoretical, curricular, and instructional training publications. Unlike the Paideia Group and its method, P4C had a catalogue of instructional works. What was also important was the particular structure of a nonprofit organization attached to the education department of Montclair State University. Here, Lipman had resources to develop test sites of practice in local schools, which he did in 1975, for a long-term study of 4,500 students in diverse communities in New Jersey. In 1976, workshops and conferences were initiated at universities such as Rutgers, Fordham, Yale, and Harvard. Continued funding of the organization through government and foundation grants allowed for continued research in schools. In addition, Montclair State University established a master’s program in 1983 and a doctoral program in 1995 in P4C.
Centralization and success. P4C raises the question of how one program succeeds in moving beyond the theoretical where other programs have foundered. Part of the success of P4C had to do with the centralization of the program at one university, the concerted effort to design and publish a practical curriculum, pilot studies in New Jersey to implement the program, and the launch of long-term empirical studies to evaluate the program’s effectiveness. Of course, all such work affords the foundation a better chance of sustained funding. In summary, a constellation of factors—a program that moves from theory to practice, from the university to the classroom—is one that with its success in one country can be easily replicated in others. In fact, the practices of the P4C were introduced in the United Kingdom through the 1990 BBC-produced film *Socrates for Six Year Olds*, broadcast in Britain, the United States, Japan, and Israel, among other countries globally. After the broadcast, over 2,000 inquiries were made about the program. One year later, initial steps were made to set up what would become the Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (SAPERE, 2015), an NGO and the heartbeat of P4C in the United Kingdom (Williams, 2018).

Reach of the program. Though it may be difficult to track the overall reach of P4C, one may have some sense of how sites of interest and footholds of practice have taken significant root. In the United Kingdom, for instance, P4C is at the heart of the teacher training nonprofit SAPERE. In the past 25 years since its inception, SAPERE has trained close to 27,000 teachers in the practice. In 2016-17 alone, SAPERE reported training 4,711 teachers at Level 1. With the assumption that each of those teachers instructed 20 students, P4C has impacted the academic lives of 94,220 students (SAPARE, 2015). While Lipman brought philosophical ideas into the classroom for inquiry, other figures in the wake of Socrates adopted the method to apply to what was considered the canon of literature.
Supplement 2: Structured Academic Controversy

Other scholars have examined methodological practices based on the Socratic discussion or argumentation (Haroutunian-Gordan, 1988; Johnson & Johnson, 1988; Woodruff, 1998). What emerged was a growing interest in classroom discussion guided toward a teleological end of skill mastery and cognitive growth. While such Socratic work may have appeared to be dialogical, it was, in fact, more monological, given that participants developed fixed positions as in debate or structured academic controversy (SAC). In fact, while Socratic discussion may encourage some movement toward truth, as understood by the instructor and sought by each student, the polarization of issues and “sides” of an argument in debate and SAC appear to enact the practice of sophistry, in which students adopt a predetermined position and argue to win. In later decades of inquiry, these practices came under greater scrutiny.

Supplement 3: The Harkness Method

Another mode of encircled discussion is the Harkness method, a method that rests alongside the practices of Adler and Lipman, all the while independent from them in its development. Unlike methods inspired by Adler or Socrates, the Harkness method emerged from the mind and philanthropy of a singular man, Edward Harkness, offered to the head of Phillip Exeter Academy (PEA), Lewis Perry. This friendship between Harkness and Perry first began at a wedding in 1902 and led to three small contributions to PEA in the 1920s, later culminating in 1930 with the largest single gift to a secondary school in the country of $5.8 million, the equivalent today of upwards of $83 million. When deciding on how to earmark the funds, Harkness rejected the initial proposal offered and instead suggested that the school reframe its pedagogy. From his handwritten notes, Perry reflected:
Harkness . . . has his mind fixed on smaller classes 8-10 and on the conference method of instruction. . . . His whole idea is the dull boy, like himself, who was in large class in mathematics and did not know what was going on. Remember the conference system of teaching that is the big idea! . . . Not recitations, but conferences (as cited from Towler, 2006, pp. 41-42)

Harkness envisioned a classroom “where [students] could sit around a table with a teacher who would talk with them and instruct them by a sort of tutorial or conference method, where [each student] would feel encouraged to speak up. This would be a real revolution in methods” (The Harkness Gift, 2018). This revolution was indeed realized through the commissioning of the large wooden tables, named after Harkness himself, which served to reorganize each classroom space from rows of desks into an encircled configuration for discussion.

**The table configures discourse.** The tables themselves, ovular and made of solid wood, were designed in such a way to seat 12-16 students who, due to shape of the table, would remain in full view of one another. Transforming both the space and teaching methodology, the seminar table mimicked the physical configuration of the college seminar table, but the method itself went far beyond the Socratic. Harkness displaced the teacher into a keen and engaged position observation (Exeter Humanities Institute [EHI], 2014), and students were encouraged to participate within shared rules of discussion, including respect for the other, participation in active listening, and a commitment to build on the ideas of others.

A typical Harkness discussion in a humanities class would have some common text for inquiry, with the teacher initiating what would be a student-driven discussion. Today, students are encouraged to address one another by name, be respectful, listen actively, and cite the text by page number in commentary. Teachers and students at Exeter agree on the inherent democratic features of Harkness, calling it “egalitarian.” The method accepts both consensus and varied opinions, offering that it builds “a common understanding of . . . points of view” while also
delivering a “balance . . . of different perspectives” (Jordan, Siepser, & Maselli, as cited in EHI, 2014). Researchers and practitioners are quick to point out how the Harkness method democratizes space in the class, presenting open rather than leading questions, and allows students to follow their own pathways instead of those grooved by the directed path prescribed by the teacher (EHI, 2014).

**The evolution of Exeter.** Since 1781, Exeter has undergone what has been deemed an “evolution” of curriculum based on two pressing influences: Harvard University and Edward Harkness (Kim, 2015, p. 28). The influence of Harvard cannot be understated in that since the late 19th century, Exeter had shaped its curriculum to prepare students for entry into Harvard. Were the entrance requirements to change, as they did when Charles Eliot took the helm in 1869, to include sciences, history and modern languages, Exeter’s preparatory curriculum would follow suit. In the early 20th century, Exeter’s curriculum was a mixture of traditional coursework in ancient languages and math, combined with new subjects in the humanities such as English and history.

**Agent of change: Edward Harkness.** The other significant change in the curriculum was the extraordinary gift by Edward Harkness, which shifted not only the configuration of the classroom, but also the ratio of teacher to student in each:

Student to faculty ratios hovering around 39-to-1 left little room for individual instruction on discussion. After the Harkness gift, the student to faculty rations were slashed to roughly 10-to-1, and there was now much more room for give-and-take, discussion and inquiry. With this change, traditional instruction and progressive ideas clashed, and a host of pedagogical issues came to the surface. (Kim, 2015, p. 21)

Faculty took on major curriculum reviews at PEA in 1945, 1973, and 1985, with adjustments made to the depth of curriculum and, in the later review, a reconsideration of the “goodness.” In method, the Harkness table and the discussion surrounding it were at the heart of each English
classroom. In addition, while the faculty shared the belief that students would drive the
discussion, faculty would ask questions, and the discussion itself would be tracked and reflected
on, they also acknowledged variations of practice (Hassan, 2015, p. 13). Not each student was
instructed in precisely the same way as each was understood as unique in her or his educational
needs.

Shifts in curriculum. Though there have been three schoolwide curriculum reviews, the
English department still maintains a curatorial vision of its program, as evidenced from the most
recent catalogue which combines both grounding in traditional works and a mix of electives to
keep step with the times. In the senior-year electives, for instance, the department has responded
to educational trends in teaching film, graphic novels, hip-hop, and a range of diverse authors
outside of what was once considered the canon. Such electives offer students great latitude of
exploration and choice. Course titles such as “Beyond Korean Cool,” “Baseball as Narrative,” or
“Art as Protest” and courses on queer theory, critical race theory, science fiction, and hip-hop
give some indication of the latitude the faculty has to introduce new ideas (Phillips Exeter
Academy, 2017).

Still, the department offers a mix of both “canonical” and contemporary authors. Students
can, for example, opt into an immersion class of writers such as Jane Austen, James Baldwin,
Samuel Beckett, William Faulkner, Herman Melville, and Virginia Woolf. These traditional
offerings rest alongside more contemporary and diverse authors, such as Junot Díaz, Louise
Erdrich, Kazuo Ishiguro, Cormac McCarthy, Toni Morrison, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Salman
Rushdie, Zadie Smith, and Derek Walcott (Phillips Exeter Academy, 2017). In this way, the
department has one foot grounded in the past and one in the future.
One may be easily enamored of the ideal realized at Exeter and the capacity for the department to think so progressively about its curriculum. However, choice and freedom are functions of independence and money. Private schools are not held accountable to state standards and the monolithic curriculum choices as are public schools. Moreover, Exeter, with the largest endowment of any private school in the country at $1.15 billion, is financially independent from any person or institution, such as state or church, which may dictate programmatic thought. Therefore, for the rarity that is Exeter, the passage from theory to praxis remains free and clear.

**Capturing the mysterious method.** Practitioners of the Harkness method speak to the mystery of it even as they attempt to articulate its mechanisms (Foley, p. 130). A former principal of PEA viewed the method as “essentially Socratic,” yet Sneeden (2015) distinguished how Harkness “discovery” differs from that of “the silent absorption of lecture halls or the high-octane Socratic investigation of that clearinghouse perched like a raptor on the corner of his desk” (p. 103). Defining what Harkness *is* and what it *is not* can lead to a reevaluation of terms, such as Socratic, that have come to point to a variety of questioning methods, be it rapid fire or heuristic.

Some practitioners employ metaphor to characterize the nature of discussion in the classroom. Both Sneeden (2015) and Perdamo (2015) imagined the method as being akin to improvisational jazz. Sneeden pointed to the jazz-like challenge of “variability” in adapting his “voice to a conversation that is flexible, open” (p. 101). Perdamo noted that each day of teaching is like “looking forward to a new ‘jam session,’ always eager to see who is going to bring the new riffs” (p. 95).

**Chaos theory.** Several practitioners have observed the chaos and mess of the Harkness method (DiCarlo, 2015; MacKean, 2015). Math teacher DiCarlo, a “numbers guy,” wrote of the
butterfly effect, particularly with the operations of chaotic systems which demonstrate “extreme sensitivity” and, as a result, diverge rapidly from their initial proximities. One might consider how DiCarlo’s metaphor visualizes conflicting beliefs on heated discussion topics, such as political ideology, race, gender, or sexuality.

In illustrating chaotic systems, DiCarlo noted how a billiard ball, banking off the edges of each perimeter, creates a chaos pattern, one that might just as easily map what might be deemed a “great discussion” (p. 116). MacKean’s “mess” is brought to light with the commentary of Todd Hearon who echoed a similar chaos theory:

There can be a lot of mush in this process, and then when it happens, it’s like a swirling vortex collecting into a center around an idea. There is a multiplicity of viewpoints, not a consensus but a gathering of various ways of looking at an idea, different aspects of a complex and/or provisional truth . . . they are seen not through a telescope but through a kaleidoscope, an instrument that can hold many nuances, constantly shifting and recombining. (Hearon, as cited by Brownback, 2018, p. 120)

Hearon’s kaleidoscope metaphor, a visual analogue to jazz, is one in which ideas are refracted and recombined through discussion through multiple voices, allowing for variations of configurations of the same elements.

**Table manners.** Metaphors aside, some hard and true facts of the method are known: the practice emerges from a table seating 12 (Kim, 2015); students drive the discussion, there is a commitment to listening and respecting others, and, as per Harkness’s own directive, “the average or below average boy would feel encouraged to speak up, present his difficulties” (as cited by Kim, 2015, pp. 26-27). Students cannot avoid discussion and are encouraged to consider one another’s comments and generate their own ideas in their own language. In turn, teachers are discouraged from correction or merely demonstrating mastery, akin to the dog-and-pony show several practitioners mentioned (Kurtz, 2015, p. 59). Instead, the teacher is more of a curator, or in Sneeden’s (2015) view, an editor or “overseeing mind” of a collective paper constructed
through the dialogue of the table. The teacher’s role then becomes marginal, as one might “insert . . . comments in the margin of an essay,” to guide the “authors” toward “the direction that will be most fruitful” and to “do justice to their impulses which started the discussion” (p. 102).

**Effects of Harkness.** One effect of the table is that each student is in full view of another; with this configuration, students are encouraged to address each other by name. This seemingly small action promotes intellectual identity, history, the use of citation, and peer respect. In fact, Boadi (2015) wrote of the humanizing effect of the table:

> Acceptance from “the other” is an invaluable tool in Harkness pedagogy. Both at the table and in writing. Harkness encourages students always to imagine the other by acknowledging and demonstrating understanding of the other perspective, even as they disagree with it. It makes real the quintessential statement, I understand your position, but I disagree. (p. 106)

Over time, encounters of the table allow for students to unite, even in their divisions of thought. Such examples come from teachers in the classroom who practice the method every day for multiple classes per day.

While it is doubtless, given accounts from students, teachers, and administrators, that the Harkness method has had great effect, teacher researchers in the humanities have not conducted any formal pedagogical studies. Recent work on the method was self-published by Exeter itself under the guidance of the headmaster. As such, the book delivers best-case scenarios, metaphors, and musings written by teachers for the head of school. One may question whether such research is a reliable examination of the method or whether such a method is even transferrable to low-income school populations who are culturally and linguistically diverse. My own studies, presented at conferences, have noted the complexity of open forum discussions among diverse student populations and the struggle for students to remain at ease with disagreement, particularly around complex issues (Gregory, 2016, 2017). It is without a doubt that the teachers
of the Harkness method have many stories of difficulty, trouble, and even alienation at the table, but the work published noticeably eschews the more problematic investigations of the method in favor of metaphors, theories, and stories of best practices.

**The reach of Harkness.** Training in the Harkness method occurs during summer seminars at Exeter Academy in New Hampshire and involves nine week-long conferences that introduce the method to a variety of disciplines, including humanities, math and science, Shakespeare, writing, and environmental literature (Towler, 2014).

However, the reach of Harkness extends beyond the training of the Institutes. Veteran teacher Johnathon Sauer, wrote that after 23 years of math instruction, he started anew (Sauer, 2012). He did so, on the recommendation of an advisor, by introducing the Harkness method into his classroom. In his blog, he chronicled his journey, noting that all he had to guide him were the resources from the Exeter website. As a public school teacher with larger class sizes, he adapted. He continued his practice and reflective blog, and it was only years later in 2014 when he first attended the week-long Institute to witness another math teacher employ the method. Inspired by his practice, another teacher at the school in the English department followed suit, attending the conference in 2013. The extension of practice thus occurs through existing practitioners and word-of-mouth.

According to conference manager Rachel Hanson, Exeter’s program, first implemented in 2000, began with 55 participants each year for the first decade until 2011. Thereafter, the training program was expanded to 70 participants each year, and recently, after 2014, to 110 each year. Since its inception, 905 educators have participated in the program, representing 356 schools and 27 countries. Though there are international participants, the overwhelming majority of participants, over 90%, hail from the United States and Canada.
In addition, 45% of participating schools have sent more than one teacher to the conference during this period. With 13 schools sending 10 or more teachers to the conference over the past 10 years, a rough estimate of 14% of all attendees come from the same cluster of schools. As 80% of the schools are independent, the extension of the program is concentrated and isolated to the clustered private schools in the United States and Canada (R. Hanson, personal communication, February 12, 2018 and February 14, 2018).

The reach of the program, however, should have little bearing on its merits. With its limited reach, the Harkness method is a subordinated, rather than dominant, classroom practice. Nonetheless, the method, rarely studied and infrequently written about, deserves greater attention.

Supplements 4 and 5: Critical Thinking and Literature Circles

An additional method that intersects with the various forms of discussion is Richard Paul’s work with critical thinking. Paul’s NGO, the Foundation for Critical Thinking, provides training and resources for teachers, including methods that incorporate Socratic discussion. The work of Harvey Daniels in 1994 is also relevant to discourse practices, as his development of literature circles brought children into small self-directed discussions around shared texts. Many of the guidelines of such student-driven discussions share much in common with larger group discussions. That said, these practices have notable differences from those previously mentioned. Classical, philosophical texts typically drove Paul’s “critical thinking” discussions, similar to some “Socratic seminars” but distinct from the literary texts common to Harkness or literature circles or the self-composed texts of Lipman. In addition, Daniels never formulated a nonprofit institution, but instead acted as a consultant and author of instructional texts for teachers. Thus, the reach of his work, without the administration of an NGO, could only go as far as publication
sales, which are themselves difficult to track. Moreover, sales figures in themselves are not necessarily an indicator of implementation in the classroom. Sadly, some work never leaves the dark stacks of the library.

The Role of the NGO

In overview, we can see the varied tuberous systems—Harkness, P4C, critical thinking, literature circles, and the Paideia method—as concurrent methods, each exerting itself through nonprofit institutions, instructional publications, and teacher training programs to reshape classroom discourse. It is not merely a single proposal or paper on practice that initiates change, but the force of entire institutions, which infiltrate schools, host training seminars, and provide online support through their websites. Writing a book, lecturing, delivering addresses, while presumably reaching educators, have neither the measurable reach nor latitude that workshops and coaching have. Thus, each of these institutions—Exeter Humanities Institute, National Paideia Center, Great Books Foundation, Coalition of Essential Schools, and Foundation for Critical Thinking—provides the designated staff and resources to implement methodological shifts. To support their training workshops, many of these institutions issue publications to provide added support. In some instances, theory preceded the institution and its work (Sizer, 1984/2004); in contrast, the practice of the institution in other cases yielded instructional publications (Lipman, 1980; Roberts & Billings, 1997).

Nourishing the Roots of Practice: Publication and NGOs

Theoretical ideas find their way into the world through a series of formalized extensions. Scholarship, when not grounded in teacher training, could remain an abstraction never to materialize in the lives of students. From this mapping of Socratic theory and practice, it is notable that many works of instructional training were formulated from actual programs of
teacher training and classroom practices. While theory frames and embraces the initial root-like structure, the formalization of theory through institutions provides the testing of theory in practice. It is such a model, one in which practice can be refined, revised, and adapted, that generates the formulation of instructional publications.

One noted gap between theory and its application was between Adler’s theoretical work and the development, through his nonprofit, of teacher training programs. Roberts and Billings (1997) wrote with candor about the initial failures of the proposal to translate to the classroom and curriculum:

Despite the comprehensive synthesis of ideas, the Paideia program was not widely adopted as a school reform blueprint until the early 1990s, in part because its original proponents had little actual experience in public schools and found it difficult to translate their ideals into the real world of master schedules and state-adopted texts. (p. 5)

Roberts and Billings accepted the task of translating the theories outlined in the Paideia Proposal into practices manageable for classroom teachers. They provided guidelines for classroom discourse, notes on unit plans, assessments, directives on seating instructions and rubrics for grading, and even sample lesson plans. Roberts and Billings’s work, then, provided an example of how ideas developed through formalized nonprofit institutions can test pedagogical theories.

**Grafting Methodologies in Instructional Publications**

In this theory of rhizomic extension, publications of teacher training manuals work in conjunction with other methods to shift discourse practices. One of Adler’s disciples, Victor Moeller and his son Marc Moeller (2002), wrote an instructional book that interconnected the ideas of Daniels (1994) and Adler (1982) with greater pragmatic detail to curriculum. This enfolding of literature circles and the Socratic seminar is akin to an aspect of rhizomic articulation of enfolding, which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) likened to William Burroughs’s cut-up method: “the folding of one text onto another, which constitutes multiple and even
adventitious roots (like a cutting) . . . a supplementary dimension to that of the text under consideration” (p. 6). Hence, in the breakout, movement, and extension of ideas, two or more works or practices may operate in concert as supplements to an idea, giving the idea greater strength to sustain itself in practice.

This grafting articulation of the rhizome is illustrated in the work of Moeller, who worked for 14 years (1967-1981) as an in-service instructor and area director for the Great Books Foundation in training teachers how to conduct discussions. In creating his work, Moeller and his son enfolded their own training and classroom to flesh out the abstractions of Adler’s proposal. Copeland (2005) did the same with a book of his own, providing rubrics for teachers to evaluate Socratic discussions and writing about his own experience in the classroom.

The Vagaries of a Publication’s Reach

While books provide helpful instructional guidance, details on book sales are difficult to ascertain or even judge in terms of implementation of practice in classrooms. Still, Adler’s work provides an example of how the theoretical work had little real effect on classroom practice, even while the work itself was much discussed and debated. Hence, the route for new methodologies in the classroom is only developed through the institutions that provide direct and classroom training. Theory itself does not have the practical focus to materialize change. That said, practical “take-aways” and tips for methods, without the backing of theory, run the risk of lacking focus or being corrupted in their circulation and replication.

Mapping of New Territories of Discourse

Much of this tangled interrelation of stems and offshoots is difficult to conceptualize in language, as rhizomic structures are inherently material and graphic. Figure 2 illustrates the interrelation between theorist, scholar (light blue and rust), nonprofit institution (yellow),
author/teacher/instructor (dark blue), and subsequent publication (green). The horizontal structure is meant to convey the rhizomic element or how one element emerges from another: that is, how one scholar extends the ideas of Socrates, how the foundation extends the ideas of that scholar into teacher training, and how that foundational experience of praxis in training and consultation allows for some instructional book on methodology in the classroom. Such a mapping allows one to view the interconnections between separate, yet related, overlapping practices. As such, one may make the following claims:

• Inspired by the Socratic method, scholars Adler, Sizer, Lipman, and Paul have exerted a clustered influence over various centers and foundations that their work has inspired. Of note is that Sizer, a disciple of Adler and expert fundraiser, was able to formulate a corollary foundation and method that did not merely replicate Adler’s work, but reconceived the work into a design for school reform. Thus, the force of discipleship, a singular figure well-situated, and financing have a direct relation to the capacity of extension of any given theory to extend itself through an NGO.

• Outliers and outsider methods such as the Harkness method and literature circles, though not formally “connected” or institutionally connected to the other practices, are nonetheless conceptually related, even as certain methodologies and practices remain distinctive. (See Table 3 in the next chapter for a comparative survey of similarities and differences among the methods of this chapter.)
Figure 2. Territorial map of people, institutions, and publications
• Institutionalization, that is, the establishment of an NGO, formalizes and directs such theory toward training and shifting classroom practices. It is notable that some NGOs have succeeded in continuing after the death of their founder (Adler, Lipman, and Paul). Others have not been able to continue without the energy and force of their founding director; for example, CES disbanded operations in 2017 although the website and resources remain available.

• Institutionalization proliferates streams of influence, as with P4C, whose practices have expanded to global organizations.

• Instructional works have often followed institutionalization since several of the works emerge from practitioners (Hassan, 2015; Moeller & Moeller, 2002/2013; Roberts & Billings, 1997). Thus, these works are not theoretical, but based on observation, teacher training, and practice in the classroom (Copeland, 2005).

**Thoughts on Mapping**

Such mappings, such as that in Figure 2, allow researchers to identify the interconnections between intellectual activities. The mapping is, of course, a reduction, necessarily limited in its scope. One might imagine a mapping inclusive of all discourse methods globally, including book groups and discussion circles. One might have similar mappings for afterschool programs, prison literacy programs, or even online discussion groups. One can imagine how such a map might expand with continuous offshoots of influence, and perhaps with metrics and new data, such a map might be formulated more easily in the years to come. My aim here is to establish a baseline, a preliminary understanding of how thought proliferates in education and educational transformation. The influence of Socratic inquiry and related methods of instruction, such as the Harkness method or literature circles in secondary classrooms, affords
the opportunity to see how rhizomic structures operate in offshoots, how corollary practices such as Harkness and Socratic questioning abut each other, or how distinct pedagogies of instruction join in new formulations as a hybrid practice, as with Moeller and Moeller’s literature circles and Socratic discussion. Such rhizomic extensions of practice are particular to the reemergence of Socratic discussion. In addition, even when the tuberous root of a program has been hindered from growth (as with the abstractions of Adler) or destroyed altogether (as with Sizer and CES), the unity of the root and its continued potentiality for growth through “secondary root grafts” remain always possible. Methods and practices may indeed find new life and territories. Perhaps such rhizomic maps may provide some forecast of how the work of two other scholars, Bakhtin and Freire, might come to proliferate, constrict, and reemerge. I address the particular extension of the work of these two scholars in the next chapter, at the end of which I offer a summary of the practices of these two chapters, considering teacher training and comparative student reach as yet another means of visualizing and recording rhizomic extension and the impact of discourse practices.
VI - THE FAR, WIDE, AND NEAR OF REFORM: FREIRE AND BAKHTIN

It is incorrect, moreover, to think that maps, for instance, prove the reality of the zoom effect: when one shifts from a map on a scale of 1 cm. to 1 km. to one on 1 cm. to 10 km., the latter does not contain the same information as the former: it contains other information that might (or might not) coincide with what appears in the former. In spite of appearances, the optical and cartographic metaphors do not overlap. It might even be said that the former has become so parasitical on the latter that it has rendered the very concept of cartography almost incomprehensible. Optics has distorted cartography entirely. (Latour, 2014, p. 121)

Bruno Latour wrote of the dual perspectives of the microscope and the telescope, in which the cartography of the zoom has become a parasite of the view from afar, the map—the Google map, as it were—from great distance. Latour argued that each map contains its own useful set of information and that the data between the two points of view do not “overlap” as one might expect. The Google effect has become so commonplace that the postmodern mind has come to view the zoom as some verification of reality and the view from afar, a vague generalization of detail.

From a researcher’s point of view, the microscopic and telescopic views offer multiple vantage points to further understand discourse theory in the classroom. From a close perspective, I examine the School of the Dialogue of Cultures (SDC), a program localized in a handful of select schools, which was inspired by the work of Bakhtin and filtered through the vision of Bibler. It is, what I would call, microreform.

By comparison, I review the Freire’s work at the height of his political and educational influence and his attempt to exert some change in São Paulo. One views this telescopically, examining the citywide reach of a plan implemented with great speed. This chapter examines the extension of ideas in two optic modes: a localized, relatively microscopic aspect of reform, and a
plan of great expansion and latitude, a reform viewed from above. In the deconstructive mode within established dichotomies, such as the near versus far view, one may be tempted, as Latour warned, to posit that the microscopic has a greater inherent sense of validity and truth. I aim to consider side-by-side discourse theories that have materialized in practices in widespread and local communities. Each view offers its own truth of how theory becomes or does not become effectively manifested and territorialized in classroom space. I begin first with Freire.

**Freire, Culture Circles, and the Telessala Method**

When he returned to Brazil after years in exile in the 1980s, Freire’s grand project to redesign the educational practices in São Paulo was the culmination of literacy work that had more humble beginnings. In the 1950s and 1960s, Freire administered small literacy campaigns in rural Brazil, campaigns that became the model that he would later replicate and expand into larger territories. However, before the reform in São Paulo is addressed, it may be useful to consider first the early formation of culture circles.

**The Culture Circle**

As an educational leader, Freire found the means to work institutionally on behalf of the public to provide education to the masses. After receiving his Ph.D. in 1959, Freire was well situated within the University of Recife to work on adult literacy. He soon established the Adult Education Program of the Popular Culture Movement and assumed the directorship of the Cultural Extension Service, a new outreach arm of the university. Freire’s interest in adult literacy was supported by the local government, and he received a grant from the United States Agency for International Development to train and fund 70 workers to implement a pilot literacy program (Brown, 1978, pp. 5-6).
The program worked directly with the rural illiterate poor, and Freire commissioned 10 illustrations from artist Francisco Brennand as prompts for philosophical discussions on issues related to nature and culture. The illustrations were drawn to initiate various abstract discussions, questioning what constituted culture, whether animals make products of culture, and how various elements of culture, such as clothing, are contextual to environment, among others.

For Freire, the content was equal to the method. Discussions were “culture circles,” as coordinators offered questions to begin each discussion. The series of illustrations culminated in a drawing of the culture circle itself, in which rural farmers, after a series of philosophical discussions, came to consider “what the experience has meant, what dialogue is, and what it means to raise one consciousness. By the time the group has reached this tenth picture, participants had regained enormous confidence in themselves, pride in their culture, and desire to learn to read” (Brown, 1978, p. 20). This consciousness raising, known as conscientização, elicited outside of written language, became the liberatory method that allowed participants to “recover their eagerness to read” (p. 20). From there, participants moved on to basic language literacy in culture circles with anywhere between 6-30 participants for 1 hour in the evenings over the course of 6 to 8 weeks (p. 25). Of the 75% of those who completed the course of instruction, all had basic literacy skills of writing and reading the newspaper. The success of culture circles inspired Freire to imagine a broader program of 20,000 circles to shepherd literacy to two million impoverished, illiterate citizens—citizens who could then vote in the coming elections (p. 27).

This ambition never came to pass for Freire. Two years after the implementation of the program, the funding was withdrawn. More detrimental to the project and the country as a whole, however, was Brazil’s military coup in April of 1964, ending the program altogether. Under the
new regime, educational program leaders were arrested, and Freire, out of the state at the time, was first placed under house arrest, jailed for 70 days, and displaced to Chile from his native country. Though in exile, Freire continued his work in South America and Africa. The culture circles he had developed with the Brazilian farmers provided Freire with literacy strategies and methods for the years to come.

In fact, Freire’s pedagogy of the culture circle had never been bounded by the classroom, schoolhouse, or rural communities.

He believed in “cultural circles” to be an expression of this new pedagogy that was not reduced to the simplistic notion of “classroom.” In the present community of knowledge that is much more certain, as “learning space” which is much larger than the school. The new spaces of formation (the media—radio, television, videos; churches; unions; businesses; NGOs; families; Internet, etc.) extend the notion of school and the classroom. Education has become communitarian, virtual, multicultural, and ecological, and school extends to the city and to the planet. (Torres, 2013, p. 63)

Hence, the cultural circle, though it began in the countryside among the rural poor in the favelas or shanty towns, extended to other dialogical spaces, including businesses, unions, religious organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. Freire soon brought the epistemology of liberatory dialogue, of critical consciousness, to bear on the practices of governmental and educational administration. In effect, his liberatory dialogues with rural farmers became operationalized as a practice in teacher education, administration, and implementation of mass literacy practices.

**The Failure of Freire’s Early Literacy Programs of Freire**

Before he returned to Brazil after years in exile, Freire worked on literacy campaigns throughout South America and Africa. This work, in Brazil prior to 1964 and in Chile, Nicaragua, and Guinea-Bissau in Tanzania, had mixed success rates. I would like to consider one of the failed attempts of the mass literacy campaign in Tanzania.
The failure of literacy reform in Tanzania can be attributed to a variety of factors from government resistance to ideological missteps (Torres, 1992). At the time of Freire’s arrival in Tanzania, public education was in dire need of change. Though in 1975 the government made claim to a literacy rate between 75-80%, other sources placed the rate somewhere between 55-60% (p. 131). To combat this, a literacy campaign was planned and instituted to train 200 “literacy animators” who ran culture circles in the rural, impoverished areas of Guinea-Bissau. However, 3 years after the launch of the program, none of the 26,000 students who participated in this training were “functionally literate” (p. 133). The failure of the program was attributed to the overall underdevelopment of the country, governmental resistance, and, in fact, a failed methodology that devolved into rote learning pedagogies. In addition, Freire educated the populace in the colonizer’s language of Portuguese rather than the native, rural Creole, a mixture of Portuguese and African dialects (p. 132). In Brazil, it was the alignment of the government’s interest in radical education reform with a similar ethos in Freire that provided the milieu to shift discourse and educational methods.

The Return to Brazil and Administrative Reform

After 16 years in exile from his home country, Freire returned in 1980 to academic posts at the Catholic University of São Paulo and at the state-sponsored research university, the University of Campinas (Torres, 1992, p. 136). There, he discovered a government led by the liberal Workers’ Party or Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) that viewed educational reform as a priority. The state consequently was no longer an obstacle to change, but rather its facilitator. Freire’s ideology first found expression and materialization when he was appointed to the position of secretary of education of San Paolo in 1989. Shortly thereafter in 1991, he founded the Instituto Paulo Freire, which he oversaw until his death in 1997.
Moacir Gadotti (2017), Freire’s chief of staff at the Municipal Department of Education (MDE) in São Paulo, wrote of the reform to the vertical hierarchies within governmental agencies. Gadotti noted that, as an administrator, Freire’s great gift was his ability to articulate a clear mission and pedagogy. With both principles and premises, he was able to apply a style of “democratic management” and “collective work” to the mission of an “emancipatory democratic educational project” (p. 23). In this way, the method of administration mirrored the protocols of practice for schools and classrooms. Freire recounted:

When I was Secretary of Education for the city of São Paulo, obviously committed to leading an administration, that, in line with our political dream, without utopia, took seriously, as it should be, the issue of popular participation in the future of the school, my teammates and I had to start from the very beginning by making an administrative reform so the Department of Education would work differently. (Freire, 1993, p. 74, as cited in Gadotti, 2017, p. 23).

Freire’s pedagogy, the dialogical *dodiscência* or teach-learning relationship, not only applied to the classroom but also to the collective working habits of the administration.

**Administration in Action**

In his position as secretary of education, Freire was responsible for overseeing a school system that included 678 schools, 700,000 students, and 33,000 teachers (Wong, 1995). The department identified five priority areas to address: (a) to overcome the banking model of teacher-student relations and establish equity, co-participation, and mutual respect; (b) to understand that knowledge is fluid, potentially transformative of the world, nonabsolute, and mediated through emotion as well as intellect; (c) to allow for both traditional and popular curriculums, interdisciplinary, and a real means of knowing the world, rather than serving as objects of study; (d) to construct a fluid, ongoing, transformative curriculum by various stakeholders in the community; and (e) to view schools as centers of culture, community, and liberatory politics (p. 139). To implement a program of citywide reform, one sanctioned by the
liberal ruling party after years of military rule, would require the collaboration of scholars, government administrators, school reformists, and educators.

**Teacher Training**

It was notably Freire, a scholar who, as part of the administrative force for change, enabled such ideas to shift the manner and method of schooling in the city. Teacher education and training within this overall project were crucial, and Freire’s project envisioned teachers as educational scholars instead of facilitators of curriculum or preformulated lessons. In line with that philosophy, Freire instituted week-long seminars with educational theorists, teacher education groups for shared dialogues, grade-level meetings, theoretical text study, professional development opportunities, and a curriculum development initiative known as the Interdisciplinary Project, which paid teachers an additional 10 hours per week for their participation (Wong, 1995, p. 125). One salient feature of the training program was the reliance on reflective and collective work, as the program was

> a necessary space for reflection on their practice and knowledge . . . and moments for exchange that validate the social, affective, and cognitive being. . . . Observation, recording, reflection, synthesis, evaluation, and planning are the methodological instruments to be utilized in these professional development groups. (Secretary of the MDE, as cited by Wong, p. 126)

Although the training of teachers, previously instructed in more authoritative discourse, was “not Freirean” in that it did not meet the teachers where they were, the program introduced democratic and dialogical pedagogy to a system in need of reform. Though its success may have been conditional, the public school reform during Freire’s tenure nonetheless demonstrated the routes, forces, and varied spheres of influence at work to execute significant change.
Effectiveness of the Program

Given the breadth of the proposed reform, one of the concerns of such a program was its efficacy. To air the “school site realities” of the program, Wong (1995) examined seven São Paulo schools through field visits and one aspect of teacher training, the 10 paid hours of the interdisciplinary project (p. 130). The efficacy of this program was mixed, and its shortcomings were dependent on several administrative factors within the school. While most schools met consistently, and some introduced the theories of Piaget or Vygotsky, others failed in both regularity and consistency. Wong (1995) concluded:

The most conducive school characteristics for encouraging classroom practices that fulfilled MDE objectives included a small staff, continuity in staffing, positive personal relationships, collective understanding and consensus around key school issues and procedures, and a full commitment of the school community to the project’s goals and objectives. (pp. 134-135)

Freire worked as secretary of education for 2 years, after which Mario Sergio Cortella and Moacir Gadotti worked, respectively, as secretary and chief of staff until 1993. The striking aspect of this program was the alignment of theoretical, governmental, and pedagogical forces. In this example, the Workers’ Party (PT) licensed and supported citywide educational reform. The department office was administrated by Freire, an educational scholar steeped in praxis programmatic change. Furthermore, the mode of administrative operations adhered to the very method of reflection instituted at schools. Last, while reform understandably would take time, consistency, and commitment on the part of schools, teachers, and administrators, a percentage of the schools demonstrated notable aspects of methodological change. Still, Wong’s (1995) focused study suggested that reform itself is problematic:

Regardless of the myriad institutional support in the form of workshops, training, focused meetings, NAE mentors, technical support, additional ages, and so on, the lack of
a commitment to the ideals and philosophy of the reform programs among some school’s staffs effectively nullified the transformative potential of the PT’s institutional encouragement. (p. 135)

While there was support from the government for reform, those schools that did not buy into pedagogical shift were a counterforce to change that could not be overcome.

Expansion of Work

Though the reform in São Paulo was a short-lived experiment, lasting from 1989 until 1993, Freire’s writing and ideas continued to have widespread effect in Brazil. One notable program initiated through an NGO was the Telessala methodology, which emerged organically from a collective of Freirean collaborators (Guimaraes, 2017, p. 104)

Bringing education to the disenfranchised, this collective of theorists, who previously had held government positions, conceived of Telessala, a series of video programs used for the distance training of educators. Funded by the Roberto Marinho Foundation and endorsed by the Ministry of Education, Telecurso, as it was soon called, was formulated as 15-minute video programs broadcast on television. Supplemented by textbooks for distance education, the program, between 1995 and 2015, was completed by over seven million students (Guimaraes, 2017, p. 109). According to Guimaraes, the methodology was “proven to diminish school dropouts, to eliminate grade retention, and to increase teacher and student performance . . . [and] critical thinking” (p. 105). What was remarkable about this NGO initiative was how video, television, and the accompanying textbooks allowed for a formalization of ideology. Furthermore, the program was able to reach rural zones that had not been previously served.

In the end, Freire’s pedagogical history, one that had begun in the countryside amid conversations with the rural poor, provided a real ideology for practical change throughout the country. From that combination of theory and praxis, Freire developed an interest in broadest
educational reform: some failed but other programs, with government and foundational support, had a positive, cumulative effect. As Guimaraes (2017) wrote, “External evaluations of Telecurso and the Telessala methodology carried out in educational systems by states and municipalities, like those in Pernambuco, Acre and Rio de Janeiro, for example, are demonstrating that Yes, Freirean principles work” (p. 100). This program effectively eliminated dropouts and propelled students to keep pace with outcomes appropriate to their grade levels.

Freire’s work in São Paulo illustrated the conversion of theory to expansive reform—reform dependent on a constellation of united forces. The distant view embraced the quantitative impact of grand reform that came effectively to change the lives of millions of citizens. That said, the sheer reach of the program may have been less conducive to sustaining quality of instruction or administering empirical studies to determine efficacy than smaller, more localized programs. Still, it may be that in order to combat low literacy rates, such programs offered the greatest good to the greatest number. After all, the shifts in dropout and literacy rates did mark a shift in national ethos. In this way, the broad sweep of reform, despite its inconsistencies, may have offered a real pedagogical solution. In contrast to the work of Freire, I would like to examine the highly localized example of dialogical theory in practice with the School of the Dialogue of Cultures.

Bakhtin, Bibler, and the School of the Dialogue of Cultures (SDC)

The SDC was inspired by Bakhtin’s work on dialogism and found voice in philosopher and educator Vladimir S. Bibler. His conception and implementation of a philosophy for schools were localized to five private schools in Russia and the Ukraine. This localized example is meant to serve as a microscopic counterpoint to Freire’s vast reform. The SDC offers an illustration of both the benefits and drawbacks of microreform.
Theoretical Underpinnings of the Program

Bibler conceived of his work with the SDC based on larger notions of movement in thought or periodizations of history. He claimed that each era—the classical, medieval, and the New Time—brought forth a singular “reason” or philosophical stance. For instance, 20th century epistemologies were distinct from those from the prior century, which had an acute reliance on science. In her notations to Bibler’s (2009) foundational work, Berlyand (2009) wrote that “New Time’s cognizing reason was replaced by another type of reason that understood the mutual relation between different cultures . . . as a dialogue between voices that are vital to one another” (footnote 4, in Bibler). For Bibler, the notion of “reason” in 20th century New Time did not supplant notions in times prior, but rather existed in dialogue with those of each era. This interest in various periods and modes of thinking through history became the basis for an entire curriculum, a curriculum that invited students at every age level to think dialogically through modes of historical thought.

Sublating Sublation

The idea that each cultural movement has equal importance emerged from Bakhtinian heteroglossia even as it flew in the face Hegel’s idea of sublation. Sublation, or *Aufheben*, a word with no direct translation, suggests at once *to raise up* and *preserve* as it does to *demolish* or *annul*. For Hegel, historical transformation happened when dominant forces took hold, sublating other forces which, while remaining present, were nonetheless subordinated to hegemonic practices. However, Bibler’s idea, according to Belyand (2009), was that cultures “of the historical past are reproduced not in sublated form, but as independent, nonsublated voices, valuable in their own right as logical subjects” (footnote 7). As Berlyand continued, “one could say that Bibler’s conception sublates Hegel’s sublation” (footnote 7). Histories, languages, and
cultural stances all have equal power and voice, a voice that can overturn more hegemonic notions that one history supplants in some past era. This broad theoretical stance provided the basis for what became a dialogical curriculum embracing multiple perspectives and eras of thinking and history.

**Formulation of SDC**

Bibler’s vision of education came to light in 1987, in a series of presentations and conference lectures titled “Dialogue of Cultures and the Twenty-First Century School,” which were followed by a series of conferences from 1988 to 1991 with educators at what was then known as the Institute of General and Pedagogical Psychology. Thereafter, Bibler held such conferences at the Russian State University of the Humanities. Enthusiasm around the educational project began to build, understandably for Bibler, as he considered such dialogical work “in the air” and part of the *zeitgeist* of the age. Ongoing conferences with teachers, no less than four per year, culminated in the composition of the three-part treatise on the foundations of the program, first distributed in *samizdat* and then in 1992, published under the title *The Foundations of the School of the Dialogue of Cultures Program* by Aleph, a publisher funded by young group of scholars (Beryland, 2009).

**Three Tenets of Dialogue**

Bibler (2009) wrote of the three foundational notions about dialogue at the heart of the pedagogy of the school:

- first, that dialogue is not merely heuristic, but at the core of a generative of concepts, such as culture;
• second, that the dialogue crucial to the pedagogy is a dialogue of cultures, “communicating among themselves” within ontological questions for the purpose of wonder, or the “surprise of reason” (p. 38); and
• third, that dialogue is a collective of consciousness among teachers, instructors, and creator-artists.

The SDC in Action

In summarizing some of the key ideas of the SDC, Matusov (2009) described the five wonders of pedagogy, including its epistemological vision, teacher scholarship, reproduction of the culture, the wedding of theory to practice, and the quality of student dialogue. These wonders informed Bibler’s overall vision of a curriculum that enacted various Bakhtinian ideas of the dialogical heteroglossia and wed that to Bibler’s interest in eras of time and thought in dialogue.

In creating a pedagogy from the notion of epistemologies of historical thought, the overall curriculum of the school, from the lower grades to the higher, adopted an architectonic of the three historical eras of classical, medieval, New Time, and what Matusov (2009) deemed the “contemporary Dialogue of Cultures epoch” (p. 9). From the 3rd to 11th grade, the curriculum follows a chronology of European history: The Culture of Antiquity is studied in 3rd and 4th grades; Medieval Culture in 5th and 6th grades; The Culture of New Time (17th and 18th Centuries) in 7th and 8th grades; Contemporary Culture in 9th and 10th grades, culminating in a the last year, the 11th grade, in which students participate meta-analytically and dialogically. In this last year, students collect problem funnels, or “points of wonder.” This arc enables each student to consider how historical knowledges and cultures are interrelated. Bibler (2009) mentioned that such an integration is not a sublation, but rather a means to “dialogically

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1 I maintained the capitalization of these course curriculum titles.
conjugate old and new idealizations” (p. 36). Hence, grade levels and historical eras are not exclusively discreet, but are studied in relation to contemporary ideas. Classical mathematical paradoxes, such as Xeno’s paradox, for instance, might echo contemporary theories of quantum dualism. Interpenetration and dialogue among eras also occur through “raiding parties,” in which students and teachers from other grade levels visit and dialogue with younger students, and by extension, “older” paradigms of thought, such as those from antiquity or medieval times.

**Points of Wonder**

Central to the pedagogy was the formulation of discussions around “points of wonder” generated in each subject matter by methods of inquiry that are puzzlements, puzzlements of word, number, nature, history, or consciousness. Kurganov (2009) wrote of such practices in the lower school of the Ochag Gymnasium in Kharkiv, which has for the past 17 years implemented practices of dialogical teaching to students as young as 6 years of age.

Kurganov (2009) recounted the how varied puzzles of the linguistic or literary word generate differentiated points of wonder in the classroom. He provided an example of a structuralist discussion of whether words represent an object, whether the object precedes the word, or whether the object signifies nothing but itself. Such topics embraced the dialogical ideal in pedagogy, as they are not determinate facts but debatable concepts. By selecting philosophical topics that generate dialogic stances, each student must wonder for himself or herself to determine and strengthen a stance.

**Rules of discussion.** Literature also provides a common point of discussion for class, as when students converge on the same Pushkin story, reading aloud in turns. Children are encouraged by using the board to illustrate their ideas through drawing, which, with the addition of each member, construct a collective illustration related to the story. From there, Kuganov
(2009) wrote that “children learn to express their own understanding, listen to what other
children and the teacher say, collate their own judgments alongside the ideas of others, and
participate in dialogue-argument and dialogue-disagreement” (p. 32). In the rules for ongoing
discussion, students are encouraged to equitably share the “sound space” to initiate new lines of
inquiry and to resolve that each student participate in class (p. 33). The parameters of dialogue
were embraced by Kurganov, who, like Bakhtin, considered that the dialogical is uncertain and
not fully known, as with the case of students who are engaged in both dialogue-argument and
dialogue-agreement.

**Heterodiscoursia.** One pedagogical technique derived from Bakhtinian thought was
*heterodiscoursia*, which occurs in the class when learning dialogues are constructed from various
linguistic figures, such as the grammarian, poet, or historian, each of which would view language
from distinct points of view. By framing and reframing language in this way, students begin to
understand the elasticity of the word.

*Heterodiscousia* not only informs the content of the class but also the operations of
dialogue, which cultivates dialogical thinking. Through the use of literature, dialogue-lessons are
driven to generate a variety of responses. Kurganov’s work closely examined classroom
dialogues around magical stories with a dialogical method of instruction—one that revels in
multiple discourses of language, in the elasticity of utterances and words, and in the divergence
and convergence of opinions in the room. Such methods become a testament to the benefits of
instruction even at such a young age. These multiple perspectives compel each student to move
from the “ego-centric position” to the “position of subject of dialogical thinking” (p. 35). This
decentering of the ego-position illustrates what Morson (2009) viewed as one of the aims of the
SDC—to cultivate a person of culture. By “person of culture,” he meant to suggest a moral
person, one capable of *vzhivanie* or “‘living into’ another perspective without losing one’s own” (p. 10). In effect, this is an expression of empathy, in which the pursuit of knowledge, to use Bibler’s terminology, is “humanized.” The course of instruction continues up through the upper grades, but this brief highlight provides some sense of the actual curriculum and practice of moments of wonder and their effect in creating a dialogized classroom.

**Bibler and Multiple Logics Within the Dialogical Self**

Matusov (2009) noted that the SDC has positioned itself in opposition to the Western notion that dialogue is “instrumental” (Adler, 1982; Burbules, 1993), conversational or triadic (Linell, 1998; Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), or ontological. Emphasizing the postmodern nature of the practice, Bibler viewed dialogue as an “eternal unresolved dilemma” (Matusov, 2009, p. 9). Though hardly a widespread practice, the SDC localized theory in practice in a handful of cities, reshaped teacher-student relations, introduced greater inquiry, and allowed for “moments of wonder” and the “yet to be determined” to enter into classroom practice.

For Bibler (1982, as cited in Puchalska-Wasyl, 2011), dialogue of the self could adopt multiple positions of semi-logic and full logic, in full view that various internalized aspects of self may be, by turns, rational, emotional, protective, or adventurous. With any idea in formation or decision in the making, the individual undertakes an internal dialogical system:

> A “dialogic,” a radical dispute with oneself in which each of my selves (internal interlocutors) has its own logic—not a worse one, not a better one, not a more legitimate one, than the logic of the other self. Therefore, no “meta-logic” is needed (which would be situated somewhere above my dispute with myself), since the very being of my logic—in the form of a “dialogic”—determines its permanent process, which means that in the response to an internal interlocutor’s rejoinder, I unfold and fundamentally transform, improve my argumentation and, simultaneously, the same occurs in my other self (alter ego). (p. 93)
Such musings about the dialogic and the self thus formulated, it was the concentrated nature of the program and the position of teacher as researcher/scholar that allowed many to examine whether Bibler’s theoretical ambitions had expression in the classroom practice.

Critique of the Curriculum

Scholars have both praised and critiqued various aspects of the SDC. In fact, the presence of dialogical engagement and learning has been remarked on from the research transcripts and publications of several teacher-researchers. Reading of the discourse in the classrooms of Solomadin, Kurganov, and Osetinsky, scholars have identified dialogical exchanges as well as moments of internally persuasive discourse (Matusov, 2009; Sullivan, 2011). This paradigmatic shift, the focus on questions that situate students into states of wonder, has supplanted prior pedagogical habits of the classroom.

However, other scholars have been critical of the cloistered aspect of the program, practiced in only a select few private schools (Smagorinsky, 2011). The question consequently remains as to whether such a program would be transferable to students in poverty or those with varied academic aptitudes. In effect, the very concentration of the program, one that has perhaps allowed for its efficacy, has raised serious questions over whether it is transferable to schools with greater socioeconomic, cultural, or racial diversity.

To the chagrin of some scholars, the curriculum of SDC is very much steeped in a “vertical” high culture predicated on the Western canon (Matusov, 2009, p. 10). Little attention, for instance, is given to popular culture or peer culture. In addition, while the dialogical aspect of culture invites a philosophical engagement with varied historical epistemologies, the program avoids the complexity of modern political issues, such as the Chechen War in Russia—
example Matusov used to underscore how the objects of study are distant from the complexities of contemporary politics.

However, while the curriculum was designed with the specific cultures and histories of Russian and the Ukraine in mind to the critique of some scholars (Matusov, 2009), one scholar noted that some of Bibler’s ideas of dialoguing with cultures dissimilar to one’s own found great application in teacher education programs in Michigan (Koshmanova, 2011). Therefore, if the entire program is unreplicable, aspects could be adapted and adopted for use in classrooms outside of the circumscription of private schools in the Ukraine and Russia.

The Theoretical Reach of the Program

The translation of Bibler’s foundational document, as of those by key scholars within the SDC such as Beryland and Kurganov, became the basis for a much-needed introduction to the West. It was that introduction that allowed a dozen or so scholars from a variety of disciplines to reflect on dialogical practices that were “in the air,” not solely in the Ukraine and Russia but elsewhere. Wortman (2011) could not help but make the connection between the Bakhtinian practices of Bibler and Adler’s Paideia Proposal or Hourutunian-Gordan’s work in the early 1990s with “interpretative discussion.” Both Bibler and Adler relied on classical philosophical questions to begin discussions that would prompt questioning and inquiry. However, it is notable that Adler’s vision of the class situates the teacher in a greater position of authority than that of Bibler’s. Nevertheless, the second generation of Adler’s work, as continued by Roberts, offered a more flexible positionality of the teacher in relation to the authority of the class.

The SDC: A Concentrated Experiment

The SDC was rolled out in the early 1990s to a select group of private schools in a handful of cities in the Ukraine and Russia (Table 2). Funded privately, it was and continues to
be a selective, concentrated experiment. This example of theory into practice is through a cluster of experimental schools, where teachers and scholars work in collaboration to identify the benefits and challenges of the program.
Table 2

Schools Participating in the SDC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Lead Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kharkov, Ukraine</td>
<td>Kurganov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krasnoyarsk, Russia</td>
<td>Kurganov; Ushkova; and Yushkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novosibirshk, Russia</td>
<td>Kasatkina, Kuznetsova, Serant, Shchetnikkov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelyabinsk, Russia</td>
<td>Litovskii; Meseniashina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomsk, Russia</td>
<td>Kovaleva; Baronene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several aspects of the SDC have contributed to its success. First, the theoretical backing (Bakhtin and Bibler) is coupled with a practical program of study from early grades through graduation. Second, the sites of practice are limited and thus easier to implement and control. Third, teachers are also teacher-researchers and scholars who work in conjunction with philosophers, scholars, and university academics in their training, research, and pedagogy. In this way, the SDC shares similar features to the work of Freire in São Paulo. The difference, of course, has to do with the program’s reach and the ability of theorists and scholars to control the implementation of the program. Shifting the practices of teachers citywide, even with training, had mixed success in São Paulo. By comparison, the relatively focused sites of the SDC and study allowed for greater control and implementation of the ideal.

**Multiplicities in the Rhizome of Thought and Praxis**

I would like to consider these three chapters as a triptych of three theorists whose work extends itself to the practical world through rhizomic structures of extension. Furthermore, I seek to illuminate how such extension is fueled by aspects of power—of the drive of a singular scholar or disciple, of the institutionalization of that drive to operationalize methodology, and of the government that supports or represses such initiatives.
With this in mind, one might consider how streams of inclination—from Socrates to Adler to Roberts, from Socrates to Adler to Sizer (via Harkness at Andover), from Freire to Gadotti to the classrooms in Brazil, from Bakhtin to Bibler to classrooms in the Ukraine and Russia—come to materialize in teacher training and school reform. In each case, educational theory was formulated into a non-profit institute to train and educate teachers in a practice.

As noted by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), some spaces of rhizomic extension are reterritorialized. For instance, in the pathway to reform, the teacher as gadfly or facilitator in Socratic discussion became extended and transformed into the role of the “student as worker” and “teacher as coach” by Sizer. Moreover, in the movement from theory to classroom practice are other reterritorializations. Adler reframed the Socratic, just as Roberts, Moeller and Moeller, and Copeland adjusted the curriculum and methods of Adler to suit greater application to the contemporary classroom. The Harkness method itself, though seemingly free to expand in any direction it chooses, is notably under the greater force of Ivy League university trends in curriculum, as Exeter had modeled its curriculum after Harvard’s for years.

Some practices find extension and reterritorialization through technology, whereas others remain constricted and localized. Freire’s work, for instance, was reimagined for the age of television and video. While this might be a bastardization of the cultural circle, it illustrates an adaptation to the cultural force of technology and accessibility, thus making the program relevant and effective. In contrast, Bibler’s reimagining of Bakhtin’s heteroglossia, a reterritorialization, only goes as far as to engage in Western cultural history and, as such, hardly addresses the globalized world through technologies Bakhtin might have exploited had he lived to see their realization. What emerges are strains and variations of pedagogies that take hold, reform, revise
themselves, and, at last, find some implementation from the varied training institutes formulated by these key educational figures.

Though institutionally and nominally segregated, these methods bear familial resemblances, as if emerging from some singular source. My aim is not to make the claim that each may be tracked back to Socrates or Bakhtin or Exeter, but rather to identify how shifts in classroom discourse occur in a set of multiplicities, springing from simultaneous sites and expanding outward through institutional networks through such reach. For instance, the Socratic seminar or Harkness discussion extends itself into private schools, lower schools, and “small school” practices and movements (Sizer, 1984/2004).

**Conversions From Theory to Practice**

In the end, this chapter is less about the extension of thought than the conversion of the theoretical into transformative practice (See Table 3). It is notable that conversion, in the grandest scale, has occurred from some singular educational practitioner, who institutionalized theory into an organization of teacher training. Methods of training vary, using television to reach outlying areas (culture circles), websites to provide access and resources (Harkness; P4C); and on-site or in-school training, or on-site institutes (CES; SDC; Paideia; P4C). Though the past chapters segregate three thinkers and those who have extended their ideas into the world, each method, at its core, involves the practice of discourse, which adopts its own texts, topics, jargon, and reflectivity.

In some ways, these practices enfold into each other even as they claim to distinguish themselves. The hallowed halls of Exeter and its costly oak tables are clearly miles away from the rural laborers in the countryside of Brazil. However, in other ways, these discourse practices overlap. One can recall, for example, how Socrates educated the slave as well as the senator; or
Table 3
Comparative Practices and Reach of Teacher Training in Discussion Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Practitioner</th>
<th>Institutional Association</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Teacher Reach 2017</th>
<th>Student Reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P4C</td>
<td>Socrates</td>
<td>Lipman</td>
<td>Montclair State University England</td>
<td>On-site</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>4,711&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>94,220&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harkness</td>
<td>Harkness</td>
<td>Sneeden</td>
<td>Philips Exeter Academy</td>
<td>On site; Institute</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>110&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2,200&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paideia</td>
<td>Socrates</td>
<td>Adler; Roberts</td>
<td>University of Chicago; University of North Carolina</td>
<td>On-site</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>300&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CES</td>
<td>Dewey</td>
<td>Sizer</td>
<td>Brown University</td>
<td>Online presence only</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>Bakhtin Bibler</td>
<td>Solamadin; Russia</td>
<td>Book; Collaboration</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Circles</td>
<td>Freire</td>
<td>Guimaraes Gadotti</td>
<td>Roberto Marinho Fdn, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>K-8, Adult Ed</td>
<td>28,000&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>700,000&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

how Bakhtin entered into debates with Marxists and Russian Formalists as easily as he worked with local secondary school students. In addition, one may consider how Freire used Socratic questions to help guide farmers to the epiphany that it was not God, but rather oppressive structures, that had institutionalized poverty and diminished their freedom. Such reflective dialogues, in form and self-questioning, may have been more similar than one might expect to those recorded in Lipman’s lower school classrooms, where students considered under what

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2 As reported by P4C in the UK
3 An estimate based on the average UK class size, as reported by the BBC of 20.4 (Rhodes, 2017).
4 As reported by R. Hansen, personal correspondence, 2/14/2018; she mentions that the program will train 180 teachers this summer.
5 An estimate based on an average private school classroom size of 20
6 as reported by Roberts, personal correspondence, who mentions that he is currently working with 29 schools in 8 states, Roberts 2/4/2018)
7 This estimate is based on 2012 data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which indicates that the average class size in Brazil is 25 (OECD, 2012).
8 An estimate from the reported fact that the program reached 7 million over a decade
conditions one may be allowed to tell a lie. In effect, many of these practices suspend the participating student in that state of ponderous self-debate and puzzlement. The teacher, gadfly, coach, or facilitator, while prompting such query, fall to the periphery of the circle to allow the collective to do its work.

This chapter, then, is the culmination of a triptych mapping of the materialization of ideas of discourse and how they do or do not make their way into the practical world. My aim was to identify rhizomic patterns of growth, extension, deterritorialization and reterritorialization in how the terrain of discourse is arranged through time. The next chapter traces praxis back to thinking itself, where theory and thinking operate under the same rhizomic principles as educational habits of practice. To this end, I review the scholarship of Bakhtin in the past 37 years and how theoretical ideas themselves, prior to their implementation in the world, take hold in fields of academia.
VII - METRICAL EXALTATIONS AND CITATIONS: THE RISE OF BAKHTIN

a farmer was ploughing
his field
the whole pageantry
of the year was
awake tingling
with itself

(William Carlos Williams,
“Landscape with the Fall of Icarus”)

In his poem “Landscape with the Fall of Icarus,” Williams, inspired by the Bruegel painting, draws focus away from Icarus’s plunge to the teeming world of labor and growth, which, he conceived, is “the whole pageantry/of the year.” Simply put, the labor and work of the world, “awake tingling/with itself,” goes on, even as one in flight precipitously falls to the water by virtue of his ambition.

I frame this chapter with Williams, Icarus, and the farmer to help animate the two worlds of this dissertation: the flight of scholarship and the plough of praxis. In many ways, this historiography of discourse traces the interrelation between thought and action and scholarship and pedagogical practices. The aim in this chapter is not to record the fertile crop or the rusty plow, but rather to define the nature of that “awake tingling,” that teeming activity that points to how a field of practice extends, monitors, and adjusts itself.

In past chapters, I have identified rhizomic structures in classroom practice—strands of practice that develop as others that continue as subordinated root structures, awaiting to assert themselves. Needless to say, at the base of praxis is thought. Thus, in this chapter, I hope to examine academic thinking more closely through an examination of the use of Bakhtin in educational scholarship. In the end, I survey the landscape first from afar, across wide latitudes, before moving closer to note that educational scholarship in Bakhtinian studies has not merely
proliferated and intensified, but it has also exhibited the same rhizomic structures of growth, contraction, and recoil as its equivalent in pedagogical practice. Thus, thought and praxis not only run parallel, but also operate by the same dynamic structures. This makes sense, since thought breeds action and action, thought. This chapter then serves as an analogue to history to be sure, but it also illustrates how strains of practice, in their shape and development, have very much the same rhizomic dynamic as thought.

**Bakhtin and Meta-analysis**

Considering the academic landscape of Bakhtinian scholarship in the past 40 years, I survey a landscape from a bird’s-eye view. To move through scholarship, I first establish what I am doing with the meta-data of scholarship itself. Indeed, I consider the totality of an intellectual landscape across many platforms, spaces, and times in a field of study. That said, the landscape is intellectual, dotted with the practical applications of the work of Bakhtin. As such, this is a study within a study of discourse—a meta-analysis of data to consider how scholarship itself develops. While my dissertation takes on the examination of discourse in the classroom, this chapter takes a step back to consider how the academic wrangling of one philosopher, crucial to the field of study in education, provides a glimpse into the organic growth, curtailment, and even dying away of ideas within a discipline.

**Surveying the Digital Landscape of Thought**

To begin, I consider how one perceives any landscape or environment, as this consideration may have some bearing on the more abstract landscape of scholarship and its history. For Merleau-Ponty (2012), our perceptions, at least initially, are bounded by a localized gaze and limitations of perception:
When I walk around my apartment, the different aspects under which it presents itself to me could not appear as profiles of a single thing if I did not already know that each of them represented the apartment as seen from here or as seen from over there, nor if I were unaware of my own movement and of my body as identical throughout the phases of this movement. (p. 209)

Here, Merleau-Ponty described how the ambulation of the body allows the eyes to take in varied perspectives and how the mind works to interconnect such varied images, knowing full well they are of the same objects. Arguing that “one cannot grasp the unity of the image without the mediation of bodily experience,” he suggested that the “bird’s eye view” is reliant on “knowing that a single embodied subject could successfully [been seen] from various positions” (p. 209). Thus, the mind, which houses a photographic history, can wed the past image of the chair in profile to that perceived from above. Merleau-Ponty’s work, one that reminds us of how perception is a function of the body, became extended in the work of de Certeau (1988), who then imagined taking in the various perspectives of New York City as he walked about.

De Certeau (1988) emphasized that technology afforded humanity the aerial view. From the skyscraper’s elevation, such as that of the former World Trade Center, we became a “voyeur,” like Icarus himself before the fall. It is from that vantage point where the city is a “text that lies before one’s eyes,” and we a “solar eye, looking down like a God” (p. 93). De Certeau viewed such vantage as the “exaltation of the scopic and gnostic drive” (p. 93). Thus, such elevation is not just a literal vantage point from above, but also the manifestation of the heights of rationalism: that the human mind can exert power over the natural world.

I employ de Certeau’s use of the skyscraper (1988), that upward feat of technology, to consider our current digital world and landscapes. I intend to make the case that I operate as a digital voyeur over a landscape of data.¹ Centuries ago, such a journey might have taken me to

¹ This idea and the imagery of de Certeau was first suggested to me by Ruth Vinz during my dissertation defense on December 2, 2016.
the locked monasteries searching amid leather-bound volumes. Fifty years ago, I might have cranked the metal arm to roll microfiche across my viewfinder screen. However, in past years, digital developments have shifted research and the collection and surveying of data. With search engines such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science (WoS), researchers can sort through aggregate data and formulate metrics and analytics. From Merleau-Ponty’s mid-century flat or de Certeau’s end-of-century Twin Towers, the surveillance of space has become reimagined in the cyber age: our modern-day Icarus now has delicate digital wings composed of zeros and ones.

**Purpose of Metric Meta-analysis**

My use of metrics is to provide some insight into the exertive influence of philosophical thought, notably that of Bakhtin, on scholarship in the field. The result is a sort of mapping of use, circulation, debate, distortions, corrections, and clarifications. Scholarship itself becomes an ongoing conversation in which ideas are discussed, overhead, and circulated for good and for ill.

**The downside of metrics.** Many debate the use and hold that metrics have come to have on the scholastic community. Rankings, reach, downloads, and paper views have come to figure into the relevance of a scholar’s life. Scholars can now ponder a journal’s reach or ranking, according to the *Journal Citation Report*, to determine where they may publish. However, a scholar’s ranking may be considered in their advancement or tenure evaluation. Furthermore, metrics can be a factor in how funding is allotted for grants. Thus, metrics have the power to drive ranking, ordering, and hierarchy, and while some of that may be useful, some have warned that metrics alone should not become the sole basis for such decisions (Wilsdon, Allen, Belfiore, & Johnson, 2015). In many ways, the quantitative drive in education at the secondary school level has increasingly become a part of the institution of power within higher education.
The upside of metrics. Nevertheless, metrics can survey a landscape quickly and use parameters to rank a journal’s circulation, impact through citations, and readership. While these data are useful to note trends, the concern with ranking is that only certain articles may receive attention and certain scholarship, funding, or accreditation.

In addition, metrics may be a useful tool to explore the disregarded as well. One can easily find and track least cited work to explore why. Like Halberstam’s (2011) low theory, which involves itself in detours, counter-knowledge, and alternative forms of epistemology, one may track “failure.” In this instance, one may consider the failure of certain publications and their metric value, based on citation and readership, and assess whether the reason is linguistic, published in language foreign to a dominant one or qualitative, as with the lack of “relevant ideas” or “loose” scholarship. Low theory compels one do to more than examine within such records of publication; it can encourage one to review outside and around a discipline and in the ways in which ideas take shape. For instance, in the field of education, one might imagine the stories of teachers, the complaints or testimonies of students, and the concerns of parents as valid, but often unheard of, forms of knowledge. Metrics can thus identify what may be overlooked. As a result, it helps illuminate the tacit ways in which thought and thinking are assessed, evaluated, and ranked.

A caveat: Altmetrics and this study. Altmetrics, which tracks metrics outside established scholarly search engines, are a growing tool. I note this here since what was a research tool has increasingly become a more integral part of shaping scholarship itself and how and where scholarship is practiced. In terms of the humanities and education, my aim here is to use established metrics and citation use rather than altmetrics, a nascent tool in the methodology. Nicholas (2017), for instance, tracked 25 emerging platforms launched between 2006 and 2014,
such as Academia and Research Gate, which provide metrical data exterior to traditional platforms of scholarship (publications in journals) to assess the impact of academic readership and impact through “open” platforms. He found that while such platforms democratize accessibility, they are by no means peer-reviewed, nor are they exempt from various forms of pollutants in establishing valid data. Such skepticism regarding data collection and science is certainly not out of line with post-positivist thinkers such as Latour (1993), who pinpointed how science developed a credibility fetish around doxa, or common belief. Latour wrote that we “know the nature of facts because we developed them in circumstances that are under our complete control” (p. 18).

Bauchelard (as cited by Latour) may have written “‘Les faits sont faits’: ‘facts are fabricated,’” but, perhaps, one might add that facts are made as they are agreed upon (p. 18).

**Reflectivity in response to metrics.** With the rise of metrics has come some reflectivity in response. As mentioned in an extensive report on metrics (Wilsdon et al., 2015):

> Metrics should support, not supplant, expert judgment. Peer review is not perfect, but it is the least worst form of academic governance we have and should remain the primary basis for assessing research papers, proposals and individuals, and for national assessment exercises. . . . However, carefully selected and applied quantitative indicators can be a useful complement to other forms of evaluation and decision-making. (p. viii)

In reaction to the zeitgeist of quantitative metric age, this report called for “responsible research and innovation,” which includes parameters of addressing the surge in metrics. Such concerns include the robustness of research; humility in the recognition that quantitative metrics must supplement rather than replace qualitative evaluation; a transparency of results, easily assessed and verified by others; a diversity of methodology to capture “the plurality of research and research paths” (p. x); and reflexivity, which understands the effects of metrics and will responsibly update new findings as is needed. With both Merleau-Ponty’s and de Certeau’s
ambulatory methods, I adopt an approach of multiple paths of metric perspective, looking more closely from great distance, midrange, and last, with a restricted data set.

**Method of Metric Research**

For my initial research, I performed searches with both WoS and Scopus. While the overall search tracked a similar intensification of research citing Bakhtin’s *Dialogical Imagination*, I noted that WoS did not track significant articles between 1980 and 1993. Comparing search results from 1980 to 2017, Scopus tracked more than 2.6 times more citations than WoS. As some have noted, Scopus has nearly twice the number of journals tracked into its database than WoS (Wagner, 2015) and is generally stronger in the social sciences. I have consequently used Scopus as the metric tool for my broad searches.

**Distant Reading**

Such a use of metrics provides a broad overview reminiscent of Franco Moretti’s (2013) noted method of distant reading, a thematic, structuralist approach to the reading of literary texts. Moretti’s notion of distant reading was set notably in opposition to New Critics and their established mode of close reading of the text. With close reading, one devotes oneself to the details of a single work and thereby localizes one’s interest to the text and its varied literary elements. In contrast, distant reading tracks voluminous titles across historical eras. Distant reading collects aggregated data and views its subjects from afar. In his work, Moretti tracked 7,000 titles of fiction through literary history, compiling data on title lengths across decades and even centuries. With such a method, one may note overall trends, but, according to Moretti, there is a downside, since “working with large quantities, the average becomes an inevitable presence—and the average means loss of distinction, slowness, boredom . . . too much

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2 Scopus’s 3,619 in total to WoS’s 1,374.
polyphony, and too much monotony” (p. 181). My aim was to consider the multiple perspectives of viewership, from great, mid, and close distances within the discipline. By using a method of varied perspectives, I aimed to look at metric data from multiple frames: zooming in, pulling away, shifting the frame east and then west. One can consider Google Maps as the modern topographical metaphor: it is not static but interactive, moving from globe, to state, to street. To see askance and through multiple lenses and to view contiguous data sets of metrics is to make some claim to a composite claim of assemblages—not one singular set, but an assemblage of related sets to make the claim of some strain of scholarship.

**The Landscape From Above: Using the Metrics of Scopus**

First established in 2004, Scopus has become the largest searchable database for academic work, including content from over 5,000 academic peer-reviewed journals, conferences, and books from over 105 countries. Scopus can also be a useful tool to deliver the trends and changes within fields of scholarship. Scopus categorizes and subdivides articles and journals by academic category. As misleading as such categories may be, my initial search on Bakhtin limited its purview to sociology, arts and humanities, and psychology. I excluded journals devoted to business, computer science, medicine, economics, engineering, mathematics, and environmental science. I include humanities, social sciences, and psychology knowing full well how education intersects with and transverses such categories. Figure 3 illustrates the results of this search of 3,660 records of works that cited Bakhtin’s *The Dialogic Imagination* from 1983 to 2018. Of note below is the intensification of citations after 2000.
Figure 3. Bakhtin citations from The Dialogic Imagination, 1983-2018, from Scopus

From the greatest range of distance, one may make the claim of a steady climb in the use of Bakhtin’s work in the social sciences and education. Comparing citation figures prior to 2000 with those after, there is, notably, a 9,057% increase of citations of *The Dialogic Imagination*. This is the broadest search, with the majority (90%) of returns categorized in one or more of the fields of social sciences, arts and humanities, and psychology. In terms of document type, this includes journal articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, editorials, among others. Authors most commonly citing Bakhtin in this search were Shotter, Petrilli, Dyson, Matusov, Rober, Wegerif, Roth, and Blackledge. The most returned journals, the top 10 of the estimated 160 journals, were, in order of ranking, *Written Communication, Culture and Psychology, Semiotica, Mind, Culture and Activity, Research in the Teaching of English, Theory Psychology, Journal of Pragmatics, Linguistics and Education, Language in Society, and Teaching and Teacher Education.*
What Distant Reading Suggests About Disciplinary Divisions and Rhizomes

The latitude and breadth of distant reading allow us to view work across a variety of disciplines and marks how fields may interpenetrate. In education, in particular, scholarship is both infiltrated by and infiltrates other disciplines. For instance, one scholar citing Bakhtin’s work is semiotician Adrian Blackledge, who works in the education department at the University of Birmingham. Though nominally in education, Blackledge publishes across a variety of journals outside the field of education. His writings on translanguaging from 2012-2017, which frequently reference Bakhtin, are published in the *Journal of Language and Politics, Ethnicities*, and the *Modern Language Journal* as well as chapters in the *Routledge Handbook of Migration and Language* and the *Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity*. Thus, in some instances, the educational scholar publishes outside the confines of educational journals. Blackledge first published on translanguaging in *Ethnicities*, a journal of sociology. One year later in 2010, his work appeared in the *Modern Language Journal* not as a research study, but as a theoretical work titled “Translanguaging in the Bilingual Classroom: A Pedagogy for Learning and Teaching?” That work, in particular, received greater traction and has already been cited by 352 other works, many of which, as illustrated in Table 4, are in educational journals. Thus, in education, the scholar’s work may begin exterior to one’s discipline, only to find traction once again within it.

This sole example illustrates how misleading categories of scholarship may be or how limited searches in merely a handful of educational journals may not in themselves tell the expansive story of how the field circulates and develops ideas. Distant reading tracks citations in the very manner in which they travel like wind patterns, moving, returning, curling into themselves, and releasing outward.
Table 4

Journals Citing Blackledge (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modern Language Journal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Education</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics and Education</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Language Identity and Education</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TESOL Quarterly</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Linguistics</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Mid-Range View: Analytics From Educational Journals

The previous analytic set encompassed more than 3,600 works citing Bakhtin. Narrowing the field offers additional data. Looking from the mid-range of the field, I selected seven journals published in the United States for a closer view of citation influence and metrics, journals that had the highest rate of citing Bakhtin in the field. Since several of these journals, particularly those of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), are not as of yet tracked through Scopus, I manually constructed a searchable database through Endnote, which, exported to Excel, could easily manipulate data and generate graphs and figures. The nine journals comprising the set yielded 375 journal articles, and I have excluded book reviews that may have included reference to Bakhtin as well as editor’s introductions, which referenced articles citing Bakhtin in the same volumes. These nine journals are English Education (EE), Research in the Education of Teaching of English (RTE), American Educational Research Journal (AERJ), Teachers College Record (TCR), Harvard Educational Review (HER), Educational Researcher
(ER), and Language and Education (LE). To these, I added two composition journals: College Composition and Communication (CCC) and Written Communication (WC).

Looking at Citation References in Nine English Education Research Journals

Taken together, these nine journals, RTE, CCCC, EE, AERJ, ER, HER, WC, and LE delivered 375 articles citing Bakhtin over the past 34 years. Though no results were found prior to 1986, one may still examine the 17 years prior and after 2000 for a comparative increase. In fact, articles citing Bakhtin increased by 128% after 2000 as compared to results prior.

![Total Articles Citing Bakhtin in English Educational Journals 1986-2017](image)

**Figure 4.** Number of articles citing Bakhtin in English educational journals 1986-2017

The figure above illustrates the dispersion of work referencing Bakhtin across nine journals, the majority of which, 61%, is concentrated among RTE, EE, and CCC. Of course, many scholars working with Bakhtin over this time period wrote across several of these journals. For this reason, to understand how scholars situate themselves in publications, Appendix A (discussed later in this chapter) sub-selects scholarship written by 37 academics who have

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published more than a single article. Such tables help to identify the framing thought and habits of scholars who write extensively in their work using Bakhtin, such as Dyson, Fecho, and Juzwik. However, the selection also reveals the gaps within mid-distance views, as it does not capture the prolific work of Matusov, who publishes in journals outside of the field of English education in the broader field of educational pedagogy. Like any framing device, one’s field of vision is restricted, which is why the multiple searches and inquiries for long, mid, and short ranges can give us some topography of the field in-the-making.

Nevertheless, limiting the view from 3,600 to 375 provides a certain concentration of results that offers greater insight into the interconnections within the field. Tables embracing a latitude of publications, such as Appendix A, serve as reminders of leading scholars in the field of discourse, such as Applebee, Gee, and Nystrand. Furthermore, the registration of early writings of Lensmire (1994; 1997) and Greene (1986) remind us how their use of Bakhtin may have broken ground for scholarship. In addition, one might consider the dispersion of scholarship across journals (Juswik, Dyson) or the relative concentration of an academic’s work in one journal (Vinz, Barone, Coulter, Sfar).

**Mid-Range Thoughts**

This work is not meant to be a ranking in any sense, but rather a tracing of thought across time and publication (see Appendix A). Such tracings afford lines of inquiry, since citation references are both tunnels to past thought and the tools with which scholars forge toward new directions. Scholars who bear the work of others through the act of citation, in turn, carry the tools to forge a futurity of thought. Kirkland (2009), for instance, used Bakhtin to address new ways to understand language in the classroom; to further his own qualitative analysis, he cited the work of Fecho and his classroom observations on “standard” and home Englishes. Thus,
these pathways, akin to subterranean tunnels or neurological transmissions, are tools to make the historical ever present. In scholarship, the present is ever-redolent of the past (Vinz, 2000), just as utterances for Bakhtin are infused with history even as they are reformulated when spoken anew. Such ideas formulate the inherent nature of the growth of scholarship: a present imbued with the ever-present past. This idea of an ever-present past in the present is derivative of Bakhtin’s notion that language itself is a vital living thing, with each word, each utterance, saturated with the past and leaning into the futurity of the addressee. Thus, thought follows a similar cue of utterance itself. From thought to utterance to scholarship, the thought within the word, the word as constructing the thought, the thoughts of one scholar linked to those of the past and present, all the while anticipating some response, brings Bakhtin’s theory into the heart of the field of scholarship itself with citation at its very center.

**Citation as Distinct From Allusion and Source**

This chapter aims to discuss the role of the citation in academic work. I have noted how the citation renders thought continuous and eternal. While more may be written about the nature of citation, I would first like to distinguish the citation from the literary allusion or journalistic source.

By its very parameters, academic thinking is different than journalistic thinking or artistic endeavors. Creative work may “allude” to the work of other authors and artists, but the allusion is often guised in the work rather than formally externalized. Thus, it may be an arduous task to track the references, subtle and indirect as they may be, to Shakespearean reference. In fact, one of the articles researched (Schuster, 1985) was a literary analysis that sparked an academic debate over whether the use of the word “foul” in John McFee’s *La Place de la Concorde Suisse* was an allusion to *Hamlet*, with “foul play” and “murder most foul” or, as suggested by another
(White, 1986), to Macbeth’s “fair is foul and foul is fair.” Even though search engines may speed the process of finding direct references, the literary allusions, so common to fiction, remain a subtle association made visible and sometimes debated by literary scholars.

If fiction guises the allusion, then journalism holds itself to a standard of truth and clarity. As such, reportage is reliant on sources, and citations are often direct quotations on the record. While journalists may often cite from other works, the press often operates from shared, central sources, such as the Associated Press. Editorial thought may reference other articles or writers, but given the short format, audience, and time constraints, it does not synthesize the same amount of data that long-term reporting may. In the end, reportage pools recent activity, gathering its sources from interviews. In contrast, scholarship bases itself on academic published work, a mountain of thought formed over time.

Like reportage and fiction, scholarship is an incestuous enterprise in that it pulls from within its discipline to extend and continue itself as intellectual progeny into the world. However, scholarship formalizes the enterprise, making the references explicit in ways that materialize a history of thought. As such, citations reflect a past legacy of readership and the synthesis of thinking about such readership. The very published work then becomes both an object, a thought thing, as Arendt (1958) deemed it, and a reverse tracking of how such thought has come to be in the world.

**Citations as Rhizomic Structures**

Traversing through citations may illuminate how scholarship exists in rhizomic, branched structures. A scholar’s work extends itself into academic space through the referencing and citing of work by other scholars; as such, academic writing has an elastic quality. The citation is a
retrospective tracing of that action that one scholar has materialized in the dialogical thought activity around any given idea.

Metrics now provide speedier routes around tracking references and citations. Some scholarship extends itself into the world of other works, elastically branching out. Other works of scholarship, for a variety of reasons—the reach of the journal, the quality of the work, the language in which it is published—may receive little or no traction. This lineage of thought, without offspring, dies out. Finally, citations may recoil upon themselves, as those citing Bakhtin may, in turn, be cited by others. These others may cite each other laterally or in a vertical axis upward toward the initial citation. Such clusters formulate recoiled structures of scholarship. Thus, offshoots may extend themselves, die out, or revert into previous thought and scholarship.

**Origins: The Single Work and Its Impact**

Though *The Dialogic Imagination* was initially published in 1981 and embraced by scholars in the fields of linguistics and literature, the work’s effect on education came more slowly. From the aggregate database of nine major journals and 375 articles listed in my references, one may more easily identify who within the field first and repeatedly used Bakhtinian ideas in scholarship. Greene (1986), Gee (1988), and Giroux and McLaren (1986) all published essays in journals in the 1980s citing Bakhtin. Looking more closely at each of these articles and their relation to Bakhtin can illuminate some sense of how interest in Bakhtin may have developed from its first entry into the field. From this, I identify several modes of how scholarship enters a field: through the gatekeeper, the shepherd, and the mediator.

**The gatekeeper and the direct portal.** One can consider Greene’s use of Bakhtin, first delivered at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) conference in April of 1986 and later published that December in *English Education*, where she considered the history
of literacy. Here, one may see the expansion of influence from conference paper to wider audience of scholars through publication (Figure 5).

**Figure 5.** Citations from Greene’s 1986 AERA address in 1986

As a noted philosopher of education, Greene delivered a keynote that was later published. She too acted as a scholar of position who was able to make accessible the theories of Bakhtin to the educational community: first in the smaller conference circle of attendees and then in the broader circle of publication readers of *English Education*.

**Shepherded from other fields.** Ostensibly reviewing Graff’s tome on the legacies of literacy, Gee (1988) allowed himself a digression into what he deemed the “fashionable” work of Bakhtin, citing not solely Bakhtin, but Morson (1986) and Todorov (1984). Figure 6 visualizes this path or lineage of thinking and how publications extend scholarship.

**Figure 6.** Gee’s citational lineage to Bakhtin
Here, Gee moves through the cluster of recent significant scholarship through linguists, biographers, and theorists to Bakhtin. In this way, Gee shepherded Bakhtinian ideas to educational theory through the scholarships of those in other fields. They are ideas of others brought into new territories and disciplines.

**The mediated entrance.** Last, one can consider how Giroux and McLaren cited Bakhtin indirectly through Rosen’s work “The Importance of Story,” an essay he first delivered at the National Association for the Teaching of English, Nottingham (April 12, 1985) and then published in *Language Arts* in 1986. In *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World* (1987), Freire and Macedo notably also cited this very same essay. These two examples illustrate *mediated citation* and scholarship, in which a scholar relies on another for the selection of citation or interpretation of a primary source. Aside from Greene, the initial work was mediated through some scholar, be it Morson, Todorov, or Rosen, to be brought more fully into educational discourse. Rosen’s work serves as bridge work, as it collects linguistic theory, literary theory (Eco, 1979), and narrative theory (Barthes, 1975; Booth, 1984; Gennette, 1980). Figure 7 visualizes how mediated scholarship, such as that of Rosen, can act to introduce key ideas into the discipline.

![Figure 7. The mediation of Bakhtin through Rosen, data from Scopus](image-url)
My aim in looking closely at several initial, early published responses in *English Education* to the work of Bakhtin was to investigate just how Bakhtin entered the consciousness of a field and how such work developed. This is not to rank or judge, but merely to note the varied methods of how thought may travel. Notably, each of these scholars was interdisciplinary: Greene (1986) considered herself an educational philosopher, while Rosen (1986) worked with literary theory to arrive at a theory of composition. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that those involved in adjacent disciplines, such as philosophy or literary studies—fields that had initially surged in their involvement with Bakhtin—were key figures in the introduction of Bakhtin to educational theory.

Although the rhizomic structure is often compared to the ginger root extending itself in various directions, the more relevant metaphor for scholarship situates the action not in the primary source, but in the scholar who attends to it. Thus, the activity around Bakhtin’s work and the scholars who write about him is more akin to the baker pulling yeasted dough from its center outward in multiple directions. Scholars pull ideas, references, and citations from that source work. In a quick review of citation metrics and the trails of influence, it was those scholar-bakers, through direct, mediated, or lateral scholarship, who initially with extended hand pulled the work of Bakhtin into the field of English education.

**Close Reading: Citation Without Thought**

In reviewing the thousands of ways in which Bakhtin and his ideas are cited and used, in viewing quick references and the circulation of commonly cited words such as polyphony, heteroglossia, or dialogic, scholastic buzzwords of the zeitgeist, I recall Simmel’s view (1971/2006) that ideas are circulated without any rigorous unpacking. Simmel warned that concurrent with the rise of material culture can be a lag of the intellectual:
In the purely intellectual sphere, even the best informed and most thoughtful persons work with a growing number of ideas, concepts and statements, the exact meaning and content of which they are not fully aware [. . .] the available material of knowledge allows and even enforces the use of expressions that pass from hand to hand like sealed containers without the condensed content of thought actually enclosed within them being unfolded for the individual user. (p. 499)

With “expressions that pass from hand to hand like sealed containers,” Simmel reminded us of the social phenomena in which ideas become stale, rather than vigorous and redolent with history and meaning. If Bakhtin (1986) noted that utterances “taste” of previous contexts and that our mouths are filled “with the words of others” (p. 89), then Simmel pointed to another phenomenon of circulation: that ideas may be distributed in such a way that they are stripped of, rather than saturated with, with context. Such circulation is repetition ad nauseam, ad infinitum, toward some intellectual paralysis. This was perhaps the concern of Caryl Emerson and David Shepherd (as recounted by Matusov, 2007), who worried that fields such as English education were more concerned with the gloss and shine of theoretical buzzwords and go-to ideas, such as dialogic and polyphony, without critically unpacking the sealed container of Bakhtin’s writing.

This is certainly not the case with some scholars, but such a review as I put forth, one which considers the level of engagement through the text, topics, and works cited, does make one pause. Some scholars may cite an idea without interrogating the text or defer to linguistic scholarship without once considering the source text itself. Matusov (2009a) noted that working with Bakhtin is a three-fold translation, linguistic, sociocultural, and, notably, disciplinary. What does it mean, then, to all at once cross language, social context, and field of study?

In the end, while this investigation travels across scholarship in the field through the reference pages, it offers a bird’s-eye view, what Merleau-Ponty (2012) would describe as a view “seen from above” (p. 209). While it is distant, delineating number and shape, though not texture or nuance, it nonetheless offers a sketch of scholastic topography. What is revealed is both the
rigor and looseness of scholarship. Given that the overall project may be valid in its method, methodology, or findings, a lack of rigor regarding to theoretical framing may often be overlooked. However, as a few have warned, some scholars may be only keeping step with academic trends and are merely repeating the terms and words circulated in papers and conferences (Shepherd, 2005).

**Closer Still: Zeroing in on English Education**

Part of this exploration of metrics is to focus more closely on one field, and within that field, one journal. I chose *English Education* and gathered my data by manually collecting data in Endnote and then transferring that data to Excel. I first searched within *English Education* for articles that referenced Bakhtin. From there, I constructed a database of 60 articles from 1983 to 2017. Within each article, I gathered data on references to Bakhtin in each text through a simple search function, with “reference” defined as any instance in which the name “Bakhtin” or any derivative was mentioned, excluding any bibliographic mention. As such, I tracked how often scholars may have formulated thought around Bakhtin, either through the paraphrase of an idea or an introduction to a quotation. I also tracked “citations,” for which I identified any instance in which the author cited from the text directly using quotations. Terminology, such as *dialogic* or *heteroglossia*, was not calculated as a citation per se, unless it was in quotations. As a sort of linguistic metric, my aim was to address the depth of scholastic work: to identify the frequency with which scholars referenced Bakhtinian thought and moved along and how frequently that idea was cited directly and elaborated in greater detail.

My initial findings were in line with the earlier, broader statistics presented on the proliferation and intensification of work citing Bakhtin. I viewed two brackets of time, the 17
years prior and after 2000. This served as an equal temporal measure and provided some basis of comparison.

Figure 8 presents the increase in articles, references, and citations. In fact, there was a 131% increase in articles, a 472% increase in references to the name Bakhtin, and an 833% increase in direct citations. Of the 60 articles published in English Education citing Bakhtin, 44 were published after 2000, a 175% increase. While more articles were written citing Bakhtin, the rate of citation also increased; simply put, scholarship intensified not only in number but also in depth. Before 2000, the rate of citation was .56 per article, equivalent to one direct citation for every two articles published. After 2000, that rate increased 3.4 times. After 2000, the rate of citation was 1.91, with nearly two citations for each article published. Thus, one may make the claim that scholars not only increased their publications referencing Bakhtin, but also intensified that work, working with the text more directly.

<table>
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</table>

Figure 8. Articles referencing and citing Bakhtin in English Education
Numbers, however, may be deceiving. Of the 60 articles published between 1983 and 2017, 49% had no citation from Bakhtin, and 43% of the articles had no more than a single mention of Bakhtin in the text. Thirty-two percent of the articles had the remarkable combination of a single mention with no citations. Thus, the contention by Shepherd and Emerson (as recounted by Matusov, 2007) that some scholarship in education may work with Bakhtin with too light of a hand, circulating a buzzword or two, may be altogether grounded.

Working With Care

That said, such metrics draw attention to the careful work of scholars who attempted to bring fresh ideas from Bakhtin into educational scholarship. Here, I selected a subgroup of the scholars published, those whose combined total of references and citations exceeded 10 and whose direct citations to the text exceeded 3 (Table 5). What such a close examination reveals is the nature of scholarship in the field. Several of those listed are established scholars in the field who have written with regularity on Bakhtin (Fecho, Vinz, Dyson, and Kirkland). It should also be noted how two of the scholars who cited most aggressively and extensively published journal articles derived from their dissertations (Tendero and Stewart).

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Work Ref.</th>
<th>Ref #</th>
<th>Cit #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fleischer, C.</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Researching Teacher-Research: A Practitioner’s Retrospective</td>
<td>DI, SG</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendero, T.</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Why Is My Name in Your Mouth?: Linking Literacy and Violence Prevention in “The Safer Places Project”</td>
<td>TPA; DI; PDP; AA; RW</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinz, R.</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>The Things We Carry: Working “In Relation” to the Past</td>
<td>DI</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyson, A. H.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Dialogic Praxis in Teacher Preparation: A Discourse Analysis of Mentoring Talk</td>
<td>DI; PDP</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecho, B., Nicole C.D., Friese, E. E. G., Wilson, A. A. Kirkland, D. E.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Critical Conversations: Tensions and Opportunities of the Dialogical Classroom</td>
<td>SG; DI; PDP</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, T. T.</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>English Teachers, Administrators, and Dialogue: Transcending the Asymmetry of Power in the Discourse of Educational Policy</td>
<td>DI; SG</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There are two additional citations related to Bakhtin, indirectly from Hirschkop (1999)
Some may claim that the use of metrics is merely the dissemination of data, but I contend that metrics provide the multiplicity of perspectives from which to see how a field of scholarship develops, constricts, errs, reflects, and extends itself. Thought and scholarship develop in a rhizomic network; some of that network develops from the rigors of scholarship, exampled by leaders in the field and continued by established scholars who impart rigor in practice. At the same time, some work may only nominally reference the work of Bakhtin. This use of metrics may provide evidentiary support to both critiques and defenders of the field.

Fecho (2010), Vinz (2000), and Kirkland (2009) used Bakhtin to frame thoughtful, distinct arguments in the field of English education. Kirkland cited Bakhtin’s notion of language as a part of a fractured social heteroglossia to consider “New Englishes” in the urban, digital, and global worlds. Fecho, Nicole, Friese, and Wilson (2010), extending the work of Bakhtin to Herman and Hermans-Konopka’s view of an identity, reviewed the tension inherent in language and thought through the balance or lack thereof between centripetal and centrifugal forces among graduate students in an educational seminar. Vinz (2000) considered Bakhtin’s nature of language’s redolent past ever-present in its usage as a way to consider the field of scholarship on the whole in a theoretical piece.

Though linguists or biographers have balked at the application of such theories to education, I contend that Bakhtin’s work itself is hardly locked into a singular discipline. In fact, much of what he wrote involved the largesse of epistemology. For educational philosophers and teacher-researchers, the very nature of writing about the profession demands that one moves from practice to theory. While many in the field may merely nod to theory, others grapple more closely with it to advance scholarship in education.
Birthing thought: The relation of mentor to emerging scholar. Looking at the map of scholarship and zooming in on the work of scholars who work closely and rigorously with the text also reveals patterns of influence crucial to the continued growth of thought in a field. An example of this is the work of an established scholar such as Vinz (2000), who applied Bakhtin’s notion of the past in the epic to a theoretical work in the field of English education. Looking more closely, the work of Vinz rests alongside another work of similar rigor with Bakhtin published in the same year by Tony Tendero (2000). Viewing this adjacency, Tendero’s work was, in fact, an excerpt from what became his dissertation at Columbia under the sponsorship of Vinz. Here is an example of a rhizomic offshoot, but one that engages with and shapes the depth, rigor, and direction of the scholarship.

Similarly, Stewart’s work (2012), which cited with such care, was the product of his work at the University of Georgia under the mentorship of Bob Fecho. Stewart even co-taught a graduate seminar on Bahktin with Fecho. Such frequency and care of citation are part of a larger narrative within the field. While citations may be some indication of intellectual parentage, they may also reveal more specific trails returning to the training of the student by an academic mentor. This vertical dynamic between mentor-teacher and younger scholars reveals the relational story behind emerging scholars, one culled from the acknowledgments page of their dissertations. Such tracings remind us of the real intellectual antecedents without ink spilled, at least for now, upon the reference page.

Citation as Bakhtinian Circle. Bakhtin (1981) notably wrote about the salon and parlor as in literature as a chronotope, noting that time is the fourth dimension of space and is intrinsically linked to it. For Bakhtin, one cannot think about time independent of some space. Time is situated in space and space, reciprocally, is infused with time itself. Thus, the literary
parlor or salon is a place infused with discourse history. It is where the “web of intrigues are spun, denouements occur and finally . . . where dialogues happen . . . revealing the character, ‘ideas’ and ‘passions’ of the heroes” (p. 246). Of course, Bakhtin himself for many years was a part of the Bakhtin Circle, a noted gathering of scholars working through various ideas related to philosophy and linguistics. Brandist (2002) wrote of the great history of discussion circles, known as krug, among the intelligentsia in Russia since the 1830s. For the circle of scholars of Bakhtin, Voloshinov (1973), and Medvedev and Bakhtin (1978), academic work emerged from long discussions and debates, so much so that the authorship of some works is sometimes questioned. What is notable is the dynamic process in the parlor of discussion itself, where words and ideas intermingle in concert and in conflict with one another.

It is this interrelation that has much to bear on communities of scholarship today and on the act of citation. Any investigation of topic of study, and any search through the citations, may reveal the interconnectivity of referenced thought. Stewart’s (2000) work cited both Fecho and Matusov. Fecho himself cited Matusov, and Matusov, Fecho. Today’s parlor may be international conferences or, perhaps, at restaurant tables afterwards. Nonetheless, such discussions continue within and across publications over time. The krug of the 19th century, once housed secretively in Russian salons, has moved into the towers of academia proper and scholastic publications. Today’s circle of exchange, the scholar-to-scholar interaction, is bidirectional, even dialogical, and such exchanges are revealed through scholar-to-scholar citation.

**Extending the life of thought: Citation as memorial.** Scholar-to-scholar relations are intellectually bidirectional, but the mentor-student relationship is a powerful means of encouraging the extension of thought into the world. Indeed, the mentor acts as midwife in many
ways to the ideas of the emerging scholar, and scholars recognize the parentage of their ideas. In a memorial to Stephen Witte, Smagorinsky (Bracewell et al., 2004) illuminated the curation of thought and how Bakhtin had come to him:

He also grilled me about my reading, which he also found entirely inadequate to the problems facing the field, and gave me a reading list: Vygotsky, Wertsch, Bakhtin, and others whose work was providing the impetus for what, I soon grew to realize, was the foundation for the field’s emerging interest in the social and cultural basis for cognitive growth. (p. 19)

Here is an example of teacher-to-student, scholar-to-scholar care. Even in this forum for memorial, Smagorinsky cited Witte, however informally, for his introduction to the work of Bakhtin. Furthermore, recent memorials to key figures in the industry—Arthur Applebee, Brian Street, and Maxine Greene—remind the field not only of the value of each scholar, but also of his or her life’s work in thought.

We honor the passing of the dead through funereal rights. We bow our heads, we close our eyes, and we listen to memories of lives lived. However, a scholar’s words do not, we should hope, die with them. Like the poet or writer, they are performed and repeated. They are the past brought forth into the present. Bakhtin’s ideas did not pass as he did, nor do those of Witte, Applebee, Street, or Greene. Citations are far more than intellectual courtesy; they are some leaning toward the eternal, toward the carrying forward of ideas past. In her work “What the Living Do,” Marie Howe wrote, “I am living. I remember you.” Such is the burden and privilege of those who are living scholars: they sift through the relics of thought to keep ideas alive, ideas which, like Bakhtinian utterances, are in turn, transformed by context, writer, and reader.

Close Reading of Keywords and Ideas

While this chapter identified that articles have referenced and cited Bakhtin, I have also identified key terms or keywords used around the references and quotations. Whenever possible,
I attempted to adhere to the language of the author, rather than extrapolate the Bakhtinian term to which that reference refers. In the event of some subtle language variant, such as dialogical to dialogism, I have settled on one keyword to group like-to-like ideas.

Among the 60 articles, I surveyed the references, noting which works by Bakhtin were referenced. Several articles, 11 to be exact, cited more than one work. *Dialogic Imagination* (DI) was cited by 81% of the articles, while 23% of the articles referenced *Speech Genres and Other Essays* (SG). The other works *Problems with Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (PDP), *Toward a Philosophy of the Act* (TPA), *Art and Answerability* (AA), and *Rabelais and his World* (RW) were referenced less frequently: when combined, they were cited in 18% of the total works (Figure 9).

![Frequency of Bakhtin References, by work](image)

*Figure 9. Frequency of Bakhtinian references, by publication*

Finally, I scanned through each article looking for Bakhtinian keywords, or key ideas appearing in the essay. Such research can indicate that certain concepts have had greater traction, such as dialogism, while others are rarely mentioned in this field, such as the chronotope. The nature of discourse is such that our language is embedded with the voices of others (heteroglossia); authoritarian discourse (monological and centrifugal in nature) are thoughts that have come into vogue in translating the ideas to educational pedagogy. That is not to say that
other ideas may not be applied or should not, only that the field collectively has attached itself to these ideas first and foremost. Table 6 lists the various keywords and their appearance, and Appendix B lists all the keywords pulled from the 60 articles in English Education. Such research constructs a concordance, pulled from one journal, of the central words and ideas of once scholar.

Table 6

*Frequency of Keywords in Articles Citing Bakhtin in English Education*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyword</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogism(^3)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative Discourse</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heteroglossia</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociocultural Discourse</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally Persuasive Discourse</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressivity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideological Becoming</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyphony</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utterance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answerability</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the end, this interest in calculating the keyword frequency is meant to shine light on how citation tracking may reveal varied portals and respective pathways of how thought circulates within a given field. Given that the nature of education both extends itself into other disciplines with limbs akimbo, it may seem that the discipline itself is akin to the multiheaded monstrosities of Scylla and Charybdis. However, if we give in at once to the shape of it—that English education will protect itself at the gate of its discipline, that it will ask those passing through to navigate the waters, that it will extend and reach into anthropology, linguistics, literary theory, philosophy, or psychology—this discipline, perhaps more than most, will

\(^3\) And its variants, such as Dialogical Praxis and Dialogicality.
establish patterns of thought that snake out, recoil, and fall away. Those that do branch out rhizomically will themselves move outward into greater extensions and iterations of thinking.

This chapter’s investigation into Bakhtin’s reach in English education provided a glimpse of how scholarship extends itself into the world. I do not mean to make any grand claim that Gee, Greene, or Rosen definitively broke down the door for Bakhtin to enter English education. Scholars had doubtless debated, talked, and quibbled at conferences in departments for years, as Bakhtin was considered a fashionable, intellectual trend. My aim was to present an emergence, while also noting the pulse and rhythm of how scholarship takes force and reaches outward. It is through citation analysis that I see the work of the rhizome so much at play. Ideas are viral agents, and Bakhtin (1986) himself knew that the very speech in our mouths has the “taste” of another’s words. What is that if not inherent citation?

**A Gathering of Perspectives**

With a method of distant reading using metrical analysis, my aim was to offer a dynamic of how scholarship is extended into the world. Bakhtin’s work, translated long after its initial composition, becomes a unique case study in how a field, when addressing a scholar’s work all at once, may ponder and digest it. Tracing Bakhtin’s entrance into the field of education also provides insight into how thinking travels, across what platforms, and which ideas develop greater traction. What, then, might be suggested about Bakhtinian scholarship?

- An increase in journal publications after 2000 as compared to that prior;
- An intensification of working with Bakhtin theoretically, given the increase in direct citations from the text in scholarly articles;
- The rhizomic structure vertically and laterally among established and emerging scholars and between fields of discipline and among colleagues; and
• The clustering around certain ideas of Bakhtin, such as dialogism, authoritative discourse, heteroglossia, and sociocultural discourse in framing research in English education.

In the end, such a meta-analysis and reflection to map the varied territories of the field of scholarship become reflexive actions as a cautionary tale. The speed with which scholarship is delivered in the field, the population of the landscape, does not necessarily equate with care in scholarship. One can see the extension of scholastic thought as rhizomic, but one can also see the passive replication of thought or of scholars citing ideas without interrogation. As Hannah Arendt (1978) wrote, “there are no dangerous thoughts; thinking itself is dangerous” (p. 78), but the inverse is true as well: thoughtlessness too is of great danger. With the pressures to publish or perish, what might be the effect on thought itself?

**Labor in the Field**

I began this chapter, a chapter steeped in data and metrics and quantitative analysis, with a poem, perhaps to remind myself that I once was and shall always be an English teacher. I remind myself that the wings of man were made glorious by the calloused hand of art. The poem depicts a view of Icarus and the world in which he was situated. Perched like Icarus, this chapter is a digital elevation of the field of scholarship. My aim was to soar up high, dart about, and let myself view the field from great distance across time. However, digital wings can be a dangerous tool, a fool’s tool. I may have forgotten a corner here, an entry there; I assembled as many positions as I could to formulate some impression. It is, however, merely an impression, a hazy outline of that organic, growing thing that scholarship does, driven by scholars themselves. I offer such a view, if only for a moment, and hope that such flight is not folly, and my errors, like that of the fallen Icarus, are not some “splash unnoticed.” Rather, this work serves as labor in the
field, for even as I view from above, the work was, at the same time, akin to that of the farmer, and this field, scholastic as it is, a “pageantry/ . . . awake tingling/with itself” (ll. 6-8).
VIII - A SHIFT TO UNDERLYING PROCESSES OF THOUGHT

There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from each of these orders, so that a book has no sequel nor the world as its object nor one or several authors as its subject. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 25)

The challenge in writing about rhizomatic structures is how to capture complexity with clarity. My aim has been to use the tuberous model to unlock the continuous, interconnected aspects of educational theory and action. Discourse studies is my focus of exploration, to be sure, but the examination on the whole is one of the book, the world, and the author. The assemblage formed from scholarship is a mapping of interlocking practices, practices that fight to extend themselves, that attach and detach themselves to other practices, that recoil into themselves, and stop and start once again. Viewed this way, one may understand something of the fatigue of hierarchy Deleuze and Guattari (1987) expressed when they wrote that “[w]e are tired of trees . . . we should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They have made us suffer too much” (p. 15). This reconceptualization from vertical, arboreal hierarchies to the tuberous network of plaited shoot systems provides a map, albeit less ordered and comprehensible, for the very nature of scholarship itself.

This chapter attempts to view such knotted interactions among theory, practice, and instructional works. One may consider how a positivist might view that tripartite of study: the scholar representing the object with the study, the book. The rhizome reorients this phenomenon, even in its multiplicity and mesh-like confusion, to make sense of the interrelations between thought, study, and instruction. Theory, for example, is both a response to and some agentive exertion upon the world—it wishes to exert itself onto studies and teacher training, all the while
continuing to adapt and adjust to those very same elements, reterritorializing itself. For example, a study that theorizes on dialogism in the classroom, only to find that few classrooms actually partake in such practice, may result in the scholar returning to theorize as to how and why such practices do not take shape, or better yet, how one may train teachers in such practices. Empirical studies may often be some passive representation of what is, a lament, as it were, of the state-of-things; but they may also be interventionist, both a representation and an adjustment to the practices of the classroom. Finally, instructional works, written to train teachers, extend from both theory and research, but they may also, in turn, shape each, as practices are implemented, successfully or not, in the classroom. One may consider how such shoots from each of these three elements grow akimbo and into one another, like potatoes in the field or the thick roots of the ginger plant. This chapter reviews such knotty interrelations in full knowledge that often they do not operate with strict divisions. Scholarly research is framed by theory, and theory is both proactive and reactive to an ever-changing world. In turn, instructional works equally collide with and respond to theory and research, as they do with the flesh and gray matter of classroom practice.

While the previous chapter focused on a singular scholar to map the routes and networks of ideas extended in the theoretical frame of research studies, I now wish to return to the broader consideration of mapping of theoretical, empirical, and instructional scholarship on discourse studies since the advent of post-structuralism, particularly from the 1980s onward. While past chapters identified the transformative theories and their translation into practice through NGOs, this chapter aims to clarify two aspects in scholarship: first, the how, that is, the method by which shifts and growth and change occur; and second, the what, the identification of the trends and directions that such scholarship takes. The how of scholarship identifies how a theory forecasts a
future not yet realized, how non-interventionist research identifies monolithic practices, and how interventionist empirical studies pave the way for instructional works to train teachers in alternative methods of discourse. The what notes the increasing direction of discourse scholarship toward internal, dialogical investigations. As such, I return to theoretical work on discourse methods, such as Bakhtinian studies, to shore up shifts and trends in movements from theory to research to instructional practices. First, however, I wish to recall several early studies in the 1980s that outlined the framework for such changes to occur.

**Post-Structural Shifts in Empirical Studies**

In the 1980s, post-structuralist theories paved the way for the work of teacher researchers who began to investigate the ways in which students were learning and talking in and outside of traditional norms of study, be it the “topic,” “task,” or the walls of the classroom itself. Two outsider studies, as I call them, examined the negative spaces of discourse: Shirley Brice Heath’s study (1983) examined community practices of orality rather than classroom discourse; and Kohlberg’s work (1984) examined internal discourse as it revealed cognitive growth.

Heath’s (1983) foundational ethnographic study of a mill town investigated the practices of literacy in two racially distinct communities of the Piedmont Carolinas she named Trackton and Roadville. Trackton is a Black, working-class community that once worked the land and now works in the textile mills, whereas Roadville is comprised of White, working-class families “steeped in four generations in the life of the textile mills” (p. 1). What is remarkable in this study, alongside the content, is the shift in method. While the first part of the research was observational, the second half was “interventionist.” After observing the literacy practices in home communities, including differentiated approaches to the home practices of orality, storytelling, and literacy, Heath returned to the classroom “to work with teachers to enable them
to become participant observers in their own domains and to use the knowledge from the ethnographies of Trackton and Roadville to inform their motivations, practices, and programs of teaching” (p. 13). This shift from the “unobtrusive” observant to the “intrusive” and interventionist marks the divide in empirical research practices as it identifies a bridge between research and pedagogical change (p. 12).

Like Heath’s study, Kohlberg’s (1984) work investigated previously unexplored spaces of classroom discourse. However, Kohlberg’s study notably focused on the student, examining the varied practices of internal and developmental communication. Kohlberg’s well-known, longitudinal work on the structure of moral thought among boys aged 10-16 applied Piaget’s concepts of moral reasoning to develop a defined structural typology of moral thought, as subjects were interviewed over the course of 40 years after the initial study began. From a research point of view, what is noteworthy here is the examination of the subject’s thinking over time and its development. Kohlberg found support for his six-staged theory of moral development, but through the examination of the thinking and the internal processes by which people come to formulate moral stances.

Other examples of empirical studies that shifted the space of study were those that focused on students’ development through action in discussion, such as gestures and off-task behavior. Several scholars noted that the unofficial voices of others were marked as “off-task” or subversive voices that revealed unforeseen aspects of student cognition (Dyson, 1989; Kachur & Prendergrast, 1997). These studies moved beyond the expected spaces of examination: beyond classrooms to communities, beyond a moral position to the rationale that supports it, and beyond standard behaviors of classroom discourse to off-task remarks or gestures as indicators of
development. During this time, empirical research found ways to shift the frame of traditional studies.

Much like postmodern theorists who questioned authority and canonicity, English educators repositioned the role of the teacher in the classroom and opened up fields of understanding regarding the home practices of discourse, learning styles, and verbal and nonverbal communication practices. In short, it was not the “Great Works” that became the object of study, but rather the domestic lives, minds, and outlying behaviors of the students themselves. Research such as that of Heath and Kohlberg opened more doors for change, as they introduced new territories for new practices. But though research reorients discussion hierarchies and shifts the role of the teacher in theory, the majority of empirical research in the United States and abroad merely confirmed the static states of discourse practice in classrooms.

**Shifting From Empirical Research to a Dialogical Future**

Much of the empirical research during this time confirmed the fixed hierarchical nature of pedagogies in the classroom. In the 1990s, Edwards and Westgate (1994) pinpointed the “unequal communication rights” of teacher talk that appeared to be monological in view of its lines of closed questioning (p. 44). These British findings corresponded with research in the United States. Nystrand’s (1997) extensive study concluded that instruction in the United States was “overwhelmingly monologic. When teachers were not lecturing, students were either answering questions or completing seatwork. The teacher asked nearly all the questions, few questions were authentic, and few teachers followed up student responses” (p. 33). Nystrand defined “authentic questions” as those that “signal to students the teacher’s interest in what they think and know and not just whether they can report what someone else thinks or has said”
Thus, while the inequity of power and the imbalance of the voice became codified practices in classroom methods, scholars began to chip away at their efficacy.

Alexander’s (2001) long-term, international study of dialogic teaching, the *Culture and Pedagogy* project, involved studies in the United Kingdom, France, India, Russia, and the United States. Beginning his research in 1992, Alexander gathered fieldwork in primary schools from 1994 to 1998 and consolidated it for publication in 2001 to scholarly acclaim, as it was awarded AERA’s “Outstanding Book of the Year Award.” Methodologies included interviews, non-participatory observation, video, photography, and documentary analysis from 106 lessons and 130 hours of videotape. Alexander attempted to define cultures of dialogue within different countries’ classrooms. He (2008a) noted that India, still under the thumb of a former system of rote learning and recitation prevalent during the British colonial era, relied on the three R’s and a transmission model of education. In contrast, pedagogies in France and Russia involved “whole class teaching,” in which “children were expected to talk clearly, loudly and expressively” (p. 103). Methods in the United States, however, were less formalized, as teachers there demonstrated an aversion to “transmission” modes of teaching.

Even so, the result was oddly question-driven, with teachers charging off “pseudo-questioning,” such as asking, “What do you see?” in a science class, which, while ostensibly “open,” nonetheless has a predetermined answer. In these classrooms, talk was “conversational” and underlined the importance of “sharing” (Alexander, 2008a, p. 117). The British classroom exhibited neither a habit of conversation nor of dialogue, but was instead dominated by recitation practices: teachers’ questions were closed rather than open; students’ responses closed the discussion with little speculation, wonder, or “thinking aloud”; and teachers’ feedback was
intended to encourage or praise rather than probe or initiate uptake (p. 119). In summary,

Alexander (2008a) wrote the following:

International data show that these so-called ‘rules’ of communicative competence, which have come out of mainly British and American classroom research . . . are neither universal nor inevitable and that they can be subverted by genuine discussion or by a version of whole class teaching that is rather different from the classic British and American recitation teaching of ‘test’ questions, minimal ‘uptake’ and evaluative but otherwise uninformative feedback. Again, France and Russia provide useful counterpoints. . . . In the alternative approach, communicative competence is judged by how one performs over the whole transaction rather than whether one gives the single ‘right’ answer; and by the manner of the response—clarity, articulateness, attention to the question—as well as its substance. (p. 119)

With Alexander’s global reach, educators became more attentive to global classrooms and cultural traditions within distinct countries as well as to how such traditions came to formulate the structure of classroom exchange. That said, the study confirmed the lack of real dialogical discourse across several cultures.

**Empirical Research in the United States**

Two long-term studies repeated the findings of earlier research on the monological classroom in the United States. Applebee et al.’s (2003) 1-year study of 19 schools in five states questioned whether discussion-centered instruction enhanced reading comprehension and literary analysis. The findings revealed that eighth and ninth grade studies were dominated by IRE/IRF teacher talk. Open exchange averaged less than 50 seconds in the eighth grade and 15 seconds in the ninth grade. Shifts from recitational to dialogical discourse patterns were rare, comprising only 6.69% of class time.

Similar conclusions were the result of Myhill’s (2006) 2½ year study which investigated discourse during whole class discussions, closely examining both teacher and student questions, interactivity, prior student knowledge, critical moments, and teachers’ beliefs about talking to learn. Her findings highlighted how, even in whole class discussion, teachers dominated and
control discourse, focusing on “correct answers rather than thinking” (p. 39). Myhill conjectured that this methodology may indeed contribute to lower school achievement. In her conclusion, she recommended strategies by which to maximize student involvement, such as framing questions to invite students to share personal experiences or adopting a no-hands policy.

In many ways, empirical research, one that proposes a possible change in its theoretical frame only to reveal the reality of the classroom, becomes a cry for change. More empirical studies in classrooms, after all, would only reveal the same result. So how does theory or teacher research propose such change? In past chapters, I tracked how theory becomes materialized in teacher training through institutionalization, but is there another route for change? Do theory, research, and instructional manuals work in a network of power for change? Or do they exist in a state of disunity, out of time and step with one another? I propose that the emergence of dialogical theory, coupled with interventionist research and instructional publications, may provide insight into how theory has taken hold, forging new educational territories, and how it may connect to real change in practice.

**Theory Leaning Toward the Future**

If empirical research were quick to point toward monological discourse in the classroom, Bakhtinian scholarship in education theory began to dream of a dialogical future. AERA formed a sociocultural special interest group (SIG) in the mid-1990s, which continues its work today on cultural-historic research in the tradition of Vygotsky, Luria, Leont’ev, Bakhtin, and Mead.

While Bakhtin was prominent among scholars of translation, linguistics, and literary theory, the increasing use of Bakhtin in educational pedagogy, as noted in the last chapter, was questioned for merely giving “lip service” to his work rather than plumbing its depths. In past conferences on the work of Bakhtin, limited attention was dedicated to educational pedagogy.
For instance, while the International Conference on Bakhtin produced 16 conferences since the 1980s, the conference was slow to expand its inquiry into education. As a result, educational scholars began to carve out discrete conference space. The International Interdisciplinary Conference on Perspectives and Limits of Dialogism produced four conferences since the mid-2000s, which united linguists, literary theorists, and pedagogical scholars. Furthermore, Matusov brought international educators and scholars together in 2013 by founding *The Journal of Dialogic Pedagogy*. This theoretical backdrop provided the setting for shifts in discourse research that allowed for dialogical pedagogy to emerge.

**Questioning Socratic and Other Practices**

During the 1990s, theoretical scholarship aimed to question or break down out-of-date teacher practices, such as fast-paced questioning or instructional and “monological” scripts (Gutierrez, Rymes, & Larson, 1995, p. 445). Furthermore, Socratic questioning was challenged or made “kinder” and “gentler” (Fernandez, 1994, p. 43; also see Vlastos & Burnyeat, 1994), even while it was promoted (Woodruff, 1998). Gentler practices in which teachers assumed supportive rather than commanding roles gave rise to the transformation of the teacher from being a “sage on the stage” to being a “guide on the side” (King, 1993, p. 30). Such paradigmatic shifts were in line with the suggestion that teachers should grant students time to formulate answers and think prior to discussion to increase involvement (Wragg & Brown, 1993). This sensitivity to each student and the differentiation between them undergirded the work of Delpit (1995), who revealed how power could silence Black and minority voices in the classroom. Delpit’s work called for instruction to bridge the power divide through a consciousness of the cultures of power that underlay it. Such scholarship was concurrent with a greater examination of
dialogue in the classroom, which, I propose, led to greater investigations of mechanisms that comprise dialogue: the internal mechanisms of the dialogized self.

**Theory That Breaks Down Dialogue**

Scholarship in both the 1980s and 1990s began to theorize with greater attention to the definition and qualities of dialogue. In the past, classroom dialogue was understood as a natural progression of the IRE, with a greater emphasis on the “R” (response). As noted previously, Bohm (1996) reminded educators that the word *dialogue* derives from the Greek, meaning *through* words, linguistically connected to “breaking down,” and shares its root with *concussion* and *percussion* (p. 6). Both Bohm and Habermas (1984) noted that dialogue was consensus-building. In contrast to the divergent simultaneous voices of Bakhtin, Habermas’ (1984) *Theory of Communicative Action* suggested that people who engage in dialogue aim to resolve varied opinions in the room: “actors seek to reach an understanding about the action situation and their plans of action in order to coordinate their actions by way of agreement” (p. 101). Furthermore, he added that “[t]he concept of communicative action presupposes the use of language as a medium for a kind of reaching understanding, in the course of which participants, through relating to a world, reciprocally raise valid claims that can be accepted or contested” (p. 99). This reciprocity of dialogue was crucial to the work of Mercer (2000), who coined the term *interthinking* to suggest that dialogue is multidirectional. Pinpointing the essential characteristics of ideal dialogues, Burbules (1993) argued that dialogue challenges hierarchy, supports plurality, relinquishes fixed teleological outcomes, is reciprocal, and invites a range of interactions and styles of communication. Inspired by the theories of Habermas and Grice, Burbules claimed that dialogue is, in fact, a “game” with rules.
Defining dialogue and dialogical practices. In line with postmodern practices and deconstructive questioning, the nomenclature of “dialogue” came under scrutiny, as it and terms related to it were poked at, torn apart, and refined. The term dialogue was used both loosely with and more precisely in opposition to the dialogical, which emerged from Vygotsky’s use of Hegel’s dialectic. Dialogical practice then came to describe a form of classroom pedagogy that was “mutualist and dialectical” and in which “understanding is fostered through discussion and collaboration” (Bruner, 1996, p. 57). Bakhtin’s theories infiltrated educational theory and undergirded most of the practices of dialogical discussion in the classroom, following Fairclough’s (1992) statement that heteroglossia was part of the world as well as literature. Bakhtin, however, was less articulate about classroom practice than he was about theories and structures of language itself. Likewise, scholarship devoted to theoretical aspects of dialogue and its characteristics did not address practice.

One notable exception was educational scholar Nystrand (1997), who used Bakhtin as a theoretical frame to perform detailed empirical research on classroom discussions. Nystrand’s work focused on the dialogical aspects of discussion, in which questions became “sites of interaction,” and where a computer-coding program, CLASS, classified such interactions. Questions, for instance, were precisely coded, such as those that lead to greater cognition or may spin off from or build on the work of others. According to Nystrand, the characteristics of the dialogical classroom included the use of “authentic questions,” which do not have a prescribed answer; “uptake questions,” to which answers are reformulated into subsequent questions; and level of evaluation, in which a student’s response has the potential to “modify the topic of discourse” (p. 32). Though Nystrand brought Bakhtin’s dialogical theory into a methodological frame by coding questions and responses, classroom practices, as he observed, fell behind the
theoretical ideal. In his 2-year study of 25 middle and high school classrooms involving over 1,100 students, Nystrand found that most classroom instruction was indeed monological (p. 41). Here is an example of how theory proposes an ideal for discussion not found in real classroom interactions. On one hand, one may wonder whether theory is too far divorced from classroom realities; on the other hand, one may consider whether the dream of theory is essential to produce the sort of classroom theory imagines.

**The Sociocognitive Turn at the Turn of the Century**

Research at the turn of the century continued to break down questioning and student response in the classroom. While Nystrand developed coding for student questions, Mercer (2000) wrote on categories of commentary, including elicitations, repetitions, and elaborations as methods by which to build “the future on foundations of the past” (p. 52; also, see pp. 52-56 for further details on categories). In the “Thinking Together” project, researchers identified three modes of “talk,” namely disputational, cumulative, and exploratory (Dawes, Mercer, & Wegerif, 2000). While the first two are, respectively, monological/argumentative and uncritical/agreement centered, the third is exploratory and asks students to reflect so that ideas are “challenged and counter-challenged” (Mercer, 2000, p. 98).

The turn of the 21st century marked a distinct shift in method, which adopted sociocognitive studies of literacy instruction and focused research in the classroom “on the exchange of ideas . . . including reading, writing, and the talk that surrounds them” (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003, p. 688). Pulling from a variety of disciplines, such as anthropology, psychology, literary theory, and linguistics, literacy scholars examined “discussion based approaches in teaching for in-depth understanding” (p. 686). In this way, research began to focus on the “cognitive and linguistic processes underlying” thought (p. 687). For Applebee et al.
(2003), Emig’s work was a cornerstone in this research practice: “Emig traced the evolution of students’ ideas while they were writing and showed how that evolution illustrated the recursive, complex cognitive and linguistic processes that writers engage in as they struggle with both content and form” (p. 678). However, according to Applebee et al., Emig neglected to include classroom discussion.

A New Century and New Territories of Dialogical Study

The events that occurred in the United States on September 11, 2001, often used as a marker between eras, ushered in an age of anxiety that was spun from new forms of terror and unseen adversaries. The effect for researchers in educational practice was a new recognition, rather than a suppression, of tensions and conflict in classroom dialogue. In inquiry, this sensitivity to tension and conflict takes on an urgent need to listen. In fact, when asked what he would say to Osama Bin Laden in the wake of the attacks, Thich Nhat Hahn, the Buddhist monk who was nominated by Martin Luther King, Jr. for the Nobel Peace Prize, responded as follows: “[the] first thing I would do is listen . . . to understand all the suffering that had led him to violence” (Hahn, as cited in Parker, p. 201). This extended comprehension that dialogue enfolds a listener and that every utterance understands those prior and anticipates those coming maps out greater theoretical, linguistic territory for researchers to consider the dialogical.

It may be that simultaneous with the intensification of hostile discourse in the past 20 years (Tannen, 1999) is the intensification of studies, both theoretical and empirical, in the dialogical. Indeed, this very dissertation has examined the rise in 37 years of the work of Bakhtin and its dramatic intensification after the turn of the century. Moreover, as I have laid out in Chapter V, the most frequently cited term in studies in English Education was the term dialogic or dialogical. Given this interest, I claim that with the scholastic consolidation around an idea
comes a dynamic force to extend that idea into practice. One can consider, for example, the pedagogical shift in the classroom from Cazden’s (1988) extension of the “E” in IRE, and how teachers subsequently began to recalibrate their response to student questioning to move beyond approval or correction. Can the same be said for the concept of the dialogical classroom?

**Dialogical Theory**

Marking a turn from one decade of work in the dialogic and uniting centuries of thought and critical discourse was the work of Matusov (2009). He examined the process of questioning in Socratic discourse, mapping the dialogues as one might do in a classroom, to reveal that slave dialogues are monologic, as opposed to free-citizen dialogues, which are more dialogical. For Matusov, Socrates was epistemologically a radical positivist, though methodologically a radical constructivist; for Socrates, knowledge and truth are singular, and dialogue can co-construct truth through internal persuasion.

Moving beyond Socrates, Matusov questioned the extent to which Freire was dialogical or merely a faint version of the ideal, wherein the teacher is less “transformed” in the pedagogical relation than Freire famously claimed. Using Bakhtin’s ideas of polyphony and the chronotope to frame the contemporary classroom, Matusov argued that monologic pedagogy contributed to student alienation, weakened teacher authority, and taught a curriculum that was out of date and irrelevant to students’ needs (p. 206). In addressing the classical and postmodern dialogism and considering the work of Paley (1993) as well as the SDC, Matusov united the inquiries of recent Western and Eastern scholarship, which he continued to explore in a joint publication of scholarship.
From Dialogical Theory to Research

Consolidation of theory can take many forms, but in scholarship, one form is the conference panel, itself a formalized modernization of the Russian *krug*, or discussion circle. Such consolidations focus lines of scholarship, which may, in turn, activate stems of theory that translate into shifts in practice. Such was the case with dialogical theory. In an interview, Solomadin (in Matusov, 2009c) recalled the 1996 AERA conference panel on Vygotsky, in which Russian scholars not only met academics from the United States and United Kingdom but also colleagues from Japan, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands, all of whom converged in restaurants in the West Village and began discussions on dialogue. This informal meeting, akin to Bakhtin’s salon of scholars, was the seed for crucial international collaborations to come.

From such formal and informal discussions emerged publications, and over a decade later, the *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology* devoted its 2009 issue to the dialogical theory of the SDC, which, as I mentioned in a previous chapter, introduced the theories and practice of Bibler’s Bakhtinian-inspired curriculum to the West. Two years later, in 2011, the same publication issued its second issue devoted to the SDC, this time with greater global reach, effectively inviting American scholars such as Fecho, Wortham, Smagorinsky, and Morson, among others, to consider the implications and scope of influence of the SDC. Wortham (2011) noted that identity itself was not merely formulated ontologically from discussion, but rather from the tensions within the “self . . . and [its] ongoing dialogue between genuine (and often contradictory), live voices” (p. 74). Fecho (2011a) brought the work of Gloria Anzaldúa to bear on the SDC in his questioning of schools that maintain an indifference to “students lived cultures” (p. 48). Fecho questioned whether such restrictions excluded popular culture and silenced the vitality of discussion in the classroom. Smagorinsky (2011) addressed whether the
private school curriculum of the SDC would have a similarly beneficial effect if it were transferred to students of poverty. In this foundational issue, the scholars were themselves “students of culture”; as such, they were invited to muse dialogically, providing queries, questions, and counter-arguments.

The aim in this sweeping global coverage is to chart the collision between scholars who at one time were disparate geographically and linguistically and to provide some narrative regarding how scholarship and dialogue gathered a central focus, a consolidation, on the dialogical—from those first discussions after the AERA conference and continuing toward scholarship, which themselves edge into the dialogical. Having teased out this one thread of development, I recursively chart out in what follows the three interrelated and crucial strains of scholarship that emerged in the past 20 years: theory, empirical research, and application or teacher training.

**Collections on Dialogical Work**

During the first two decades of the 21st century, several lengthier works of theory gained prominence in the field of dialogical theory. Two collections, which were published in the past 15 years, consolidated the work of leading educational scholars to consider Bakhtin’s influence on pedagogy. Ball and Freedman’s (2004) collection of research and theory, primarily from scholars from the United States, explored the application of the core linguistic theories of *polyphony* and *heteroglossia* to existing work by scholars such as Carol Lee and James Gee. Other theoretical work in the collection set Bakhtin’s ideas in line with other educational scholars, such as Dewey and Rosenblatt (Dressman, 2004), while applying the concept of *double-voicedness* within the context of the African American vernacular (Lee, 2004), inner dialogues and writing (Knoller, 2004), and new technologies (Gee, 2004; Mahiri, 2004). In
another collection, early childhood scholars White and Peters (2011) brought together researchers from multiple disciplines and with a global reach, including scholars from Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Greece, Israel, the United States, and Australasia. Subdividing the collection’s empirical studies, this anthology used the three Bakhtinian theoretical concepts of authorship, answerability, and the chronotope. Such anthologies brought critical formulations as to how scholars may use Bakhtin’s theories in pedagogy and were perhaps a response to earlier critiques by linguists who had faulted educational studies by using Bakhtin’s ideas without consideration or depth.

**Internally questioning discourse in theory.** Such anthologies addressed or further provoked the scrutiny of philologists, who witnessed the complexity of Bakhtin’s ideas distorted into serviceable and reductive frames that misrepresented the scholar’s work (Emerson, as cited in Matusov, 2007; Shepherd, 2005). Taking a split stance, both in support and critical of educational theorists, Matustov questioned both the scholarship and practice of dialogical ideas, such as internally persuasive discourse. By casting a meta-reflective critical eye to scholarship, Matusov (2007) out-Bakhtined Bakhtin in continuing a dialogue among scholars, asking questions and prodding the dialogue to continue without finality. He ended his thoughts with the provocative query, “Can pedagogy be dialogical?” as if to invite dialogue, or alternatively, lament the possibility of such dialogue altogether. As theorists continue to debate the dialogical in the present age, some have considered how the dialogical was affected by the age of new technology.

**Bringing Bakhtin’s theories to the digital age.** Wegerif’s (2013) major and exclusively theoretical work moved the dialogical into the age of the internet, which Bakhtin could never have imagined, but which is, nonetheless, very much an extension of the Bakhtinian Circle salon.
In the digital age, Wegerif viewed a Copernican shift of consciousness, as exampled by the shift from the monological encyclopedia to the polyphony of Wikipedia. Wikipedia is at once dialogical, “collaborative and participatory,” thereby recalling a return to Socratic forms of dialogue that involve “worlds that can be questioned, that answer back, and that participate in the development of understanding” (p. 10). While such observations instill great hope for education, they can sometimes remain, however, a wish, and just as often a warning; occasionally, it falls to researchers in the classroom to examine whether theories on dialogue are manifesting in classrooms.

**Interventionist Research in the Dialogical**

Set against the grand studies of classroom discourse in years prior (Alexander, 2008a; Applebee et al., 2003), studies that often exposed the limitations of current practices were smaller studies that revealed the possibilities inherent in dialogical teaching and discussion. These studies were often interventionist, in which the researcher’s stance made the case for new practices. Such studies informed the way research itself can activate new shoots of practice and thus contribute, along with theorists and NGOs, to the rhizomic network of discourse practices.

Skidmore’s (2000) study of one primary school classroom and its discourse revealed how internally persuasive discourse operates within dialogue in the classroom. Using Bakhtin, Skidmore urged that more reciprocal practices are crucial in the classroom rather than monological pedagogical practices. Such studies, which observe and then call for action, positioned the researcher first as an impartial observer and second as a retroactive corrector of classroom operations, while other studies in this era most notably adopted a more interventionist approach to test how such theories play out in the classroom.
Several empirical researchers have adopted a more active, participator stance to deliver findings in support of dialogical work in the classroom. Langer’s (2001) 5-year study examined 25 middle and high school classrooms comprised of 44 teachers and 88 classes of predominately low-income and diverse populations in New York, Florida, Texas, and California to chart the effects of what she termed “high literacy” (p. 838). The frame of Langer’s comparative study set dominant, traditional practices against the more progressive pedagogies of schools focused on “beating the odds.” Such practices included teachers who focused on integrated and explicit instruction and techniques to drive deep understanding, as well as the use of shared cognition activities such as whole and small working-group discussions. One finding indicated that “deep thinking” emerged from student-driven whole class discussion and from “shared cognition” (p. 874) practices with small working groups or other “mind-to-mind” activities (p. 858).

Certain researchers considered that changing classrooms was a function of changing the minds of teachers’ and students’ habits of mind equally. Sutherland’s (2015) yearlong study of four teachers in three urban schools in Southeast England compared initial transcripts of classes to transcripts from after researchers had introduced dialogism. This work showed that “eleven of the twelve transcripts showed a greater proportion of exploratory talk . . . in terms of . . . reasoning, analysis, peer questioning to elicit developed responses, length of utterance, . . . talk and level of participation by all” (p. 52). This transformative approach attempted to show the effect that coaching may have on student achievement and abandoned the passive discourse of objectivity. Instead, researchers demonstrated that after intervention, a quantifiable difference in cognition and achievement was measurable. On the whole, such findings make a strong case for interventionist studies and dialogical practices in the classroom.
However, not all interventionist studies fall into a heroic transformation narrative. With Alexander’s work as inspiration, Wilkinson et al. (2017) devised a 3-year study of lower school classrooms that sought to reshape teachers’ beliefs about dialogic pedagogy. In its second year, researchers aimed to teach argument literacy, using Alexander’s methodology of dialogic discussion in the classroom, while adding a meta-reflective element. The results, however, found only a small shift in teachers’ belief that a dialogical system would be any more effective than traditional methods. Teachers adopted a “relativistic” stance, viewing each method as being of equal value. Among the many individual studies since 2000, of note are edited collections of essays that bring together the work of diverse researchers in curated publications. One can consider how such collections are an extension of the panel conference discussion. However, with the collection, the scope and latitude of work offered can be greater and the curation more focused. Further, the formal introduction to the collection has greater space to situate the importance of the unifying theory in the history of scholarship.

Collections of Empirical Research: Talking About Talk and Early Childhood Learning

Collections of scholarly research remain an acknowledgement that an idea has taken hold of scholarship, particularly surrounding the dialogical. While single studies are essential contributions, the gathering of thought within collections is the scholarly assemblage of concurrent trends in research. Collections both acknowledge and codify the network of rhizomic structures. Some are tied to professional institutions of scholarship, others to key players in the field, and still others are awarded to such key players by scholastic publications.

Murphy et al.’s (2009) important meta-research on discussion in primary school classrooms consolidated 40 years of work by other researchers. They concluded that it was not
talk itself but rather the kind of talk that is crucial to cognitive development. “Not all talk is created equal,” they wrote, adding that talk is an essential means rather than a pedagogical end. Of note is that over 50% of the 49 studies she examined took place in the 1990s. My study in Chapter V of the work of Bakhtin in journals devoted to English education noted the proliferation of Bakhtinian scholarship after 2000. Given this proliferation, it may be fruitful to continue with a meta-analysis of empirical studies from the last 10-20 years of research.

AERA’s 2011 conference in Pittsburgh yielded an expansive volume of collected work by international scholars in dialogical practice. Editors Resnick, Asteran, and Clarke (2015) reached out to scholars from across the globe prior to the conference to inquire about the uses of a dialogical methodology in classrooms. The conference site became a forum in which to “talk about talk” and “specifically, the role of academic dialogue in learning” (Introduction). The volume that was assembled from the conference divided the papers into 32 chapters and five sections. The inquiry involved structured, teacher-led discussions across subjects and grade levels, including a long-term 30-year study that found that cognition increased through discussion. Other studies ranged in context from dialogue in a yeshiva to dialogue in science and mathematics courses, and research considering how digital communication enhances or inhibits depth of knowledge. Such anthologies of work appear to be very much in the spirit of the Bakhtinian Circle, given that they emerged from dialogue itself and by their interdisciplinary reach. Bakhtin’s own work bridged linguistics, philosophy, and literary theory. That educational anthologies began to consolidate scholarly interests, rather than subdivide them, echoed the sort of polyphony that made the Bakhtinian Circle productive. In the same year as the AERA conference, the Teachers College Record similarly collected the work of scholars to investigate a counter-narrative of talk: the act of listening.
The *Teachers College Record* explores listening. Another notable collection of scholarship was a contribution by the *Teachers College Record* (2011), which devoted an issue to the uncharted activity of listening. In it, scholars broke down the mechanics and classified aspects of listening (Burbules & Rice, 2011) and mapped the possible relation between listening and the democratic principles of equity and political trust (Parker, 2011). Thus, dialogue and dialogical theory were not only a response but also an act of talking about and processing the opinion of another, against and with the self. The interest in listening gave greater consideration to the “internal” part of IPD, including conflict and tension.

Some scholars felt the need to acknowledge and explore the tensions within each student agent (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010), between students with vastly differing stances (Fecho, 2001, 2011b), between teachers and students (Fecho, 2011b), and between teachers working together in the classroom (Hermann-Wilmarth, 2008). Speech and dialogue were thereby revealed to be “troubling,” often viewed as a “threat,” and affording “tension and discomfort” (Fecho, 2001, 2011b; Jaworski, 2006). Some of the fieldwork examined listening and attempts toward understanding, particularly in disagreement. Most research prior to 2004 notably focused on speech in dialogue, while studies thereafter began to chart the flip-side of speech and the speaker, which involved the unspoken actions of listening and the listener, including misunderstandings, tension, and even interruption (Haroutunian-Gordan, 2010). While this group of scholars explored the existing tensions of the dialogical within psychology, others considered the application of Bakhtinian concepts in the early formation of language and thought.

development, with scholars using the carnivalesque to examine humor (Tallant, 2015), dialogism and responsiveness to examine violently-themed play among nursery-aged children in London (Rosen, 2015), self-authorship through imaginative play and living in a social-cultural context among others (Stetsenko et al., 2015), and “visual surplus” or the dialogical exchange of glances between infants and teachers (White, Redder, & Peter, 2015). In summary, White’s collection of essays brought Bakhtin’s ideas of humor and the dialogical to early childhood studies in communities from the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

In all, the acceleration and globalization of empirical research are notable. While some scholars observed the existing problems of monological discourse, others operated with a Freirean, transformative mindset. The consolidation of scholastic interest in such publications built communities of research practice, and those communities of practice focalized the territorial reach and impact. Such communities have had an effect on the third tangled component of the rhizome in scholarship: teacher training and the practical application of theory within the classroom.

**Instructional Publications for Classroom Application**

While theory is essential in imaging and diagramming the ideal classroom, empirical research serves as evidence of its manifestation or lack thereof in the classroom. Practice and theory are interdependent. Theory, often responding to dated practices, imagines a future. In turn, innovation among practitioners, however slight, may well give scholars the routes to revise and expand existing theories. Bridging the gap between what might or should be and what is in the classroom is the function of teacher training and publications on the practical applications of theoretical ideas. Publications, conferences, and teacher training are crucial to enact a shift from theory to *praxis*—from the clouds of the ideal to the marker and whiteboard of the classroom. In
the past 20 years or so, several American scholars have produced lengthy works to instruct teachers on the practical applications of dialogical classrooms.

Juzwik, Borsheim-Black, Caughlan, and Heintz (2014) brought dialogical theory to its practical application in a work written for the working educator. As dialogical work is a form of *cumulation* (Juzwik et al., citing Alexander & Mercer), the educator in practice must consider her or his work over time, throughout the course of the year, not merely for one lesson. To that end, Juzwik offered tools to scaffold dialogic interaction in the classroom over time, including rubrics for students on what it means to participate in discussion (p. 66), preparatory questions to ready students for classroom talk, and talk as a means through which to transition to formal written assessments. Furthermore, Juzwik encouraged discourse analysis of classroom discussions, and collaboration among colleagues to refine dialogical practices.

A work of similar integration of theory to instruction is Fecho’s (2011c) work on writing in the dialogical classroom. Published by the NCTE and written for an audience of classroom teachers, the work frames the nature of the dialogical classroom and considers means of working dialogically in the writing process, even in the assessment process. Fecho’s work takes the “nest of talk” in classroom as a rehearsal and preparation for the activity of writing (p. xviii). Working with a host of classroom teachers and the lived classroom experience, the work bridges both theory to instruction, principles to practice, and discourse to composition. I include it here in a historiography of classroom discourse since the dialogical classroom is a prerequisite for composition. In fact, Fecho’s continued work advanced the investigation of internalized dialogical spaces of discourse, moving beyond “wonder” into states of irresolution and self-questions, what he termed “wobble.”
From Wonder to Wobble: The Shifting Terrain of the Dialogical

While dialogue about dialogue in teacher practice thus came to be considered internationally and within communities of scholars who wrote dialogically—through inquiry and questioning, and responsively and collaboratively—there remained the question of how dialogical theory affects classroom practice. For English classrooms, and teachers of English and literacy, Fecho’s work illuminated the shifting terrain of the dialogical self, the scholar, and scholarly practice. Noting the “thoughtful and elegant” theoretical frames of the SCD, Fecho’s work took a page from Bakhtin and Freire to recount actual dialogical practice in the classroom, be it his own (Fecho, 2004, 2011b), or that of others (Fecho et al., 2016). His findings revealed students and educators in moments of wobble, or a “liminal state . . . in which change is occurring” (Fecho, 2011b, p. 53). If educators subscribe to dialogical practice rather than recitation, leading questions, and the predeterminations of Socratic inquiry, then what happens in the classroom? Fecho’s work aimed to develop a practice that was at once heuristic, ethical, and compassionate.

Fecho (2011b) shifted the understanding of dialogue from the quantifiable and notational to the dynamic and fluid. Furthermore, the dialogical wobble, as he revealed, transverses the terrain between teacher and student, between students in the classroom, and among the dialogical spaces within each student. For the space within is also a dialogical experience (Fecho, 2016; Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010), an experience that is “silent,” internal, and informs classroom practice. Fecho’s work identified examples of the “small c cultures”—the host of identities within—that resonate both in concert and conflict with one another. By exposing the wiring behind the walls of each student, Fecho invited educators further into the vast range of cultures and stances within each member of the class. Fecho extended the SDC’s moment of
wonder into wobble, which brings to light the complex networks within each student that may “disorient,” be resisted, or lead to a transformation of mindset.

As researchers examined issues of conflict and controversy, so too did they consider how technologies may invite and extend practices of inquiry to redefine what constitutes dialogue in the classroom. Fecho’s (2011) flash dialogues, be they written, live, dialogical, or interactive, shifted the perceptions of classroom talk and exchange. In addition, scholars brought the dialogical practice of inquiry into the method of publication itself, thereby questioning and transforming the monological practice of what constitutes “research.” In the first section of the collection of essays on theoretical Bakhtinian perspectives published in 2004, Allison Weisz Bretschneider (2004) revealed the dialogical process among six scholars whose chapters-in-process were circulated among them and students at Brown University. Reflecting on the circulation of drafts and the exchange of ideas in generating the chapter section of essays, she described how the generation of scholarship adopted a Bakhtinian methodology:

I could read drafts on multiple levels of dialogue with and about them—internal dialogue with classmates and professors who each came to them with backgrounds and understands different from my own, and written dialogue with their authors . . . through private reading, class discussion, and e-mail exchanges, we seemed to be engaged in a series of dialogues that, through their varied forms, laid bare the dialogical nature of language. (pp. 99-100)

This model is distinct from later work presented in The Journal of Russian and Eastern European Psychology in 2011, in which scholars began to pursue dialogical practices with one another, but only in the published work itself, in which they responded to and questioned lines of thought. Bretschneider’s earlier work, an experiment that perhaps went unnoticed, presaged future practices and invited scholars to open up composition to the multivoicedness of the dialogical. It suggested that writing and thought itself can be attached to a certain response, and that it is in itself a process of becoming. The use of Bakhtin in process work expanded
scholarship beyond its theoretical framing and practical examples. By talking about talk and dialoging about dialogue, scholarship moved into a meta-cognitive realm that would likely have delighted Bakhtin.

Fecho’s (2004, 2011c) work took a similar interest in the dialogical method. As such, he moved out of theory to anecdote and self-reflectivity in order to expand the possibilities of pedagogical representation, beyond the uniformly scripted research work. He considered such work to be a “dialogical writing project” which “represents an intersection of academic and personal writing, (2) allows writers to bring multiple voices to a work (3) involves thought, reflection, and engagement across time and located in space and (4) creates opportunities for … ongoing meaning making” (Fecho, 2011c, p. 32). This work revealed the dialogical process of writing together—not only in the classroom, between teacher and student, but also in the research process, between scholars who examine data. Writing about dialogue was no longer sufficient. At one point, researchers, once monological in composing scholarship, began to experiment with dialogical practices of thinking, writing, and publishing together.

The Use of Maps

In many ways, this work is a postmodern map of scholarship: it uses the telescope and microscope; it ambles about each object from various perspectives; it rises high above and digs far below. But what use are such maps for the field of education? As with any practice of human agency, such a map unearths the starts, stops, forces, and weaknesses of practice. It alerts researchers in the field not only as to what is but also what may be. Moreover, with interventionist empirical studies, one may better know what certain discourse practices may do for students. Consider that one moment when teachers moved from praise to uptake questions. Such a practice opened the furrow of query for further seeds to be sown. How might a dialogized
classroom space provide greater student autonomy, self-reliance, and even a necessary uncertainty in classroom discourse? Such a map as this allows us to ask questions of how to manage the earth, soil, wind, and water of work in the field.

**The Knots of Maps**

This chapter has moved through the various shoots, loops, and recoils of thought, work, and scholarship in the field. The aim was twofold, to chart: the *how*, the manner in which theory, research, and instructional publications consolidate to affect change; and the *what*, the direction of such change in discourse scholarship. As such, it may be tricky to consolidate, list, or order any sort of observation. Nevertheless, one may identify some preliminary threads of inquiry in theory, research, and practice in the past 40 years. To restate, they are as follows:

- **In theory:** (a) classroom practice significantly lags behind the theoretical imagining of the dialogical; and (b) there is an increasing use of Bakhtin in pedagogical frames of discourse in the classroom, particularly after 2000.

- **In empirical studies:** (a) there is an emergence of international research on dialogical theory in the classroom; (b) the dialogical is used not only as a practice of pedagogy, but also in the development of scholarship; and (c) there is a movement in scholarship, inspired by theory, from the external mechanism of teacher questioning to the internal dialogical process of student thought and growth, particularly through IPD.

- **In practice:** there is a shift, however initial, localized, and emergent, from the quantitative classroom to the dialogical, from a monological to polyphonic stance, from external to internal observation, from a focus on teacher actions to students’
individual responsiveness, and from examinations on external utterances to the
internal discourse of each student.

These conclusions are by no means definitive or conclusive. Scholarship, even as it is
fixed and set down in writing, continues to expand and revise itself. This chapter is merely one
of several in the dissertation, one of several points of views, to examine an assemblage of
practice. This is not an attempt to loosen the knot, nor one to divide one chain from another, but
rather to represent the tension within the tangle of rhizomic structure itself.
IX – A WANDERER AND CARTOGRAPHER OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

What sort of wanderer am I? What kind of cartographer? I imagine myself as some tumble of past wanderers, the first of whom was Socrates, aside his student Plato, whose gaze was ever upward in contemplation of Forms of knowledge. Perhaps I am some mapmaker of the Renaissance, parchment and pen in hand, mapping out imaginary sea monsters before the real tumult of tossed waters and distant shores. Or the flâneur of Paris, loitering about Parisian streets, able to see and record the life force others cannot. Am I some Leakey on the dig to unearth artifacts of culture and bones of being or Goodall amid her shrewdness of apes, transcribing their habits and protecting them from poachers? Or donned in cap and coat, am I de Certeau’s ambulatory walker of the New York City, gazing up the avenues or down from the perch of the towers?

I am none of these. I am all of these. I am a postmodern mapper, a Rauschenberg “combine” of the varied practices of painting and sculpture. In my case, I combine varied methods of movement and stasis and from this vantage point or that. I walk the ground, climb the stair, view from above, or till the soil to reveal what lies beneath. I am by turns in flight, on terra firma, and underground. In the end, my map has been all I have been able to survey.

Like any surveyor, I have adopted varied points of view, various newfangled instruments and tools to find my way. I unearth the manner in which scholars talk across generations and among themselves. I have situated myself in the metric space high above 40 years of publication. I have traveled through an early history of classroom discourse to note the increasing gap between theory and classroom practice. I have tracked the theories of three foundational theorists, whose work, through discipleship and institutionalization, became converted into instructional training practices. Finally, I considered the tangled and intersecting tuberous
systems of theory, study, and instruction in the past 40 years. I have mapped ideas and practice, both the dominant and subordinated; I have mapped from near with localized studies and afar with metadata. I have walked the ground of practice, but unearthed the structures of theory, thought, and publication, and it is beneath such ground, with its network of tuberous extensions beneath, in their tangled struggle for sodden soil and feed, that will determine what will be visible to those treading the earth. Scholarship itself works underground, seemingly out of site, yet its effects under particular circumstances of direction, extension, and conversion, determine what fruit may grow and fall, what buds may open, and what blossoms bloom. But it begins beneath in the teeming struggle under.

**The Cartographer’s Gait**

In no way have I walked the straight temporal line of chronology. I have ambled here and there, near and far, in equal parts a theory-under-his nails horticulturalist and digitally-winged aerialist. I have used various methodological practices from my saddlebag of tools to track the development and extension of theory through institutionalization into practice. Part of the challenge has been to balance the history of victors against those who are not typically represented; here, I have attempted to consider isolated experimental practices of reform, such as those by Freire, Bakhtin, and others, in Russia, the Ukraine, South America, and Africa, against the more prevalent research on dominant practices in the United States and abroad. In addition, I have aimed to critique practices or air criticism of practices that run the risk of reification, such as the Harkness method, without a researcher’s critical eye. Furthermore, I have examined historical aspects of scholarship over the years from multiple vantage points through metrical analysis to gain a greater understanding of the development and extension of theoretical ideas.
over time in scholarship. I note the failure of reforms to launch, the dying out of programs, and I have speculated on the reasons, both fiscal and administrative, that account for such constriction.

I have hoped to tell my story “crooked” rather than straight. Hence, I followed three theorists and their impact in the scholarship. I examined the translation of those practices into NGOs; in the broadest of views, I exampled the scholarship of one scholar, tracing its impact on a field. I reviewed the tangled interconnection of empirical research to teacher training and instruction in the past 20 years. Finally, I have, every so often, interrupted my narrative to look for literary analogues and metaphors for the growth and extension of rhizomes in theory and practice.

**Limitations of the Rhizome**

One additional consideration of this work is the limitation of the rhizome as an organizing principle for academic thought, talk, and praxis. In the past, other theoretical models have been used to structure our understanding of pedagogical practices. Industrialization and Fordism gave rise to a mechanized, automated system of understanding the relation of creator to product. Some scholars (Applebee, 1974; New London Group, 2000) have noted that such conceptions had filtered into various forms of theorizing about education, not limited to literary theory and classroom practices. The rhizome is yet another conceptual frame emerging from a certain epistemological moment and a post-structuralist wave of thinking. In this dissertation, I attempted to integrate the rhizome with various power structures, such as the will to power and Foucault’s subordinated practices, to detail the varied ways in which practices fight to sustain themselves. The hope is that this work provides a transferable theory that might be useful for those in the field of education considering other pedagogies of practice, such as composition or

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1 This addition to my dissertation emerged from my notes on a discussion I had with Eugene Matusov on April 4, 2018.
reading studies. For in such fields, one may consider how key theorists introduced theories that may have rhizomic extension in scholarship and praxis through NGOs to translate themselves into classroom practices. At the same time, while the rhizome may be useful for examining some practices, it also may not be transferable universally. Consider, for example, how the value of metrical data shifts from culture to culture. In the contemporary Western model, metrics that track citation use add greater worth and ranking to scholarship. Yet in a different political climate, metrics have the inverse effect. In oppressive regimes, visibility becomes a threat, as many scholars are targets of the government. The more prominent the scholar becomes, the greater the scholar’s influence over a field of study, and the more endangered that scholar’s freedom can become. As Matusov (2018) has noted, those recognized by the state are frequently those most aggressively targeted, exiled, or jailed. In this way, visibility is an endangering rather than illuminated force. This is merely one example of how rhizomic structures may not operate in the same way in each political context. That said, under particular conditions, the rhizomic may provide a useful conceptual frame from which to examine the interrelation of theory, study, and practice in the varied fields of education.

**Dissertation as Assemblage**

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) composed a work they have admitted is a form of assemblage. It is “a multiplicity . . . in connection with other assemblages and in relation to a body without organs” (p. 4). Their aim was to identify one of many “machines”—movements in the modern world that operate with strata, strata that interrelate, expand, or constrict—like war machines or love machines. The labor of this dissertation was meant to present an organic “machine” of thought and talk: how it operates, penetrates, transforms itself, institutionalizes itself, and reterritorializes itself through theory only to return to the body, the very machine it
once constructed. It is doubtless big theory, and my aim was to use the historiography of discourse as an exemplar of how theory extends itself through theory, how it is able to extend or curtail itself into praxis, how it may stall as a static rotational gear replicating the same practice, as with lecture or IRE, or how it may circulate, however infrequently, from classroom practices to theory and back again. The chapters of static early history of classroom talk (Chapter III), the transformation of theories to praxis through institutionalization (Chapters IV, V, and VI), the extension of thought through generations (Chapter VII), and the tangled interconnection between theory, research, and teacher instruction (Chapter VIII) all formulate an assemblage, varied strata, a multiplicity that unearths how a discipline of study, the study of classroom discourse, operates as a machine of the discipline.

**Map, Talk, and Table**

The mapping of this machine, the method through which scholarship makes its way into the practical world, concerns the growth and failures of classroom discourse. The point of focus was discourse, though I might have taken as my topic composition, reading, literary, ESL, or any other sub-discipline of educational research. For me, talk and thought, unlike reading and composition, were an unexplored territory to map.

In Chapter VIII, I left my map with some markings on the varied uses of the dialogical—in content choice, classroom method, global reach, and even the presentation and development of scholarship. But this map is by no means complete, and even as I mark the page, I watch the empty margins expand ever outward. For there are roots and tubers yet to be unearthed and untangled. For instance, I might have considered how key journal editorships in the field led to a focalization of interest, a spike in works centered on Bakhtin, the dialogic, or other topics. Or I might have investigated how key figures in publishing have shepherded particular works into the
academic marketplace or how personal relations forged in conference presentations extend work within a discipline. Thus, the multiplicities of tangled shoots which construct the map of the field suggest the possibility of future papers based on personal interviews and other strains of research. My aim was to start the map, knowing full well my map would be incomplete.

Method as Subject and Table Talk as Site of Study

The subject of this dissertation then was an unearthing of a method, a pedagogy of the manner in which a discipline functions. The site of my investigations was various tables and circles of talk. We began with the perambulations at the agora in ancient Greece and continued to lecture halls and podiums, to Bakhtin’s *krug* in Nevel, to Freire’s encircled questioning in rural Brazil, to conferences and published collections, to Harkness tables, and to those tables felt but not seen by anyone engaged in talk with another. All such sites are sites of talk, and like my unfinished map, talk itself is unending. Such sites are sites of ideological becoming in which the utterances of others become assimilated, albeit not always entirely, by each of us. In education, teachers and students are ontologically interconnected to each other’s thoughts and utterances in the classroom, and this interconnection extends both into the texts of discourse and outward to the world. For Bakhtin, the lineage of readers, thinkers, scholars, teachers, and students participates in the very same waters of dynamic fluidity, ever-regressing backward and ever-lurching forward. It is in our classrooms that the intersecting realms of literary, pedagogical, and lived external worlds may both come under scrutiny and gain clarification by the wondrous, and sometimes dangerous, art of the dialogical.

The dialogical state, so reliant on “the other,” may have its source, at least in the Western tradition, in that pugnacious, part-gadfly, part-midwife Greek of practice. But perhaps Bakhtin can be considered as yet another model of discourse. Those closest to Bakhtin knew him
affectionately as a *chudak*, which translates roughly as “a strange funny man, almost an idiot . . .
fully immersed in his own quasi-fantastic world of dreams, ideas, and theories” (Gratchev, 2016,
p. 599). This vertiginous dreaming of existence, however, is not independent of the world of
others. Rather, it is constructed by the progressive and eternally regressive flow of the ideas of
others, which are mediated and negotiated by each self. Instead of the sharp sting of the gadfly,
perhaps an image for educators would be that of the dreamer: full of fantastic possibilities.
Educational practice thereby becomes a form of dream-play wed to the discipline of self-
reflection: an interactive cross-engagement that may from the outside appear to be an idiot’s
practice, but for those in it can be a dialogical space of wonder, inquiry, and reconciliation. And
where there is the dialogic, there is always a table—material or imaginary—around which we
may gather, speak forth, and listen for and to some response, and it is such responses each holds
within, a self-dialogized, a self in continuous discussion within.

**Coda**

My hope was to map the various interrelations of power and extension in fields of
educational development: the interrelation and spawning of thought to thought; the extension of
thought to praxis; and the tangle of thought, research, and instructional publications. In light of
this, I acknowledge here that this not so much an end as some point of initiation to other
considerations. For instance, my topic was discourse practices, but one might consider how the
rhizomic structure might inform other disciplines in the field, such as composition studies,
reading studies, ESL studies, or the emergence and circulation of new ideas, such as culturally
sustaining pedagogy.

Further, one might employ the idea of the rhizome to explore how some ideas receive
greater support and the relation of editors and publishers to trends or new ideas, or how research
funders may direct the trajectories of work itself by dictating the parameters of research in their proposal guidelines.

Finally, one may consider how rhizomic theory relates to the top-down administration of standards. Do “tubers” and “grass-roots” ideas make their way into standards, or do they exist in defiance of set standards? Can promising yet subordinated practices be wide-spread while maintaining their integrity, or are such practices best implemented locally?

It is the nature of thought and thinking that it only breeds greater questions rather than certain answers. So, I leave you here dear reader, knowing that nothing is finished, not this line of inquiry or research, not my work in writing nor yours on reflecting. Growth, expansion, and extension begins once the reading has been completed. So now it begins.
REFERENCES

NOTE: References marked with an asterisk indicate studies included in the meta-analysis.


*Ball, A. F. (2012). To know is not enough: Knowledge, power, and the zone of generativity. *Educational Researcher, 41*(8), 283-293.


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Gregory, C. G. (2017, March). Hierarchies and Harkness: Shifting from the podium to encircled modes of investigation. Poster session at the CCCC Annual Convention, Portland, OR.


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## Appendix A

### Frequency of Articles in English Education Journals by Author


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# Appendix B

## Frequency of Keywords from *English Education* Articles Referencing Bakhtin

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Unfinalization
Utterance (3)
Utterance
Utterance
Voices
Words and Deeds