

The Voiceâ??s Standpoint in Creative Expressions: An Artistâ??s Perspective

Description

The AutoEthnographer

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With my recent studies and initiatives, there is one particular theoretical perspective I have come to know deeper â?? the Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST). FST offers concepts that can be applicable not only to feminist studies but in finding our own voice in communication and creative expressions and acknowledges that an individualâ??s perspective of their own experience is a valuable source for data. FST further explains that individuals, in general, are situated in specific â??social locationsâ?• â?? whether one is *â??poor, wealthy, European, American, African American, Latino, uneducated, well educated, etc.â?•* therefore, each one of us have our own â??standpointsâ??, which is the â??*social location and the basis of interpretation of an individualâ??s life*â?• (West & Turner, 2018).

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There are multiple approaches to find oneâ??s poetic voice depending on the lens one chooses as a part of the authorâ??s creative decision.

Our standpoints are, I think, the primary source of our â??voiceâ?• or perspective in whatever creative expression. Similarly, these concepts are useful in autoethnographies (i.e., autoethnographic creative expressions). For example, this article is written from a perspective that is influenced by my cultural, experiential, social and academic pedigree.

From a performing artistâ??s perspective, I have experience *performing* poetry and drama scripts written by someone else for over ten years. This is an interesting perspective since the *voices* I have performed do not necessarily come from me, therefore, my process of internalization is different from that of the authorsâ?? â?? whether they come from a perspective that is feminine, masculine, a different generation, and from a particular standpoint that is completely different from mine. Those poetry performances used my voice and interpretation being an actor on stage. The performance I give in a poetry performance, for example, is based on my interpretation of the persona perceived by the author.

The voice performed in a poetry performance then becomes the amalgamation of â??voicesâ?? of the author, (the director), and ultimately, the actor â?? who is at the end of the process where the poem is being experienced.

The reader-response theorists offer an explanation to this context wherein they suggest that a readerâ??s interpretation of a literary piece is influenced by the individualâ??s own beliefs, values, and experiences. Thus, a readerâ??s reception to a poem is ultimately a reflection of their own poetic voice.

Citing an instance, I had an experience performing the same piece written by a poet with another person. I performed the piece, as requested, in a literary & arts performance series, and I performed it using my training in literature and theater. The poet commented that she liked the â??flavorâ?• I gave in my performance to her poem. Later on, I had the privilege to witness the poetry performance of the same piece by another person for another event and the treatment was different from mine. It seemed

our performance interpretations of the same exact words and texts were not exactly the same, therefore, not evoking the same audience reception.

To describe my personal process as an actor, when I perform a piece â?? whether poetry, music, song or drama â?? I try to understand the persona created by the author of the piece.

As an audience member of that performance, I did not hear the same exact voice I gave on my own. In the case of my performance, was my voice â??absentâ?• in that performance? Are we hearing mainly the voices of the poets in these poetry performances? How about the performative interpretation of the pieces, are we not â??hearingâ?• the actorâ??s voice in such performances? This is a common puzzle among performing artists, whose work is the constant interpretation through performance of scripts and poems written and possibly directed by someone else.

To describe my personal process as an actor, when I perform a piece â?? whether poetry, music, song or drama â?? I try to understand the persona created by the author of the piece. How I perform it is based on my human experience paired with my training in theater along with a directorâ??s guidance (if present). In this process, I donâ??t feel that the actorâ??s voice is fully absent in surfacing the poemâ??s voice through performance.

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Intentionality is key to finding voice in creative expressions

The voice performed in a poetry performance then becomes the amalgamation of â??voicesâ?? of the author, (the director), and ultimately, the actor â?? who is at the end of the process where the poem is being experienced. I think that this intrapersonal communication process of finding voice in creative expressions is inherent to every artist, regardless of art form and expression, and I think it is a truly personal journey, and can be guided by knowing exactly what one wants to evoke in a creative expression.

In conclusion, I think that intentionality is key to finding voice in creative expressions. The voice in creative expressions should be consistent with what it intended to be. I think that one must try to understand from what particular standpoint a particular voice the poem should come from â?? whether based in real life or a fictionalized one. Understanding the poetic voice or the persona must also come with an understanding of the voiceâ??s standpoint, because otherwise, the voice â??vocalizedâ?• will become a misinterpretation of the intended voice upon conceptualization â?? whether simply read or performed.

References

West, R. & Turner, L. (2018). Introducing communication theory: Analysis and Application. (6th ed.). NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

Other suggested reading:

Daiton, M. & Zelly, E.D. (2019). Applying Communication Theory for Professional Life: A practical introduction. (4th Ed.). U.S.A: Sage.

Credits

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