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Delivery, *Facilitas*, and *Copia*: Job Market Preparation and the Revival of the Fifth Canon

Joseph Turner

ABSTRACT: This essay argues that English Studies departments should implement training programs in oral delivery strategies for graduate students seeking tenure track employment. A sample a 13-week training program, modeled on elements of classical rhetorical pedagogy, can help students develop and refine stills in oral delivery necessary for academic job interviews.

KEYWORDS: Delivery, Job Placement, Graduate Education, Rhetoric

For all but the last century of rhetoric's millennia of history, oral delivery was a fundamental component of a rhetorical education.[1] The Renaissance thinker Desiderius Erasmus, for example, developed a training program modeled on Quintilian's loosely-defined concept of *verborum ac rerum copia*, or "abundance of words and ideas." Erasmus, like Quintilian before him, wanted to train rhetors to be capable of spoken and written eloquence, signaling the historical twin foci of the field commonly referred to as rhetoric and composition. But in recent years, the field has moved away from rhetoric's roots in speech. The very name of the field is now contested: many university programs have embraced the title of Writing Studies, shifting from rhetoric (which etymologically means "that which is spoken") and toward written compositions alone, broadly conceived to include traditional print media and digital delivery platforms.[1] Oral delivery, once the fifth canon of rhetoric and an essential part of rhetorical training, has fallen by the wayside.

Disciplinary configurations and scholarly trends contribute to the lack of attention to oral delivery in English departments and in dedicated programs in rhetoric and composition.[2] First year writing courses frequently teach and assign oral presentations, while courses dedicated to "speech" or "public speaking" are often housed in Communications departments. In addition to this disciplinary split, recent scholarship in rhetoric and composition on delivery has attempted to revive the fifth canon in terms of curricular structures or, more recently, digital media.[3] This recent shift of understanding "delivery" in terms of digital delivery platforms instead of speaking strategies, combined with the disciplinary status of speech studies as a subset of Communications at many universities, contributes to the dearth of academic interest in oral delivery as an area of scholarship in English Studies.

Deemphasizing the spoken in favor of the written belies the continued importance of oral delivery skills in the academy. Of course, much high stakes work of the academy is written, as evidenced by the importance of published articles and books for those seeking tenure. However, nearly all of the day-to-day work of the academy is verbal: in classrooms and in meetings, in defenses and in advising, and at conferences. Given the prominence of the spoken word in the professoriate, the academy puts much pressure on oral communication skills during job interviews. That is, the interview phase of the academic job cycle—whether in person at MLA, via Skype or phone, or during on campus interviews—reinforces the centrality of oral communication skills to the professoriate. On campus interviews in particular rely heavily on speaking skills, especially in teaching demonstrations and job talks, in Q&A that follow these presentations, and in informal conversations during campus visits (during meals and meet-and-greets, for example). In fact, interviewing is arguably the major gatekeeper to securing a tenure track job in academia.

The gap between the importance of oral delivery and its current status in the field of English studies creates the opportunity—and need—to reconnect with the history of rhetorical pedagogy, which long prized the cultivation of oral delivery alongside of written communication. In what follows, I argue that returning to the pre-modern tradition, which focused on orality simultaneously with written composition, can achieve two ends. First, it will enrich approaches to graduate student professionalization that will help students to not only secure tenure track jobs, but also to be productive members of their departments. Second, it will allow the field of English studies to revitalize an historical focus on oral communication for an important and practical context. Increased training in oral delivery will certainly not guarantee tenure track job placement, but in the hyper competitive academic job market, students need every possible competitive advantage.[4] Focusing on oral delivery as an aspect of graduate education not only offers a useful heuristic for job-market candidates to see interviews as rhetorical occasions, but also offers them avenues to present concise yet potentially expansive answers to common interview questions. Through these means, English Studies programs can help students become capable interviewers by developing oral delivery skills prized by the professoriate.

Current Praxis: Problems and Opportunities

In a recent issue of *Pedagogy* dedicated to graduate education in English studies, David M. Ball, William Gleason, and Nancy J. Peterson (2015: 105) describe the intense feelings of anxiety that plague most English graduate students. This anxiety is fueled partly by the fact that as of 2013, Modern Language Association job listings had fallen nearly 40% over a five year period (Flaherty 2013: n.p.). As of 2015, job openings fell another 3% to an all-time low (MLA Office of Research 2015: 1). Due to these diminishing prospects, one recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* urged humanities Ph.D.s to leave the country: "Today, I am

writing from Ecuador to offer this advice to new Ph.D.s in the humanities: Pack your bags" (Gibson 2016: n.p.). Others have responded to this anxiety with increased calls for professionalization, preparation for career paths outside of academia, or reduction in admissions to graduate programs in English.[5] These declining statistics have sounded alarm bells for many and no doubt contribute to increased rates of attrition in English studies graduate programs (Cassuto 2013: n.p.). Students may ask themselves: why persist when there is no (or little) light at the end of the tunnel?

The typical structure of graduate programs in English studies, which prizes the written essay over oral delivery, may also contribute to student anxiety. That is, many students feel unequipped for the academic job interview, which hinges on skills in oral delivery. This problem is compounded by the common assumption that writing a dissertation and talking about a dissertation are one in the same. Even if those skills overlap, they are nonetheless discrete, and delivery needs attention in the same way that writing does. Cicero, for example, understood that developing an idea and communicating it were separate things, splitting invention from delivery as distinct canons of rhetoric. Quintilian, too, dedicates much of books 10 and 11 of his *Institutio Oratoria* to delivery. The culture of antique Rome was, of course, oriented toward orality more than our twenty-first century world, so such an emphasis in the Roman rhetorical tradition is unsurprising. In focusing on the academic essay over oral speech, contemporary English Studies departments focus much attention on developing ideas and written expression, but less on how to deliver them.

Consider how graduate courses in English studies are typically assessed: through an end of semester, article-length argumentative essay. As Gregory Semenza (2010: 90) puts it in the popular *Graduate Study for the 21ˢᵗ Century*, the seminar paper "might accurately be understood

as the *sine qua non* of your academic training," or that most essential part of graduate study. Although there are a variety of oral performances in the average graduate course—in the form of participation, leading discussions, and oral presentations—what tends to count the most, in terms of assessment, is the final essay. Between MA and PhD coursework, most graduate students in English will go through 60 credits—or roughly 20 courses—that follow some version of this basic structure. And while some professors are turning to digital media for student compositions, the resulting product remains divorced from modes of oral delivery. Regardless of the form of the final project—digital or print—this structure reinforces the centrality of composing over oral delivery.

Much job interview anxiety also stems from relationships with faculty and from the occluded genre of interviewing. Student-faculty relationships tend to be evaluative. That is, most institutionally sanctioned interactions take the form of testing (grades in coursework, the prospectus, exams, dissertation proposal and defense). By the time students earn a Ph.D., they have been being formally evaluated by faculty members for a decade or more. Despite many faculty members' best intentions to cultivate friendly, comfortable relationships with students, evaluative structures common to graduate education make it is easy for graduate students to expect interactions with faculty to be, in some form, adversarial. Additionally, academic job interviews as a genre are especially difficult because they are both occluded and extremely high-stakes (Swales 1996: 46-47). That is, students rarely (if ever) observe an academic job interview, and as a result, they typically lack an authentic model. Students also know that poor performance means they have little chance of advancing to the next stage of the interview phase. These issues—of typical relationships with faculty, of occlusion, and of stress—make it difficult to see the utility in common advice on interviews, such as "act natural," or, "try to turn the

interview into a conversation." However, most good interviews do proceed as something like a conversation, and students need to learn to see the hiring committee differently than evaluative professors. They need to see the committee as potential colleagues; they need to see the committee as equals.

Common departmental approaches to academic job market preparation do little to clarify the occluded nature of academic interviewing. In what seems to be a typical approach to job market preparation, many English departments assign faculty members to a placement committee, which offers practica on the major job market documents (such as *CV*s, job letters, etc.) and organizes mock interviews and mock job talks. Likewise, in *Surviving the Academic Job Hunt: Advice for Humanities PhDs*, Kathryn Hume (2010: 20) notes that, "two official mock interviews is about as much as you can hope for from the faculty of your department. If you are lucky, your supervisor may do one or two more." She further describes how the onus of market preparation falls to the graduate student, as she makes clear in the following advice. She says, "Brainstorm [questions] with friends and fellow job hunters. Generate variations on the questions and answer them. Ask yourself questions and answer them as you walk, work out, sit in the car, shower, sit on the toilet, or stand in line at the cash register" (31). Semenza (2010: 269) offers similar suggestions, and he says that "the majority of your practice sessions will occur when you are alone." Recent research elsewhere in the field supports Semenza's and Hume's observations. A 2016 study on recently hired tenure track professors in technical and professional writing suggests that 93% of their sample relied on institutionally sanctioned professionalization less than "contra-professionalization," or professionalization "outside established conventions, programmatic requirements, and resources available within participants' specific institutions" (Purnelle, Frost and Getto 2018: 5). These sources make clear that graduate students in English

studies look outside of the department for much of their market preparation. Moreover, such a focus on contra-professionalization signals that students are aware of the lack of institutional support for job market preparation, so much so that graduate students are forced outside of established institutional offerings.

Despite this lack of programmatic training in oral delivery, the ability to express oneself verbally remains centrally important to earning a tenure track job. A study of over 330 hiring committees' preferences found that "performance at interview with the search committee" during the on-campus interview phase was the most important criterion for making a job offer" (Broughton and Conlogue 2001: 45). "Candidate's personality" also ranked highly, and 27% of respondents "think that personality and appearance often have more influence than credentials in the selection of candidates" (46). Similarly, poor interpersonal skills were a factor in 28% of first-choice of job offers (47-48). Although "personality" cannot necessarily be taught, training in delivery can help candidates better express their ideas, achievements, and "fit" to a prospective department. Such analyses underscore the importance for developing professionalization opportunities in oral delivery. Professionalization, as studies have argued, should not just help students get the job—but also to keep it.[6] Oral delivery skills, that is, can contribute to both finding and keeping an academic job.

If the approach to job market preparation outlined by Semenza and Hume is typical of most departments—a claim corroborated by the existence of the vibrant industry of job search websites, such as "The Professor is In," the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s popular *Vitae* series, and by those very books published by Semenza and Hume—it seems English Studies departments are simply not doing enough to help students navigate the job market process. It is true that it is incumbent upon the graduate student to prepare and to master his or her job

materials. I do not intend to suggest that it is the adviser's or department's job to do work graduate students are supposed to do. My suggestion, however, is that students develop the ability to communicate their deep, specialist knowledge in job market scenarios through intensive training—training that needs to be conducted by someone with experience on the market. The next sections of this essay will offer a sample 13-week syllabus for developing delivery skills, followed by explicit advice on delivery from the ancients, from Greek notions of timeliness to Erasmus' concept of *copia*. Such a syllabus, coupled with a historical survey of advice on oral delivery, suggests that developing flexible delivery strategies has been (and should continue to be) a foundational part of English studies.

Job Market Preparation: Sample 13-Week Syllabus

While I was a student at the University of Delaware, our department chair, John Ernest, met weekly with advanced Ph.D students to workshop typical interview questions. Questions such as: "how do you teach first-year writing?" Or, "tell us about your dissertation." I have built upon that structure over the last two years at the University of Louisville, using Dr. Ernest's model as a base and adding to it insights gleaned from ancient pedagogues. In the fall of each year, I hold optional, 1-2 hour weekly meetings with the cohort of market-bound Ph.D students (usually 4-5 students). For the first meeting, I try to get to know students—what type of institution they most desire to join (liberal arts, Ph.D granting, etc.), area of scholarly expertise, publication record, and other relevant details that may be assets to their job candidacy (such as work with local organizations or teaching in other departments). I end each meeting by forecasting the following session's central question and by offering a response to the question from when I was on the job market as a model (for emulation or divergence).

Each session after the first follows a similar trajectory. For each meeting between weeks 2-12, students prepare a response to a question, such as "describe a 300-level course you'd like to teach." Then, I ask students to deliver their response to the group. We workshop each answer: what works well, what could be improved; how the student can use voice, pitch, and hand gestures to better effect; and any other salient suggestions. On some weeks, I ask students to engage in some of the oldest rhetorical exercises: abbreviation and expansion. I ask them to give the answer again, but in 30 seconds (sometimes called the "elevator pitch"); then to give another version, but in twice the time. We work through each student's original, expanded, and abbreviated answer before moving to the next student. As a group, we sift through what gets left out in the process; lacunae in the answers that need fleshing out; *exempla* that could better demonstrate the answer. Then we move to the next student. Week one, students are nervous. But by the end of the semester—in the weeks leading up to MLA—students are much more assured, like they've "been there, done that." These weekly meetings gradually progress toward mock interview sessions. By week 3, students are asking one another follow-up questions and by week 9, each meeting becomes a miniature mock interview. Students see how interviews can twist and turn, and how they can use their answers to guide the conversation. How they can use inflection, emotion, and passion to advantage. And importantly, they learn how to say "I don't know" eloquently. Additionally, the type of "play acting" or "roleplaying" required by these sessions can help to make the general advice often supplied by placement committees (such as "interviewing is a lot like dating") into usable strategies.

Such confidence only comes through repeated practice, and as a result, the following syllabus presumes the ability to commit to semester-long series of practica. The concerted effort

represented on this syllabus can help students excel in the speaking occasions common to the

academic job market.

<u>Sample Syllabus for Delivery Preparation</u>

Week	Topic	Additional Strategies & notes
1	**Introductions**	Use this time to describe the average MLA and phone interview situations. Take notes on students' goals and anxieties.
2	**The dissertation question[7]** Tell us about your dissertation…	Emphasize that this question is, in many ways, the most important question in any interview. It is also often the lead question at most institutions with research demands.
3	**First-Year Writing** How do you approach FYW?	Ask two students ask follow-ups and stay "in character." Many graduate students feel comfortable pedagogically, so this is a nice opportunity to allow them to take on the role of interviewer.
4	**The Dream Course** Describe a 300-level course (or a graduate version) that you'd love to teach	Ask logical follow-ups about textbooks, course outcomes, and assignment scaffolding. Encourage students to do the same.
5	**The Hollywood pitch** Try to sum up your project in an exciting or pithy sentence (or two)	Ask students to give the best version of their scholarship in a sentence or two. Something that's likely to be memorable to an audience. This is a difficult, but important, skill. It also leads logically into week 6's activity.
6	**The dissertation, part two** "elevator pitch" (30 second) and extended (2 minute) versions	Ask students to condense their dissertation talk to 30 seconds, then expand it to two minutes. This is one of the oldest exercises in rhetorical pedagogy: abbreviation and expansion.
7	**Adversity**	Ask students to discuss their approach to adversity, either in a classroom setting or in an administrative capacity. This is a crucial question that can

	Tell us about a time you dealt with adversity in the classroom (or in a WPA scenario)	showcase students' commitment to a range of social issues. At this point in the semester, try to stay "in character" for at least 5 minutes. That way, the sessions will start to seem more authentic to the interview experience.
8	**The Next project** What will you work on after the dissertation?	Ask students something like, "what projects will you pursue next? What will you produce after your dissertation?" Whether a series of essays or a second book, students should have an idea of what's next.
9	**Digital/Multimodal** How do you teach digital composition? Online courses?	Ask students how the incorporate digital media into their teaching. Around week 9, I find it useful to try to trip up students. Play the role of the adversarial interviewer. Try to frustrate them and see how they handle it. At this point, you should have students treat each question as a small mock interview. Ask the other students to respond with questions for 5-10 minutes (or until the topic loses momentum).
10	**The End of the Interview** What questions do you have for us?	Make sure students have questions for the interviewers. Ideally, these questions will be tailored to specific institutions. Also, ask students to rephrase what they heard their peers ask so that students can see how their questions might be interpreted by interviewers. I also ask students what aspect of their scholarly profile each question has the potential to highlight. For example, asking about partnerships with community agencies can highlight a student's background in community outreach.
11	**Dissertation, part 3**	Try variations on the dissertation question, such as: "you've told us about your project, now tell us why it's

		important work." Or, "which scholarly presses might be interested in publishing the book version of your dissertation"?
12	**Teaching broadly** How would you teach a course on X?	Try to ask each student a different version of this question that ranges somewhat outside of their expertise. Such questions might be: how would you teach a course on community literacy? Or disability studies? Or American literature?
13	**Final Meeting** Students' choice	Ask students to self-identify problematic responses they have. For students who have had interviews already, ask them to share questions and responses as models. Offer encouragement for upcoming interviews.

The syllabus falls into roughly three sections: laying groundwork (weeks 1-3), anticipating the interview scenario (weeks 4-8), and mock interviewing (weeks 9-12). The first section allows the adviser and students to get to know one another and to become comfortable with the type of role play and acting required in the course. Here, it is important to build trust and to be encouraging; to note what works and to gently steer students away from common pitfalls in interviewing (such as giving overly long answers). In weeks 4-8, the goal is for students to ask questions of one another and to reflect critically on what they hear and say. In other words, the goal is for students to start thinking like interviewers. The final section of the course, weeks 9-12, attempts to approximate (in small chunks) the interview scenario and to allow students to engage in more than the customary one or two mock interviews. For this course to work well, the instructor will need to offer specific examples from his or her job interviews (or to construct new examples), so it may be useful to incorporate junior faculty who are closer to the interview process. It is also always useful to invite faculty from across the subfields of

English studies to participate. Indeed, having colleagues from creative writing, film studies, literature, and rhetoric and composition (and others) will allow students to see how their questions and answers resonate with diverse audiences, such as are likely to comprise a hiring committee.

This syllabus requires a thorough cycle of practice, delivery, and feedback. It also requires students to develop flexible ways to adapt prepared answers for new contexts. That is, asking students a question such as "why is your dissertation work important?" requires them to adjust their response to the "tell us about your dissertation" question. The substance of the response may remain unchanged—"my dissertation rethinks X, Y, or Z"—but how he or she leads into the question will need to pick up on the interviewer's prompt. Such variation, too, keeps student responses from appearing rehearsed or stagnant. Repeated practice through intentional variation produces the ability to perform with confidence. This confidence also grows from staying "in character" for extended periods of time during these sessions—that is, to treat the session as an actual interview for some set duration of time. Students will often make minor missteps (such as coughing or forgetting what to say) and ask to start over, which is only natural. However, as the course progresses, take away the students' ability to break character in order to recoup from missteps. Instead, students should deal with the misstep as he or she would in an interview (which inevitably happens in actual interviews). We should also ask multiple questions in a row without any breaks. In short, as the course progresses it should begin to approximate the conditions of the interview scenario as thoroughly as possible. Such practice, in this case, helps to build ways to adapt prepared orations for a variety of contexts and to perform with confidence.

The Classics: *Sermo* and *Kairos*

This proposed syllabus on delivery skills builds from aspects of ancient pedagogy, many of which can help students to develop flexible thinking and speaking strategies valuable to academic job interviews. These principles of classical pedagogy are heuristics that can help students prepare for and respond to the rhetorical occasion of the job interview. Delivery was a strong component of rhetorical pedagogy throughout the classical tradition, featuring heavily in the Greek training program known as *progymnasmata* (or elementary exercises that prepared students for more advanced exercises in declamation) and in classical and medieval disputation. It was typically meant for public orations or declamations rather than conversational interactions. Thus applying classical notions of delivery to twenty-first century contexts can be problematic, in part because delivery in the classical Greek and Latin traditions (*hypokrisis* and *actio*) was largely theorized as a public, civic art. In these contexts, delivery was not conversational in the ways that academic job interviews often are. Such interviewing contexts—phone, Skype, MLA, or on campus—require looking outside strict theorizations of delivery, although other oral delivery contexts (conference presentations and job talks, for example) can draw more directly from classical notions of delivery.

Important concepts from ancient rhetorical theory can help guide efforts to professionalize students in oral delivery strategies. One such idea, which Cicero called *sermo*, or "conversation," can help foreground the importance of interviewing as a conversation rather than question and answer. Cicero noted the differences between public oratory (*contentio*) and conversation (*sermo*), theorizing that training in conversational rhetoric should follow both the rules of public oratory and imitation of successful models. He develops the distinction in his *De Officiis* (*On Duties*), where he explains:

> The power of speech in the attainment of propriety is great, and its function is twofold:
> the first is oratory; the second, conversation. Oratory is the kind of discourse to be
> employed in pleadings in court and speeches in popular assemblies and in the senate;
> conversation should find its natural place in social gatherings, in informal discussions,
> and in intercourse with friends; it should also seek admission at dinners. There are rules
> for oratory laid down by rhetoricians; there are none for conversation; and yet I do not
> know why there should not be. But where there are students to learn, teachers are found;
> there are, however, none who make conversation a subject of study, whereas pupils
> throng about the rhetoricians everywhere. And yet the same rules that we have for words
> and sentences in rhetoric will apply also to conversation. (1913: 135)

Cicero's advice on *sermo* explicitly asks to develop "rules" for interpersonal conversation, suggesting that a rhetor can develop an arsenal of communicative tactics through imitating successful models. A course in delivery preparation can provide such a forum. Imitation has been a forceful component of rhetorical pedagogy throughout its long history. Cicero's suggestion that students look to successful rhetors also resonates with the etymology of delivery: the Greek *hypokrisis* and the Latin *actio* are both related to performance and acting. Much of Hume's and Semenza's advice is characterized by this emulation model. A careful study of successful delivery performances can contribute much to a student's mastery of both *contentio* and *sermo*. Such a model is why we advise graduate students to attend job talks given by prospective faculty new hires; it is part of the motivation for asking them to attend research talks given by distinguished scholars. However, due to the occluded nature of job interviews, it is important to model interview strategies for students, and to use student responses as models fit for emulation.

The "Sample Syllabus for Delivery Preparation" contains suggestions for incorporating opportunities for imitation into job market preparation efforts.

A successful job interview requires that the applicant be finely attuned to the expectations of conversation. Delivery, in this context, can be understood as the knowledge of what to say and when to say it. *Sermo* relies on well-developed notions of timeliness and appropriateness. The ancient Greeks were acutely aware of such issues, often called *kairos*, and sometimes represented anthropomorphically. In a poem accompanying a statue of *Kairos*, the third century BC Greek epigrammatic poet Posidippus (2008: 49) describes the elusive god. In this depiction, *Kairos* wears winged-shoes, and his head is bald on the back with long hair on the front. The poet explains the hairstyle: "A handle for the one who meets me, By Zeus … [and] Once I've passed you, running by on winged feet, you won't latch onto me from behind, for all your desire. *Kairos* is often understood as right timing, a component of *kairos* which Lysippus's statue and Posidippus's poem emphasize. Kairos was also implicated in physical contests, as Deborah Hawhee (2004: 65-67) has argued: in order to win, athletes have to understand both the right time for action and the correct way in which to act. *Kairos* was, in Homer's time, used to describe openings in enemy armor or weak points on the body, or the right place to strike with sword or arrow (66-67). Such physical registers of meaning, for Hawhee, underscores *kairos* as a means of responding to "ever-shifting conditions" and "of remaining open and responsive" to change (73).

How to teach *kairos* has preoccupied rhetoricians for millennia. James Kinneavy and Catherine Eskin (2000: 434) argue that Aristotle's definition of rhetoric, as the ability to "discover the available means of persuasion," is determined by *kairos*. Aristotelian rhetoric is situational; the available means of persuasion shifts with context. For Aristotle, delivery consists

of style (*lexis*) and arrangement (*taxis*) (2007: 12). His model of *kairos*, moreover, is what Hawhee (2004: 68) calls an "accommodation model," which responds to context and to the situational aspects of the speaker and audience. *Kairos*, for Aristotle, is understanding when to activate certain knowledges and appeals; the rhetor has an arsenal of rhetorical maneuvers that he or she can turn to in any given situation. As Kinneavy and Eskin (2000: 434) put it, *kairos* entails "the application of the general rules of the art to the individual case or situation." Hawhee (2004: 68) also outlines a "creation model" of *kairos*, or one in which "the rhetor-in-charge creates his or her own openings" in the conversation. This model of *kairos* seems tricky for graduate students, but is perhaps closer to advice about "steering the conversation" in an interview.

As a governing idea, *kairos* is important for interview preparation for several reasons. It underscores that there are no hard-and-fast rules for interviewing; the interview, like a conversation, is dynamic and evolving. As a participant in that conversation, the rhetor needs to have a dynamic and adaptive verbal repertoire that can accommodate interview scenarios. A thorough awareness of *kairos* likewise compels the rhetor to deep preparation. To properly respond to a range of questions and interview scenarios, with an understanding of the accommodation model of *kairos*, the rhetor must have considered and developed potential answers to possible questions. In that way, *kairos* anticipates the overlap between invention (or what to say) and delivery (or how to say it) that Quintilian would later discuss in the *Institutio Oratoria* (2001: 13). The creation model, although harder to teach, can offer opportunities to "steer the conversation," even if only in small ways. Such a model is a useful way to help guide potential questions. If an interviewer were to ask, for example, "describe a 300 level writing course you'd like to teach," a student may respond with "I have two such classes—one on writing for the web and the other on the history of the essay—but I'm particularly excited about

writing for digital contexts…" and then describe that course. In that way, the student creates the possibility that the interviewer will then ask about the other course; he or she also caters to different sections of the field and, potentially, the interests of separate interviewers. Similarly, the student might attempt to steer the conversation by ending a response to the same question with something such as, "…I also have another idea about a course on the history of the essay, if the committee would like to hear." Such strategies, of course, must be used carefully and judiciously or quickly risk overuse.

Facilitas **and** *Copia*

Kairos offers one useful way to understand how the rhetor can act—both by responding to the situation and by attempting to shape it—in the interview scenario. Although taking different terms later in the tradition, Roman thinkers such as Quintilian and Renaissance theorists such as Erasmus also sought to cultivate the ability of adaptive response to a variety of communication situations in their students. They used different terms, however, and different means of acquisition. The development of new terms and educational methods was perhaps motivated by the relatively scant extant material on how to teach *kairos* in the Greek tradition. But the Romans, as James J. Murphy (2012: 37) has argued, "took the comparatively loose ideas of the Greek educators and molded them into a coherent system." The goal of the Roman rhetorical curriculum was to develop *facilitas*, or "the habitual capacity to produce appropriate and effective language in any situation" (38). Hawhee's characterization of the accommodation model of *kairos* is akin to this Roman understanding of *facilitas*: the ability to respond to context and to audience flexibly and easily. Much can be learned about the ideal Roman educational curriculum from the great Roman orator and educator Quintilian, whose *Institutio Oratoria* outlined an educational curriculum in the verbal arts. For Quintilian, rhetoric is not necessarily a

rule-based art, but rather study in rhetoric should foster the ability to understand how and when to mobilize various rhetorical tactics toward certain ends. In his discussion of delivery, for example, Quintilian subordinates any rules of rhetoric to the general aims of expediency and propriety. Quintilian's understanding of appropriateness in delivery (*apte*) is of a species with the accommodation model of *kairos*. "What is the use of words," Quintilian (2001: 9) asks, "which are good Latin, meaningful, elegant, and even embellished with Figures and Rhythm, unless they accord with the views toward which we wish the judge to be guided and influenced?" Expediency—or producing the desired effect in the appropriate audience—is more important to Quintilian than slavishly following established rules.

Yet as Murphy (2012) argues, guiding rules or precepts were an important starting point of Roman education, as was imitation. Precepts were useful only if illustrated for and internalized by students: rules alone, however, were useless. Murphy outlines a seven step program, characteristic of much Roman rhetorical pedagogy, through which pedagogues taught students how to put precepts into action (54-61). In "Roman Rhetorical Education and Modern Adaptation" below, I have adjusted Murphy's discussion of Roman rhetorical pedagogy. This model could provide a framework for individual sessions or workshops on interviewing strategies. Such an arrangement might be attractive to departments that cannot commit to a sustained, semester-long course in oral delivery strategies. However, adjusting this scheme into individual workshops may not allow students the sustained practice necessary for truly developing *facilitas*.

Table 2: Roman Rhetorical Education and Modern Adaptation

Name of exercise	Description	Modern Adaptation

Reading	Reading (and performing) a model aloud.	The adviser should feel encouraged to provide a model response to a range of common interview questions, such as "What is your philosophy of program administration?"
Analysis	Analyzing the model and the performance.	The adviser should explain why he or she approached the oration in that manner and also welcome critiques from students (both in terms of content and delivery).
Memorization of models	Memorizing of a model, usually a positive example suitable for imitation.	Students should develop their own response to the interview question and memorize it. They should also attempt to perform the response rather than simply recite it from memory.
Paraphrase of models	Placing the model into the students' own words.	Students should offer their own response to the question, attempting to adapt the adviser's performance choices when appropriate.
Transliteration of models	Translating a model from one language into another.	Students should practice adjusting their orations for different audiences, such as explaining a philosophy of program administration to the Dean versus explaining it to the search committee.
Recitation of paraphrase of models	Presenting paraphrase orally.	Students should take advantage of recording technologies and record their responses to the question. Then, students should critique their recordings. (This can also help prepare

		students for Skype interviews.)
Correction of paraphrase	Offering feedback and corrections of student compositions.	Students should perform their question responses to the group, welcoming feedback in the form of content and delivery.

As this scheme makes clear, the Roman classroom was interactive, and in many ways anticipated modern emphases on peer review and the social construction of knowledge. Applied to interview training sessions, the instructor might model his or her own response to a typical question (which I typically do when I run practica on interview preparation) then submit that oration to analysis and interpretation. Students could then attempt to work in the same mode as the instructor; to offer an answer that reworks elements of the model, adjusted for differences in background, goals, and personality. Such an exercise also forces students to practice thoroughly, to rehearse questions and answers, and to account for how others will respond to his or her offerings. Rather than arcane or generalized advice, student workshops would focus on authentic questions and answers and provide students with models fit for emulation and critique.

The approaches to delivery preparation outlined in the "Sample Syllabus for Delivery Preparation" and the "Roman Rhetorical Education and Modern Adaptation" also draw from (or prefigure) contemporary educational theory. This focus on repeated practice, for example, is motivated by the same pedagogical utility as Marshall Gregory's (2001) observations about the importance of fostering connections between curriculum and lived experience through practicing analytical skills. Gregory's focus on flexibility and future application recalls the basic tenets of *facilitas*. He writes that:

If I repeat a skill I am learning over and over in exactly the same way, it follows that I

will repeat the skill at exactly the same level of proficiency. Practice has to be governed

not merely by a repetition of sameness but by two mental activities: first, by criticism, the

ability to see the imperfections in the performance so far, and, second, by imagination,

the ability to visualize the performance or the skill not as it is actually being done now

but as it might be done in the future, differently and better, after more practice. (74-75)

Marshall's claims about pedagogy likewise find support in Lee Shulman's (2004a) concept of

Pedagogical Content Knowledge. Shulman notes a fundamental difference between content

knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)—that is, a difference between knowing

chemistry (mole ratios, Avogadro's number, etc.) and how to teach chemistry to a room full of

people. That is, PCK is "the most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most

powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations … the ways of

representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others" (203). Shulman

argues that successful, veteran teachers have developed "an extraordinary repertoire of examples,

analogies, metaphors," and he advocates for teacher training programs to incorporate more case

studies, role playing, and real-time classroom scenarios (2004b: 404). That scheme of teacher

preparation—in focusing on repeated practice—recalls the Roman model and offers cues for

contemporary delivery preparation scenarios.

The means of generating expressive variety that motivate Shulman's characterization of

effective teachers finds a historical analogue in the rhetorical tradition, or what Quintilian called

verborum ac rerum copia, or literally "abundance of words and ideas." It is another means of

generating the type of stylistic fluidity described by the concept of *facilitas*. It is the ability to

express ideas fluidly, concisely, and powerfully. The opening chapter of book 10 of Quintillian's

Institutio Oratoria is called *"de copia verborum,"* but Quintillian declines to schematize the production of *copia*. For Quintillian, *copia* is dependent on context and situation. He instead suggests imitating past authors and reading widely in philosophy and history. Erasmus, writing some 1400 years later, supplies the process for producing *copia* that Quintillian omits. For Erasmus, students develop *copia* by endlessly working through stylistic variation, at the level of sentences and ideas, with the help of the *magister*, the teacher. That is, the teacher helps a student develop a mental storehouse of expressive variety that students can flexibly adapt for particular expressive opportunities. Erasmus compares the process to molding wax (2012: 17). He advises that students should "make at first two variations, then three, then more and more" in order to "attain to such ability that at length we can without difficulty make a hundred or two hundred variations" (17). And that is exactly what Erasmus models. For example, he produces over 150 variations of the sentence "your letter has delighted me very much" (38-42). *Copia* is borne from practice, repetition to the point that the rhetor has a whole matrix of experience to draw from. Or, as Erasmus puts it, "unless we are trained in the principles of copia, we shall often find ourselves either confused, or crude, or even silent" (17).

In the same ways that we urge students to "show, not tell," Erasmus argues that *exempla*, examples or models, are essential to *copia* (68-75). There are two broad types of *exempla*: fabulous and historical. These stories are how we *show* rather than *tell*, as the classroom adage goes. In interviews, it is often more forceful to *show* how we teach first year writing, for example, by sketching out a successful course we've taught (operating in Erasmus' historical mode). Likewise, it is often necessary to imagine ourselves teaching a new or needed course at the prospective institution (or the fabulous mode). It is necessary to yoke together the theoretical precept (such as being 'student centered') with a specific and telling moment. Students need to

practice this point; they need to develop *copia* of ideas (or the specific *exemplum*) and *copia* of words (or how to deliver it).

The only way to teach students (and teachers) to develop *copia* is through repeated practice in conditions that most closely approximate those of the interview itself. Hume and Semenza are absolutely correct that it is incumbent on the job candidate to develop his or her mental and verbal repertoire, or *copia*, as thoroughly as possible. But I argue that as advisors and mentors, we need to help students develop flexible habits of mind and mental storehouses of ideas and words that they can access on the fly. That kind of preparation takes time and effort, developed over the course of months and months. It takes years to write a dissertation, and it takes much concerted effort to learn how to deliver the knowledge of the dissertation. The "Sample Syllabus for Delivery Preparation" projects a course in which students can work toward repeated practice in conditions that approach the academic job interview. Conditions that, in other words, allow the occluded genre of interviewing to seem less obscure and more comfortable.

Conclusion: Reuniting the Spoken and Written

The first century rhetorician Aelius Theon (2003: 6), in his treatment of the *progymnasmata* (or elementary training exercises in oratory), knew the value of practice in helping students learn to write:

But just as it is no help to those wanting to paint to look at the works of Apelles and Protogenes and Antiphilus [ancient Greek painters] unless they themselves put their hand to painting, so neither the words of older writers nor the multitude of their thoughts nor their purity of language nor harmonious composition nor urbanity of sound nor, in a

word, any of the beauties in rhetoric, are useful to those who are going to engage in

rhetoric unless each student exercises himself every day in writing.

Teachers of writing have no trouble recognizing the wisdom of Theon's advice: clarifying

unfamiliar genres and hands-on experience are essential for effective writing instruction. We

seem to have thoroughly internalized these lessons when it comes to the teaching of writing.

However, other genres (such as the interview) remain occluded to our students—they rarely see

an interview, and they even more rarely practice one. Like learning to write, learning to

interview requires that we demystify the genre and that we provide hands on experience. As

Theon knew too well, students can only learn so much via imitation; they need extended

practice.

Removing the occluded nature of interviewing can also reinvigorate speech studies as a

vital historical component of rhetoric. As English studies broadly, and rhetoric and composition

specifically, embraces more fully its mission of writing studies, we are in real danger of losing

our roots in orality. The Greek root of "rhetoric," *rhema*, is literally "that which is spoken." From

that Greek root is derived the Latin *verbum*, the English *word*. The centrality of *words* in what

we do and what we have always done—spoken words, written words—should compel us to

reconsider the importance of delivery in our professional lives. In the current job market climate,

students need every competitive advantage possible. If the interview remains the major obstacle

for securing a tenure track job in academia, then students need training in it. The occluded genre

of interviewing needs to be opened up. Students need to develop flexible habits of mind and

modes of expression that they can bring to the interview and to the job they secure. That training

can grow from the dynamic, adaptive programs the ancients developed for their rhetors-in-

training. Like our graduate students in the twenty-first century, ancient rhetors had to be able to

express themselves in multiple modes.

Notes

[1] See the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's program in Writing Studies, Syracuse's program in Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, and Duke's Thompson Writing Program as representative examples.

[2] For ease of use, I will use the phrase "English studies" in this essay, with the acknowledgment that there are often vast differences between English departments housing rhetoric and composition programs (in which the primary object of study is frequently imaginative literature) and dedicated rhetoric and composition/writing studies departments.

[3] For delivery as curricula, see Yancey 2006. For digital media, see DeVoss and Ridolfo 2009 and Brooke 2009.

[4] This essay does not necessarily consider undergraduate students or MA students oriented toward industry or alt-ac jobs, although the principles explored here can be modified for interview preparation outside of the academy.

[5] Many responses to the floundering academic job market are represented in *Pedagogy*'s Cluster on Graduate Education in English Studies in issue 15.1 (2015).

[6] Henschel, S., & Meloncon, L, "Of horsemen and layered literacies: Assessment instruments for aligning technical and professional communication undergraduate curricula with professional expectations." *Programmatic Perspectives* 6.1: 3-26, p. 22. Retrieved from http://www.cptsc.org/pp/vol6-1/henschel&meloncon.pdf

[7] For more common interview questions, see Cheryl Ball's useful online resource: http://jobs.ceball.com/interviews/questions-they-might-ask-you-at-mla/

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