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Teaching Writing to Non-Native English Majors: A New Sophistic Approach to the Purpose and Syllabus of First-Year Writing

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Abstract

One's mastery of speech conventions is considered an essential qualification for an educated individual, especially a scholar of English. Teaching writing to non-native English majors, writing instructors feel the burden of adopting the Current-traditional pedagogy. It is a process that stresses students' internalization of speech conventions and treats students as passive recipients. Current-traditional pedagogy is inadequate to foster future scholars. This article offers a plan for teaching freshman writing inspired by the ideas and values of Protagoras and Isocrates and identified as New Sophistic pedagogy. Good speech/logos lies in good reasoning based on individuals' self-knowledge and sociopolitical awareness. Thus, the proposed pedagogy focuses on students' intellectual and emotional maturity. The writing instructors understand their moral responsibility to guide their students who lead the learning process. The proposed New Sophistic pedagogy consists of three cycles of deliberative discourse: Monologic Argument, Mediation, and Negotiation. Through the different argumentation types, students understand that speech/logos mirrors one's mind, their true essence. Progressively, students prepare themselves as true scholars by cultivating personal and social identity and empathy for others.

Keywords: New Sophistic Rhetoric, Composition Studies, Protagoras, Isocrates

Introduction

First-year writing is a mandatory course in all English departments throughout Turkey. English majors are expected to explore human nature through the reading, understanding, and analysis of literary works that express diverse political voices and social visions and are products of different views on the self, the other, and the relationship between the two. Expanded consciousness—the greatest virtue of future prolific scholars in social sciences and humanities—lies in active citizenship associated with one's "resolution and courage" (Kant, 1784/2009 p. 1) to wander intellectually at present. The challenge is double for those English majors who are alien to the

English culture, and thus, they have to get to know it progressively during their studies in an English program. Students encounter difficulties connecting to and understanding foreign literature. They lack a sociopolitical vision that expands beyond an illusionary "self-centered" reality shaped by master narratives about an individual's attitude towards private and public affairs. This article discusses the purpose of the Freshman writing class within the context of Neosophistic rhetorical criticism, a reactionary movement to the Current-Traditional movement in Composition Studies.[1] Furthermore, it proposes a syllabus for teaching first-year academic writing to non-native English majors. The proposed New Sophistic writing pedagogy consists of three cycles, blending classical rhetoric (first cycle: Monologic Argument) shaped by Protagoras's and Isocrates's rhetorical principles and teaching ideas with contemporary rhetorical genres (second cycle: Mediation and third cycle: Negotiation).

Critical Appraisal of Previous Works

The proposed New Sophistic writing pedagogy applies cultural studies. It encourages students to understand how their self-identity and needs develop within a specific cultural environment and bring their "self" in dialogue with "the other" to enrich their view of reality by implementing two interrelated principles defining Protagoras's and Isocrates's teaching of rhetoric. The first principle is that political techne's knowledge—the art concerned with a society's affairs—contributes to creating valid claims by those who possess the virtues of prudence, reverence, and self-control. The second principle is that there is not an absolute truth imposed by the dominant culture.

Regarding the first principle, moral (socio)political deliberation shapes better future citizens capable of keeping alive the democratic character of their society. In Plato's *Protagoras*, Protagoras highlights that justice and reverence are primary qualities given to humanity by Zeus, "for cities cannot exist, if a few only share in the virtues [reverence and justice], as in the arts" (Plato, 380/1892, p. 322). According to Protagoras, the teaching of political techne nurtures the virtues that reside in every human soul. Therefore, by "admitting every man as a counsellor about this sort of virtue, as they are of opinion that every man is a partaker of it" (Plato, 380/1892, p. 323), the democratic Athenians show in praxis their interest in the spiritual and physical well-being of their polis. In his statement, Protagoras condemns the conventional belief that only a few economically and socially privileged citizens can possess virtue. He advocates that all members of society may become virtuous through accessible education. Protagoras continues his speech by noting that the teacher is the most obliged to transmit virtue to the youth (Plato, 380/ 1892, pp. 327-328). Isocrates also values the teaching of human virtue, but, unlike Protagoras, he takes a slightly different approach to its attainment. In *Against the Sophists 21*, Isocrates claims that somebody cannot directly teach human virtue (Isocrates, 393/1929, p. 177). Yet, he agrees that exposure to the study of political discourse may strengthen good ethos (Isocrates, 393/1929, p. 177). Isocrates perceives (socio)political discourse as enhancing human virtue among youth rather than instilling human virtue in youth.

[1] Among noteworthy Neosophists—also identified as "antifoundationalists"—stand John Poulakos, Sharon Crowley, Victor Vitanza, Kathleen Welch, and Susan Jarratt. In contrast, critical Current-Traditional figures, or "foundationalists," are Edward Schiappa, Eric Havelock, G. B. Kerferd, Jacqueline de Romilly, and Thomas Cole (Consigny, 1996, p. 253).

Concerning the second principle that there is no Truth imposed by the dominant culture, in "Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric," John Poulakos acknowledges the importance of applying Protagoras's doctrine of dissoi logoi towards the production of meaningful speech (Poulakos, 1983, p. 40). The utility of an argument depends on a particular society's needs at a specific time (kairos); moreover, rhetors/writers must be able to express their ideas by using the appropriate style, tone, and organization (to prepon) to appeal to the reason (logos) and the feelings (pathos) of the audience (Poulakos, 1983, pp. 36, 40-41). Similarly, in *Against the Sophists 13*[2] and *Antidosis 132*[3], Isocrates highlights that good discourse harmoniously combines wise judgment and eloquence. It should mirror the rhetor's creativity and respond to the kairos and to prepon. By blending philosophy and aesthetics, Isocrates reveals the importance of persuasion without overshadowing the truth, honesty, and utility that characterize the political techne (art). Weak ideas and unpopular suggestions for action have the potential of being heard, embraced, and fulfilled under different methods of presentation and (socio)political circumstances. Becoming familiar with kairos and to prepon, students realize the beauty of experimenting with the speech in terms of style and development patterns and cultivating their relativist spirit. Students can produce knowledge based on a multi-sided reality; thus, the writing course's epistemological aim is served.

Sophistic rhetoric—the essence of New Sophistic writing pedagogy—differs from Classical rhetoric, the solid foundation of the Current-Traditional writing pedagogy. In "Toward a Neosophistic Writing Pedagogy," Kenneth J. Lindblom juxtaposes Sophistic dialectic to Hegelian dialectic that is based on Plato's dialectic (antilogike) and Aristotle's logic of noncontradiction (Lindblom, 1996, p. 97). Lindblom cites G. B. Kerferd, who views Hegelian dialectic as "'the progressive unfolding of the Universal Mind'" (as cited in Lindblom, 1996, p. 97). Hegelian dialectic advocates a hierarchical structure of theses according to which a thesis is closer to the Truth than the refuted previous one (Lindblom, 1996, p. 97). In contrast, Sophistic dialectic sees all theses in parataxis and valid equally according to the shifting conditions. Lindblom provides Susan C. Jarratt's view on Sophistic dialectic—also shared by John Poulakos—as "'materialist, 'anthropological,' 'historical,' 'liberal' and 'pragmatic' (17)" (as cited in Lindblom, 1996, p. 97). Paradoxically, in the interpretation of literature, experience in the praxis of Sophistic dialectic endows the literature student with emotional freedom, mental flexibility, and wisdom (emotional and intellectual balance) that are prerequisites for the possible later application of Hegelian dialectic. Thus, the Sophistic dialectic may function as the solid foundation of the Hegelian dialectic. The opposite case, however, cannot take place. The exposure of freshman students to the Hegelian dialectic, promoted by the current–traditional writing pedagogy, may increase inexperienced writers' emotional insecurity through the strengthening of their fear of making mistakes and may foster their intellectual rigidness through the cultivation of the antagonistic spirit and the fostering of a worldview of divisions and hierarchies.

Before practicing deliberative discourse in class, the teacher and the students should negotiate their ethos. According to Isocrates, both parties—teacher and students—should negotiate their ethos to achieve the best teaching and learning quality, respectively. He is the first Sophist who brings into equilibrium the responsibilities of the teacher and students. In *Antidosis*, Isocrates views the teacher as a guide; the teacher is not the wise person who intervenes in the students' learning process to instill knowledge, experience, and talent. The students activate their talent by

[2] Isocrates, 393/1929, p. 171.
[3] Isocrates, 355/1929, p. 261.

becoming active listeners. Showing mutual respect, the teacher and the students collaborate towards the successful materialization of oral and written deliberative discourse:

> In this process [of teaching-learning], master and pupil each has his place; no one but the pupil can furnish the necessary capacity; no one but the master, the ability to impart knowledge; while both have a part in the exercises of practical application; for the master must painstakingly direct his pupil, and the latter must rigidly follow the master's instructions. (Isocrates, 355/1929, p. 293)

Isocrates explains the teacher's guiding role in several passages of *Antidosis*:
• The teacher should produce writing assignments that enhance "virtue" and "justice" (*Antidosis 67*) (Isocrates, 355/1929, p. 223). Thus, students are reinforced to get to know their true selves.
• The teacher should urge the students to make policy claims that may lead to the prosperity of their society and allies *(Antidosis 85-86*) (Isocrates, 355/1929, p. 233), as well as their enemies (*Antidosis 79-80*) (Isocrates, 355/1929, p. 229). An additional element of Isocrates's teaching of deliberation is its transnational character. Isocrates does not limit his teaching of deliberation within his society's borders. He argues that the aim of political deliberation should be the best solution for the well-being of the leading power, its allies, and its enemies. Isocrates envisions a teacher of rhetoric who is the universal mind and, thus, understands the interconnectedness between "I" and "the other." Isocrates's concern with the well-being of "the other" finds its expression in the new rhetorical modes of Mediation and Negotiation included in the proposed New Sophistic writing. Initiating freshman literature majors to political deliberation in class, the writing teacher fosters universal minds: conscientious citizens and knowledgeable scholars sensitive about economic, social, and political injustice in the global scene.
• The teacher should teach all forms of discourse, applying theoretical knowledge to real issues plaguing society and requiring an immediate solution. Students combine conventional theory with practical wisdom. Students with good judgment shape the best policy (*Antidosis 183-184*) (Isocrates, 355/1929, p. 289). As it has already been mentioned, Isocrates notices that students' talent is needed to produce meaningful speech. Still, he argues that familiarization with different kinds of discourse through which multiple voices can be heard reinforces the formation of active minds.

Adopting the view of Protagoras and Isocrates on the purpose of rhetoric (written and oral speech), contemporary Composition Studies theorists point out the strong bond between the teaching of deliberative discourse and the shaping of conscientious individuals. The civic service of writing teachers is inevitable. Possessing wisdom from diverse knowledge and experience that are products of other academic disciplines, especially the social sciences, writing teachers are morally obliged to teach human virtue through rhetoric to their students. In "The Nature of Composition Studies," Andrea A. Lunsford asserts that Composition Studies' inclusive character encompasses the free expression of various voices, the employment of different genres, as well as the collaboration of disciplines and institutions (Lunsford, 1991, p. 211). The teaching of deliberation in oral and written forms may develop students' ability to express themselves and share their thoughts on severe and complex issues. Simultaneously, it encourages students to control themselves and respect their interlocutors, leaving space and time for the latter to express their ideas.

In "Playing in Traffic: Cultural Studies and Composition Pedagogy," Greg Wilson, Carl G. Herndl, and Julie Simon advocate the fostering of sociopolitically active minds in the writing class by citing from Linda Brodkey's *Writing Permitted in Designated Areas Only*:

> '[Writing teachers] must think more about how to represent writing and reading as discursive [i.e., social and political] practices and less about them as a set of skills or abilities or competencies that 'we' have and 'they' want, to be taught by 'us' and learned by 'them' (5).' (as cited in Wilson et al., 1999, p. 102)

Greg Wilson, Carl G. Herndl, and Julie Simon argue that the application of Cultural Studies principles in writing pedagogy encourages students to develop themselves as active social actors who can make history by viewing critically the social conditions within which they live and working towards the making of necessary changes (Wilson et al., 1999, p. 95). Similarly, in "Revising English Studies," Nancy C. DeJoy reminds teachers and theorists of writing Worsham's observation that Composition Studies scholars must endow their teaching with a democratic character that motivates students to become free active minds (DeJoy, 2004, p. 143). Teaching academic writing with a focus on the micro-rhetorical issues of style (e.g., grammar, syntax, and vocabulary) and form (specific kinds of writing and development patterns) does not adequately help students expand their consciousness, a prerequisite to the comprehensive and in-depth examination of English literature. Textbooks in the writing class preserve the teacher's and the students' passive attitude toward guiding and learning. Both parties follow directions given from "above," the theorists-writers of the textbooks. DeJoy observes that exposed to these textbooks, teachers and students "are expected to identify with the assumptions behind those materials even though, in most cases, they are not familiar with those materials" (DeJoy, 2004, p. 134). DeJoy's comment reveals that every writing class is a unique living organism defined by age, culture, education, economic status, and each member's political and historical experience. Also, DeJoy's comment becomes even more helpful for writing instructors who prepare students for examining another culture, much different from and, sometimes, clashing to their own culture.

Isocrates's balanced view on the teacher's role as a guide is adopted by Peter Elbow, who tries to bridge the traditional teacher and the nurturing teacher. In "Embracing Contraries in the Teaching Process," he supports that two conflicting mentalities should characterize teachers—from one side, a commitment to knowledge and society, and from the other, a commitment to their students. If the teacher defines the learning process as a situation in which "both parties must be maximally transformed—in a sense deformed" (Elbow, 2000, p. 58), these two mentalities will coexist harmoniously. Teachers should be willing to "profane" what they are teaching, while at the same time, they should expect students to become "fit receptacles":

> The more clearly I can say what I want them to know or be able to do, the better I can figure out what I must provide to help them attain those goals. As I make progress in this cycle, it means I can raise my goals even higher –ask for the deep knowledge and skills that are really at the center of the enterprise. (Elbow, 2000, pp. 62-63)

The learning process becomes fruitful when the teacher plays the double role of the students' pure helper and evaluator. Like Peter Elbow, in "Connected Teaching," Mary Field Belenky challenges the teacher's authoritative role and introduces a new instructor model: teachers willing to share

their experience and knowledge with students by motivating them to develop their thinking. Often, teachers do not reveal their thinking process to their students but are accustomed to presenting the "polished products" of their thinking. Because of this, students falsely assume that the creation of ideas is the faculty of semi-gods (Belenky et al., 1997, p. 215). The teacher's ultimate goal is not to shape young personalities that blindly follow their teacher's ideas, values, and beliefs. The teacher helps students shape ideas and adopt values and beliefs that contribute to the continuous betterment of their private, public, and professional lives. Gregory Vlastos characterizes the ideal teacher as a wise man who "has power to change men so that their appearances do not agree with his, but the result appears good to them" (Vlastos, 1958, pp. xxi-xxii).

Three Cycles of Deliberative Discourse

Teachers who want to apply Sophistic thinking in the writing class and enjoy experimenting may teach the art of deliberation (Monologic Argument, Mediation, and Negotiation) by stressing the importance of one of the three cycles or treating all three cycles equally. In all three deliberative discourse cycles, the essay's composition is viewed as a process consisting of prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Each essay receives in-class peer review once during the writing process between drafting and revising. The writers produce a second draft (final draft) based on the feedback of their fellow students on the rough draft. The number of reviewers and the time allocated to review may depend on the weekly class participation. After completing the final draft produced in the editing stage, students present orally on their chosen subjects by employing PowerPoint, photographic material, questionnaires, and anything else to spark interest, inform, and persuade their fellow students/audience about the discussed problem and their proposed solution(s). The audience's response accompanies the oral presentations.

Before composing their Monologic Argument essays, students participate in debates in the first cycle. The teacher divides the class into two big opposing teams supporting and refuting the assigned claims. The number of claims depends on the number of students in each team. Besides the two opposing teams, a small number of students become the jury/audience; their role is to judge which team presents the most persuasive arguments. The next step in the first cycle is the composition of the Monologic Argument essay that enhances students' confidence to voice themselves on contemporary conflicts between dominant culture and subcultures on a local or national level. Students should include both personal ideas and external sources in their compositions. The structure of a Monologic Argument essay may consist of the following five steps:

I. State the problem. Convince your audience that this problem exists and threatens the development of your society or the human society as a whole/your audience should have the power to solve the problem.
II. Establish your ethos. Present your connection to the issue.
III. Present counter-arguments. Refer to the group of people who claim that the problem does not exist or has a minor social impact.
IV. Refute the counter-claims and present your arguments. Try to convince your audience that your arguments overshadow the importance of the opponent's claims.
V. Present solutions.

The second cycle is dedicated to Mediation. In a period of globalization, every country's citizens should be aware of the social, political, economic, and military affairs outside their national borders. The Mediation essay stimulates students' interest in the "other" that is often ignored. Students are encouraged to view themselves as citizens of a specific nation and as members of the international community. They play the neutral role of the mediator in conflicts beyond their national borders. Students engage themselves in systematic research during the composition of a Mediation essay, enabling them to become informed about a problem they have not been aware of and project the opponents' views in a just and accurate way. In the last part of the Mediation essay, students develop their judgment skills by expressing their opinion about the conflict's resolution. The format of a mediatory essay is the following:

I. State the conflict.
II. Establish your ethos.
III. Provide a background history of the conflict.
IV. Present one party's position.
V. Present the opposite party's position.
VI. Propose solutions that may satisfy both parties to resolve the conflict.

In the third cycle, students are exposed to Negotiation. Students write about a conflict between their culture or nation ("we") and another culture or nation ("the other"). Similar to the Monologic Argument, students are directly involved in a conflict. However, Negotiation addresses an international conflict, unlike the Monologic Argument essay's local/national character. Also, the Monologic Argument views the conflict between the "self"/"we" and the "other" as a power relationship, whereas the spirit of reconciliation and compromise permeates Negotiation. For the composition of the negotiatory essay, students take the following steps:

I. Introduce the opposed parties and state a few words about their relationship.
II. State the conflict.
III. Present one party's arguments.
IV. Present the other party's arguments.
V. Compromise. Identify good arguments stated by the opposite side and reach a consensus through a decision that will satisfy both parties.

Methodology

Below is the presentation of two different fifteen-week syllabi (syllabi A and B) designed for a three-hour lesson weekly to a class of thirty students. Syllabus A is designed based on the Current–Traditional approach. In contrast, syllabus B exemplifies the New Sophistic approach. A brief discussion accompanies the two syllabi, focusing on the advantages of syllabus B.

Syllabus A (the Current-Traditional approach)[4]

Evaluation: Midterm Exam 40%
Narration essay (prewriting activity, rough draft, final draft) 20%
Journals I-V 15 %
Feedback 5%

[4] For the creation of syllabus A, the textbook entitled *Patterns for college writing: A rhetorical reader and guide* (Kirszner & Mandell, 2012) has been used.

Final Exam 60%
Monologic Argument essay (prewriting activity, rough draft, final draft) 35%
Journals VI-IX 20%
Feedback 5%

Week 1 Introduction to Writing/ Writing is a Process (prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing)

Week 2 Patterns for College Writing: Narration
"Shooting an Elephant" by George Orwell—Journal I (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 3 Narration essay: In-class prewriting activity
Home assignment: Create a rough draft of the Narration essay

Week 4 Narration essay (rough draft)—Peer review
Home assignment: Revision of the rough draft and production of the final draft

Week 5 Narration essay (final draft)
Patterns for College Writing: Description
"Ground Zero" by Suzanne Berne—Journal II (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 6 Patterns for College Writing: Exemplification
"Girl" by Jamaica Kinkaid —Journal III (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 7 Patterns for College Writing: Process
"How to Decorate Your Room When You're Broke" by Joshua Piven, David Borgenicht, and Jennifer Worick—Journal IV (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 8 Patterns for College Writing: Cause and Effect
"Suicide Note" by Janice Mirikitani—Journal V (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 9 Midterm Exam—Writing Portfolio, including the Narration essay (prewriting activity, rough draft, and final draft), the peers' feedback on the Narration essay, and Journals I-V

Week 10 Patterns for College Writing: Comparison and Contrast
"Sex, Lies, and Conversation" by Deborah Tannen—Journal VI (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 11 Patterns for College Writing: Classification and Division
"The Ways We Lie" by Stephanie Ericsson—Journal VII (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 12 Patterns for College Writing: Definition
"I Want a Wife" by Judy Brady—Journal VIII (Summary and Affective Response)

Week 13 Patterns for College Writing: Monologic Argument
"Letter from Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King Jr.—Journal IX (Summary and Affective Response)
Home assignment: Prepare the rough draft of the Monologic Argument essay

Week 14 Monologic Argument/Peer review

Week 15 Final Exam—Writing portfolio, including the Monologic Argument essay (rough draft and final draft, the peers' feedback on the Monologic Argument essay, and Journals VI-IX)

Syllabus B (the New Sophistic approach)

Evaluation: Midterm Exam 40%
Monologic Argument essay rough draft and final draft 20%
Oral presentation on Monologic Argument 10%
Peer review 5%
Feedback on oral presentations 5%

Final Exam 60%
Mediation essay (rough draft and final draft) 15%
Oral presentation on Mediation 5%
Negotiation essay (rough draft and final draft) 15%
Oral presentation on Negotiation 5%
Peer review 5%
Feedback on oral presentations 5%

Week 1 Introduction to the course/ Writing is a Process (prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing)
Debates (Monologic Argument)

Week 2 Introduction to the structure of Monologic Argument

Week 3 Monologic Argument (rough draft) —Peer review

Week 4 Monologic Argument (final draft)
Oral presentations on Monologic Argument (each student has a five-minute presentation)
Audience's response to each presentation (five minutes)

Week 5 Oral presentations on Monologic Argument (each student has a five-minute presentation)
Audience's response to each presentation

Week 6 Introduction to the structure of Mediation

Week 7 Mediation (rough draft)—Peer review

Week 8 Mediation (final draft)
Oral presentations on Mediation (each student has a five-minute presentation)
Audience's response to each presentation (five minutes)

Week 9 Midterm Exam—Writing portfolios, including the Monologic Argument essays (rough draft and final draft), a written version of the oral presentation, and the peers' feedback on the essay and oral presentation

Week 10 Oral presentations on Mediation (each student has a five-minute presentation)
Audience's response to each presentation (five minutes)

Week 11 Introduction to the structure of Negotiation

Week 12 Negotiation (rough draft)—Peer review

Week 13 Negotiation (final draft)
Oral presentations on Negotiation (each student has a five-minute presentation)
Audience's response to each presentation (five minutes)

Week 14 Oral presentations on Negotiation (each student has a five-minute presentation)
Audience's response to each presentation (five minutes)

Week 15 Final Exam—Writing portfolios, including the Mediation and Negotiation essays (rough draft and final draft), a written version of the oral presentation on Mediation and Negotiation, and the peers' feedback on the essays and oral presentations

Both syllabi (A and B) adopt a holistic approach to student evaluation, making praxis the idea that writing is a process. Writing portfolios substitute for the conventional examination, usually the writing of an essay whose topic and pattern of development have been chosen by the instructor and must be produced within a limited time. Writing portfolios give students the needed time to internalize the knowledge they are exposed to throughout the semester and employ it through the production of various genres of writing, including essays (A and B), feedback on essays (A and B), feedback on oral presentations (B), and journals (A).

Still, syllabus A exemplifies the Current-Traditional approach because it focuses more on the technical aspects of writing than the individual's thinking process. English majors familiarize themselves with different writing patterns to answer exam questions effectively concerning the main structure of their responses. The written feedback on their fellow students' essays and a weekly journal (summary and affective response) about the assigned readings help students overcome the fear of writing by practicing their grammatical and syntactical knowledge and expressing personal opinions. Still, these assignments contribute little to the students' contemplating the self, the other, and the relationship between the self and the other. They do not require the formation of elaborate arguments for supporting claims, are limited in length, and are produced in a short time. The Narration and Monologic Argument essays require students' effort and time. Also, students express comprehensively and in-depth their feelings in the Narration essay

and thoughts in the Monologic Argument essay. Narration and monologic argumentation advance the students' sense of self. To a degree, monologic argument even helps them acknowledge "the other" in their community the dominant culture tends to silence. In "Beyond Argument in Feminist Composition," Katherine E. Lamb argues that the monologic argument allows each side to be as precise as possible about what they think and feel. She supports her idea with Ruddick's claim that "the sense of self must precede maternal thinking or integration more generally" (Lamb, 2000, p. 237). Still, students do not cultivate empathy for others.

In syllabus B, based on the New Sophistic approach, the teacher's primary concern is fostering thought rather than teaching specific writing patterns without, however, degrading the latter's value. There is also a balance between encouraging students to understand themselves and "the other" by assigning essays on Mediation and Negotiation besides Monologic Argument. In all cycles of deliberative discourse, students balance research and personal opinion; thus, they produce works characterized by accuracy, reliability, and creativity.

In the first cycle, debates and the Monologic Argument essay strengthen students' sense of self and acknowledgment of the "other." The debates encourage students to show a vivid interest in contemporary sociopolitical issues. The competitive atmosphere enhances the active participation of students since all of them want their team to win. The teacher supplies the teams with vague statements covering simple or complex issues. Here are some examples of claims for debate:

Online education is more effective than traditional education.
Globalization poses a threat to cultural diversity.
Homogenous societies do not face social and political instability.
Religion suppresses our free will.
Contemporary democratic societies offer high standards of living to their citizens.

The statements' ambiguous structure encourages students to narrow down the statements' meanings and form arguments applicable under various conditions within particular contexts defined by the students. The teacher may not know how the students will eventually perceive the statement and under what conditions they will develop their arguments. The primary aim of the debates is to stir up conversation and rhetorical dissensus. Students may express various interpretations of the claims' meaning, leading to conflict among members of different teams or even members of the same team. However, rhetorical dissensus is a healthy means for shaping collective knowledge that is complete when different truth sides are shown. Furthermore, the rhetors should carefully listen to their interlocutors' arguments. Within a few minutes, they should find new counter-arguments that will weaken the power of the opponents' arguments and be approved by the jury/audience. In this way, students become observant and creative.

The role of the jury/audience is challenging—yet beneficial— for freshman students. They should listen to their fellow students' arguments, putting aside their biases, prejudgments, and personal values and beliefs. Students who comprise the audience have a unique opportunity to sharpen their critical thinking and cultivate good judgment through active listening. Students may be reminded not to evaluate the presented arguments' quality based on whether they agree with the orators' ideas. Students should examine the arguments as products of rational thinking and comment on the comprehensiveness and depth of the arguments and the rhetors' efforts to earn the audience's sympathy through the appropriate (at the right time within the particular setting) presentation of

the arguments. The jury/audience also has another challenging task. The audience/jury members collaborate to decide which team produces more effective arguments; in other words, the audience needs to reach a consensus. Promoting the ideal of democracy, the teacher should ensure that all jury members contribute to forming the decision. Coaching the jury's conversation, the teacher tries to prevent the domination of opinions produced by members who have strong personalities.

In the second cycle, assigning the Mediation essay to English majors who are not native English speakers further stimulates their curiosity for other cultures. It reinforces them to contribute to the resolution of the "other's" problems, for which freshman English majors often demonstrate disinterest and apathy since the "other's" problems are not parts of their daily experience. In the third cycle, the Negotiation essay is both the most challenging and beneficial task for freshman English majors because it reinforces students to be less self-centered and willing to reach consensus with the "other." Students try to negotiate their values and ideas, approaching situations with a relativist spirit. Students must demonstrate emotional and intellectual maturity since they should be willing to acknowledge that the truth resides partially in the opposite party's words.

Verbal deliberation is as essential as written deliberation. Oral presentations—conducted in all cycles of deliberative discourse—help students feel comfortable in their interactions with their fellowmen and practice the effective communication of their ideas, opinions, and visions both as academics and as world citizens. At the end of each presentation, the audience shares their immediate intellectual and emotional response. The audience makes constructive criticism by bringing the pros and cons of the presentation to the forth. Each student practices active listening and critical thinking during the whole semester since all students give and comment on presentations.

In both syllabi (A and B), the teacher provides the genre and format, and the writer chooses the style (aesthetics and tone). However, a significant difference between the two syllabi concerns the quantity and quality of essays and presentations of deliberative character assigned throughout the semester. In syllabus B, students are encouraged to examine how the writers' style affects and is affected by their establishment of ethos (authority to speak about an issue) and their audience visualization. The readers also trace possible discursive parameters—such as the writers' political, educational, national/ethnic, economic, and religious background—that have hindered or advanced the writers' style, their perception of the audience, their purpose, the amount of space dedicated to the presentation of the conflicted theses, as well as the order and quality of arguments and the plausibility of the plan of action. In the New Sophistic teaching method, the teacher encourages students to take the responsibility of finding their intellectual weaknesses and strengths through both individual (the composition of essays and oral presentations) and collaborative efforts (peer reviews and feedback). In "Three Levels of Composing," Bruce McComiskey refers to the textual (genre, format, and style), rhetorical (audience and purpose), and discursive (factors that shape one's reasoning) components of the composition (McComiskey, 2000, pp. 6, 12). He advocates that "a balanced approach to the three levels of composing leads students to the fullest and most effective understanding of their writing processes" (McComiskey, 2000, p. 7). The New Sophistic writing pedagogy advocates a holistic approach to the essays' evaluation focusing on macrorhetorical rather than microrhetorical issues. It stresses the interconnectedness among the textual, rhetorical, and discursive aspects.

The New Sophistic writing pedagogy is more effective when implemented in a relatively small class (maximum of twenty students). All students may have a fair review of their essays' rough and final drafts in all three cycles and the chance to present orally on their topics. If the class is small, all students may present orally in all three cycles; otherwise, the composition instructor may divide them into three groups (one in each cycle). Still, all students must provide feedback on the oral presentations in all three cycles.

Conclusion

Protagoras and Isocrates succeeded in shaping citizens with increased sociopolitical awareness and direct involvement in making decisions concerning the polis's future. They emphasized the value of deliberation in maintaining or restoring a democratic social order in which justice and respect are exalted. The fostering of sociopolitical consciousness in the first-year writing class in the English department is an ideal intellectual environment where students can prepare for future academic challenges. Viewing their writings as mirrors of the relationship between the self and the other, literature majors sharpen their analytical skills and become (socio)politically sensitive, two tools necessary to understand literature, especially of a different culture.

High school teachers aiming to familiarize students with sociopolitical and cultural interest subjects may also apply the New Sophistic pedagogy. If the youth is exposed to healthy deliberation earlier than the university years, entering the university as freshmen will be more prepared to face academic challenges. Teaching speech mechanics and the conventional structure of certain composition kinds (expressive, informative, and/or argumentative writing) without encouraging students to think critically, to be curious about the different and the alien, and not to fear to agree, to disagree, and to negotiate with their peers, writing instructors fail to contribute to the emotional and intellectual maturity of their students. Speech is not merely a tool of communication. Speech is the outward manifestation of the human essence, the human mind. Understanding and responding to the perennial yearning of humanity to expand its consciousness, the writing instructor participates in empowering students' consciousness by embracing the tradition of deliberation (monologic argument) and expanding this tradition by incorporating Mediation and Negotiation in the syllabus. Mediation and Negotiation enhance collectivism and balance the excessive agonistic spirit in and out of the academic world. Young citizens refuse to embrace conventional thinking and ideological fanaticism and learn to respect diversity, acknowledging that there is always space for common ground. The English field needs future scholars with ethos, social awareness, and critical thinking to produce knowledge as individuals, citizens, and academics.

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