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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Joann R. Johnson for the Master of Arts in Speech Communication presented May 5, 1986.

Title: The Treatment of the Concept of Impersonation Within the Art of Oral Interpretation: A Contemporary Perspective.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

Robert W. Vogelsang / Chairman

Theodore G. Grove

LaRay M. Barba

This historical survey of speech journals and sixty-one textbooks covers seventy years of the treatment of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation, from 1916 to 1985. The purpose of the study is to investigate the concept of impersonation, synthesize the material for the benefit of contemporary thought, provide clarity for the student, surveying scrutiny for the curious,

and finally, provide additional contemporary knowledge in the light of "a gradual evolution of teaching methods."

The essential questions are:

1. How has the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation been treated in the past?
2. How is the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation treated in the present?
3. How should the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation be treated?

The study begins with the Maud May Babcock-Rollo Anson Tallcott 1916 debate over the proper definition of the concept in relation to the social background. The term is traced through the course of seventy years and in the interim focuses on changes of attitude and teaching method toward the concept of impersonation with regard to the importance of the social eras. Three time periods are researched: Between the Wars (1916-1941), Encompassing World War II (1941-1960), and Contemporary Period (1960-1985).

The contemporary period is enhanced with the inclusion of questions and the responses from twelve contemporary oral interpretation authors for mid-1980's comment.

The significance of the study rests in the discovery that the term "impersonation" has had a consistent lack of consensus as to a workable definition in the Art of Oral Interpretation for the last seventy years. The study

further reveals the trend toward a gradual evolutionary decline in the use of the concept.

The findings positively show that (1) present lack of enthusiasm for the concept of impersonation is firmly embedded in tediousness with the subject, and (2) there are problems with confusion and stress when trying to incorporate the concept in classroom instruction. The resultant trend is toward avoidance of the concept for discussion.

The conclusion is drawn and the recommendation forwarded that a concerted effort be undertaken to retire the seventy-year-old term "impersonation" to the annals of Oral Interpretation history as it now stands in Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives (David W. Thompson, ed., New York: University Press of America, 1983). A course of action is suggested with this recommendation.

THE TREATMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF IMPERSONATION
WITHIN THE ART OF ORAL INTERPRETATION:
A CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

by
JOANN R. JOHNSON

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Portland State University

1986

TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH:

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of
Joann R. Johnson presented May 5, 1986.

Robert W. Vogelsang, Chairman

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APPROVED:

Theodore G. Grove, Head, Department of Speech Communication

Bernard Ross, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

To D. J., and My Mentor

To achieve--keep your heart on your work,
your mind on your task, your eyes on your
goal, and go!

Harry C. Mabry

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My gratitude and thank you also extends to the Library Staff at Portland State University for their competent and

cooperative methods in the Inter-Library Loan system to secure textbooks from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, California, North Carolina, and Utah for this research project.

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My indebtedness and thank you also extends to family for support and effort to locate out-of-print textbooks in Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon.

One basic stimulus for inspiration toward this project was gained while reading Stanley A. Weintraub's dissertation (Columbia University, 1953), when he chose to exclude the concept of impersonation from the comparison of Oral Interpretation textbooks.

All reaffirm my conviction--but for you, there goes I.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This descriptive study of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation is the culmination of the writer's personal involvement during a class assignment in a course in Advanced Oral Interpretation.

As a student I learned all too quickly that a fine line exists between oral interpretation and acting. Where one begins and the other ends is a point of conjecture contingent upon the degree of impersonation. I was cautioned during class instruction not to "go too far" with the interpretation. In fact, it is this inhibiting portion of oral interpretation that tends to promote the effect of putting the student between a "rock and a hard place." Yet, the overall appraisal for the interpretative assignment was well received with the thought-provoking remark, "Just like Hal Holbrook." This evocative remark instigated and instilled an obsessive desire to trace the concept of impersonation within this art form in order to clarify an overwhelming feeling of confusion. Just where does impersonation fit into the Art of Oral Interpretation? The question had to have an answer.

Today there exists a tendency toward a liberal outlook within the area of oral interpretation and this may be an indication of a trend which could affect the concept of impersonation. Support for this liberal trend is advanced by Wallace A. Bacon, a leading educator in the field of oral interpretation. Bacon believes that the rigid rules are loosening.¹ Also advancing this trend, and indicating softened attitudes, are two recent textbooks, Roles in Interpretation and Oral Interpretation.² But, more importantly, the student who retains this liberal outlook but desires to seek information from earlier texts, will discover only confusion.

When the student takes time to peruse the textbooks, including the early copyright dates, that student soon becomes aware of the awesome fact that over fifty years of confusion has existed among professional speech educators concerning the concept of impersonation within this art form.³ It is this "confusion" that motivates the writer with the impetus to pursue the subject.

With persistent, periodic appearances, the concept of impersonation becomes a study of speech educators trying to decide their approach to this concept by either defending their position or by simply avoiding the subject.⁴

It seems that over fifty years ago the concept of impersonation nestled very comfortably within the context of social structure and the element of time.⁵ Yet, through

the years, among speech educators the concept of impersonation has been jostled, coddled, ignored, and reviewed with some current indications of softened attitudes.⁶

This review is submitted in order to enlighten, clarify, and evaluate the concept of impersonation within the light of contemporary thought. In very large measure, this thesis is dedicated to the conscientious student, the solo performer, who is confused with the problem of impersonation as it relates to the Art of Oral Interpretation.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

A probing survey into the concept of impersonation is warranted for there is current evidence of confusion with the underlying question of creativity which affects the concept. In 1982, Eric E. Peterson and Kristin M. Langellier state in their article titled "Creative Double Bind in Oral Interpretation":

When theoretical elements such as "technique" and "spontaneity" are taken as distinct, the interpreter must choose one or the other approach to performance. If a performance is technical and mechanical, it cannot be natural and spontaneous, and vice versa. "Technical" and "spontaneous" describe two distinct styles or messages of the same logical type and are contradictory. An interpreter either follows a given technique and is not spontaneous, or performs spontaneously and ignores technique.⁷

Individuality exists in the study of performance of literature in oral interpretation. Some say an interpretation should be one's own expression of that interpretation.

Others say things such as a "student must both fully encounter the literature and hold back from fully encountering it in order to include the audience."⁸ It becomes a double bind and it is a problem so basic to oral interpretation that it deserves penetrating scrutiny with research focused on the concept of impersonation. But, there are also current sanctions from leading educators that justify this study. Both Isabel M. Crouch and David A. Williams from New Mexico State University and the University of Arizona respectively, encourage with enthusiasm a surveying focus on impersonation. They are both leading Speech Communication educators and intensely interested and involved in oral interpretation.⁹

David A. Williams states in his article "Impersonation: The Great Debate": "Indeed, impersonation has been cheered and leered, clarified and kicked, buried and born again."¹⁰ Williams believes that "no event, discussion, or dictum has changed or really clarified the question of acting versus interpretation or impersonation versus interpretation."¹¹ He also believes that the student interested in the problem of "interpretation versus acting or impersonation" should start with the year 1916 in which two leading educators of interpretation argued through the pages of a speech journal concerning this concept.¹² In order to become more knowledgeable about the concept of impersonation, Williams states that for the "academically avid . . . or

casually curious . . . the Babcock-Tallcott debate is the place to begin for twentieth-century comment."¹³ For the present writer, the word "curious" proves to be the incentive that provides the impetus for this project. But, Williams' next statement gives definite justification for the study:

. . . declare a moratorium on the use of the word "impersonation" in interpretation circles. We all have been guilty of reacting to the connotation, the stigma, or the word without objectively trying to determine whether it might be used for some literature and by certain performers.¹⁴

Jere Veilleux expressed his views about the confusion which exists by those who teach and write in the area of oral interpretation. Veilleux's essay titled "The Interpreter: The Nature of His Art," gives vent to feelings of involvement in a "tiresome question":

. . . interpretation vs acting. No one who has ever taught interpretation has not faced the problem; if the instructor does not raise the question, the student will. "When does interpretation become acting? How does it differ from acting? If interpretation is not acting, what is it?"¹⁵

John W. Gray believes that if there is a problem one should try to find answers:

. . . we must initiate research and find answers to questions which plague our discipline. In some areas we are making valuable headway but these studies and writings are few in number and are originating generally from the same sources.¹⁶

Gray also believes that one must view "events and relationships as 'dynamic, on-going, ever-changing, continuous.'"¹⁷

That view is further exemplified in Mary Margaret Robb's invaluable and enduring research project Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities: A Historical Study of Teaching Methods. Robb's final overall view that follows is indicative of the propulsion and, furthermore, provides a basis for the present writer's thesis: "Pressures from the academic environment and also from the world itself unite to produce changes in the educational process" with a gradual evolution of methods.¹⁸ This thesis embraces the foregoing view and finds evidence for support in the current 1983 edition titled Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives.¹⁹

Support for justification of this thesis can also be found in the indications of a current trend toward a change of attitude; therefore it would seem that the time is advantageous for a surveying focus on the concept of impersonation--the concept that has been lingering for a long period of time within the textbooks and speech journals. A review of the theses and dissertations reveals a paucity of current information concerning the concept of impersonation within the field of oral interpretation. It is a propitious time to proceed.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation with a surveying focus on a review of textbooks and speech journals from 1916 to 1985; to evaluate for the purpose of assisting current educators; to provide clarity for the student; to provide surveying scrutiny for the curious; and finally, to provide current thought for additional contemporary knowledge in the light of "a gradual evolution of teaching methods."²⁰

The essential questions are:

1. How has the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation been treated in the past?
2. How is the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation treated in the present?
3. How should the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation be treated?

RESEARCH METHODS

The research plan for this thesis is as follows:

- (1) Survey oral interpretation textbooks and speech journals in chronological order from 1916 to 1985. In this historical review (a) trace any attitudinal change relating to the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation, and (b) search for the change in teaching methods regarding

impersonation in the light of social context. (2) Contact by form letter the authors of the oral interpretation textbooks in order to discover contemporary thought concerning teaching methods and attitudes toward the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation.

DEFINITION

The first part of the definition for this descriptive study is taken from the 1968 edition of Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities: A Historical Study of Teaching Methods by Mary Margaret Robb. The second part is based on extrapolations from the current teaching methods set forth in three leading textbooks,²¹ and the remarks of a current educator.²² One should keep in mind that a working definition for the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation has been wrought with much difficulty throughout the years and this fact becomes apparent in the review of literature.

For purposes of this thesis "Oral Interpretation is defined as oral reading, with or without memorization, which has as its purpose communication of the intellectual and emotional content of literature to an audience" ²³ with consideration of convention and aesthetic principles as they apply to impersonation "in order to capture the essence and dimension of voice in the text." ²⁴

Chapter 1--Notes

¹Wallace A. Bacon, "The Dangerous Shores a Decade Later," in Richard Haas and David A. Williams, eds., The Study of Oral Interpretation: Theory and Comment (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1975), p. 222.

²Refer to Judy E. Yordon, Roles in Interpretation (Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1982), pp. 8-11; also Paul C. Edwards, "The Rise of 'Expression'" in David W. Thompson, ed., Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives (New York: University Press of America, 1983), pp. 547-548; see footnote reference to Charlotte I. Lee, coauthor Frank J. Galati, Oral Interpretation, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977).

³David A. Williams, "Impersonation: The Great Debate," in Richard Haas and David A. Williams, eds., The Study of Oral Interpretation: Theory and Comment (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1975), pp. 43-57.

⁴Chapter II refers to these positions.

⁵Chapter II refers to background information.

⁶See footnote 45 in David W. Thompson, ed., Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives (New York: University Press of America, 1983), p. 548.

⁷Eric E. Peterson and Kristin M. Langellier, "Creative Double Bind in Oral Interpretation," The Western Journal of Speech Communication, 46, No. 3 (Summer 1982), p. 244.

⁸Ibid., p. 251.

⁹Isabel M. Crouch, personal letter, November 21, 1983; also, David A. Williams, personal letter, November 29, 1983.

¹⁰Williams, "Impersonation: The Great Debate," p. 43.

¹¹Ibid., p. 43.

¹²Ibid., p. 44.

¹³Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁵Jere Veilleux, "The Interpreter: The Nature of His Art," in John W. Gray, ed., Perspectives On Oral Interpretation: Essays and Readings (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1968), p. 19.

¹⁶John W. Gray, ed., Perspectives on Oral Interpretation: Essays and Readings (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1968), p. 4.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Mary Margaret Robb, Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities: A Historical Study of Teaching Methods, rev. ed. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), p. 11.

¹⁹See Thompson, Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives as evidence of change.

²⁰Robb, p. 11.

²¹Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen, Communicative Reading, 3rd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972); Wallace A. Bacon, The Art of Interpretation, 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979); also, Judy E. Yordon, Roles in Interpretation.

²²Williams, personal letter, November 29, 1983.

²³Robb, p. 12.

²⁴Williams, letter.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

There are excellent reference sources available for an in-depth study of the facts prior to the emergence of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation.¹ The writer heartily concurs with the historical researcher, Mary Margaret Robb, that one must be knowledgeable about the past, to be aware of the story, and the connections that link the facts, and then commence with analysis and evaluation.² For this reason alone, it becomes imperative that a brief historical review of elocution be included in this thesis, to maintain continuity to the legacy, and to transmit additional support to the basis for the attitudes and the methods as they evolved within the social context.

ELOCUTION AND ORAL READING

It is important to realize that the overall intellectual climate both in England and in America toward the latter part of the nineteenth century was conducive to the elocutionary movement. This movement was propelled by the emphasis on science and nature.³ G. P. Mohrmann extends the view that "only when understood as a response to the

accepted epistemology and psychology of the era will the elocutionary movement fall into proper perspective."⁴

The intellectual climate of this era was the guiding principle for change; a process of change that was involved within society and the individual. Waldo W. Braden asserts the following:

Ordinary citizens--farmers, mechanics, laborers, and housewives--dissatisfied with the status quo, commenced to seek for themselves and for their neighbors a fuller life, a better society, and a wider understanding of the world beyond the horizon. Reform was in the air.⁵

Boyer Jarvis also notes that this reform had cultivated a "burgeoning interest in the teaching of oral interpretation as elocution"⁶

The same intellectual climate that indulged in science and nature had also nurtured and developed the emergence of two schools of thought which were emphasized in the foundational teachings of elocution. One school of thought believed that the mechanical approach was the ideal and the other emphasized the natural approach to oral reading.⁷

One may ponder the interchange of the terms "elocution" and "oral reading." Research reveals that the terms were synonymous until 1915. Robb explains:

Elocution is used more than any other term in the early history. It was always closely related to the training of voice and gesture, the delivery and technique of reading. . . . Oral Expression and Spoken English were used rather loosely. . . . especially during the period 1870-1915.⁸

It was during the latter part of the nineteenth century, amid the advances of science and industry, that the middle class, unleashed from tradition, awoke to the spirit of culture.⁹

In response to the cultural demands, the "mechanical" and "natural" theories of elocution were centralized in Boston with the formation of three schools of speech: The Emerson College of Oratory, The School of Expression, and the Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word.¹⁰ These schools became increasingly popular with the society during this time. Research concerning the three schools, by Edyth May Renshaw, notes that "there were five thousand students of oratory and elocution in Boston."¹¹

The literature includes numerous references to the founders of these three schools, Charles Wesley Emerson, founder of The Emerson College of Oratory, Samuel Silas Curry, founder of The School of Expression, and Leland T. Powers, founder of Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word. It is of particular interest that, as Renshaw discovered, "these three men and some of their colleagues studied with some of the same teachers at the same time." They had common knowledge of an influential form of speech training referred to as the Delsarte System of Oratory.¹² John W. Zorn notes that it was "the most popular single method or system of speech training in the United States from 1870 to 1920"¹³ Zorn states:

Under the cultural impetus of the Scientific Revolution, the "Delsartians" understandably emphasized the idea of elocutionary scientific method or system. Hence the popular appeal to private elocution teachers. . . . In the eyes of the general public . . . the exponent or specialist of the Delsarte system seems to have been as prestigious in his day as the teacher of the New Math or New Biology in our day.¹⁴

The Francois Delsarte system had arrived in the United States via an enthusiastic admirer: an "American actor and theatre manager" James S. MacKaye who spread the word, and "lectured on the Delsarte method extensively and profitably in the United States."¹⁵ Although the elocutionary system was absorbed in mechanical rules and science,¹⁶ it did provide evidence of Delsarte's background. According to Zorn, Delsarte had "devoted five years to the study of anatomy and physiology, to obtain a perfect knowledge of all the muscles, their uses and capabilities. . . ."¹⁷ Oscar G. Brockett also notes this overly mechanistic influence in the theater:

Eventually he [Delsarte] arrived at an elaborate scheme whereby he sought to describe how the feet, legs, arms, torso, head, and every other part of the body are used in communicating particular emotions, attitudes, and ideas.¹⁸

ELOCUTION, ACTING, ORAL READING, AND THE CONCEPT OF IMPERSONATION

In a confusing atmosphere of "mechanical" and "natural" theories of elocution, "culture" was extended to the small towns. The lyceum featured adult educational lectures and

the Chautauqua circuit held revival meetings accompanied by entertainment. The schools of elocution, during this time, served as channels for these gatherings by providing accomplished readers as part of their programs.¹⁹ However, it should be added that not all of the talent was channeled from these schools. Many times the talent was recruited from the local areas, and this often allowed for fair or poor performances. These inferior performances were due in part to the peripatetic instructors.²⁰ While there were many in the audiences who were completely satisfied with the entertainment and clamored for more, there were also those who looked upon the performances with overwhelming dismay as their ideals of art were swept away. Eugene Bahn and Margaret Bahn reveal the following:

Some performers lost all sense of form and style, sometimes overstepping the limits of reading by going into acting or vaudeville routines, or doing something to make the spectators roll with laughter, cry copiously, or scream in fear. This type of entertainment . . . did real damage to art, education, and oral literature by making them seem ridiculous.

Bahn and Bahn continue:

Material was often written to display extremes of emotion without any semblance of logical development, and absurdities of character and situation were presented without a true sense of comedy.²¹

Debasement of oral reading is the essence of the emphatic words used by Bahn and Bahn for this era: ". . . chagrin in its exaggerations, its relentless exhibitions, and its tedious books and artificiality."²²

Serving as a counterbalance to the problem of the stigma of embarrassment to the prestige of oral reading was a welcome attitude for the concept of impersonation. This was partially due to the founder of the Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word who became known nationally for his performances utilizing his special technique of impersonation. In addition, a large part of the acceptance was due to actors and actresses of renown who impersonated characters in plays, and well-known authors who impersonated characters from their novels.²³

The speech journals intriguingly reflect upon this era. Dorothy E. Coats reports on "The Masculine Repertoire of Charlotte Cushman." Words such as "daring," and "indomitable energy," suggest a glimpse of this actress and the impersonative quality of her character presentations.²⁴ Although Cushman was criticized by some people for her masculine role-playing, according to Coats, the following indicates that she was gifted for these parts:

Her tall gaunt figure and homely features were certainly no requisites for an actress, but the flexibility of her facial expression registered every passing emotion. Throughout her life she maintained an almost masculine virility which she strove neither to conceal nor diminish.²⁵

It was during Charlotte Cushman's later years that she gave many successful Shakespeare readings.²⁶

It was true that Cushman was well aware of the current emotional extremes of role-playing, but undaunted, she

gallantly pursued the independent route of "suggestiveness" for her portrayals.²⁷ Robb indicates the overall confidence as she reports that the complete composure of Charlotte Cushman was such that she "sat at a table and read from a book."²⁸ In this manner, she assumed the roles of all the characters.²⁹ Coats's research reveals that Cushman's voice was "hard and aspirate" and much "'too high for man's, [also] too low for a woman's.'"³⁰ It would appear obvious, then, that a complete synthesis had occurred in accord with society's taste, as evidenced by Charlotte Cushman's name having been inscribed in the Hall of Fame.³¹

However, research by Robb reveals that the concept of impersonation during this era was treated in still another fashion by including complete memorization, walking, and the incorporation of acting technique. Robb states:

The impersonator used properties and acted each character with fidelity to the stage. The exaggeration of "pantomimic bearings and vocal modulations" is explained as necessary to accent the opposition of characters to each other which had to be shown in moments and not in continuity as on the stage.³²

The close bond to acting should not be inadvertently overlooked. Indeed, it was the epitome of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation.³³ One has only to read about the famous novelist, Charles Dickens, during this time to discover an extremely compatible bond. Through his novels one finds a magnificent blend in terms of the essence of drama.

Without formal training in acting, Charles Dickens was seemingly drawn to the stage. His fertile mind served him well for writing novels as well as plays. Dickens's temperament was of an independent nature; he was unable to take stage directions. One may acknowledge that it was fortunate for society that he preferred to fulfill his acting ambitions through the reading of his novels. Theresa Murphy's article "Interpretation in the Dicken's Period," broadens this viewpoint and also comments on the style of performance. Rather than moving about, Dickens stood quietly before a lectern with one of his novels resting upon it and continued to enchant his audiences. Murphy extends this view:

As a reader Dickens was noted for his mobile face, one moment blank, the next crafty or mirthful. His eyes were most expressive. With great speed he could assume one role after another. He was noted for his rapid change in inflection, his use of pause, variety in pitch, the illusion he could create without the use of props, costume, or scenery.³⁴

Dickens always appeared with a nosegay in his left lapel which added to his meticulous appearance and overall warm countenance.³⁵ In addition to the care for his outer impression on the audience, Dickens immersed himself into painstaking care for the preparation of the impersonative performances. He worked several hours each day in a set, consistent pattern, in order to prepare himself for the programs: they were completely memorized presentations.³⁶ His mind served him well to attain rapport with his audience

while he retained a quality of complete composure. Melvin H. Miller reports that Dickens used humor with the presentations and that there was not a noticeable omission of even a moments waver due to "the lack of a word or the slipping away of [an] idea."³⁷

In 1867, the novelist Mark Twain was a direct observer to Charles Dickens's "effortless" performance. Twain records the following interesting verification:

Mr. Dickens read scenes from his printed books. From my distance he was a small and slender figure, rather fancifully dressed, and striking and picturesque in appearance. He wore a black velvet coat with a large and glaring red flower in the buttonhole. He stood under a red upholstered shed behind whose slant was a row of strong lights--just such an arrangement as artists use to concentrate a strong light upon a great picture. . . . he performed in the powerful light cast upon him from the concealed lamps.

Twain continues:

He read with great force and animation, in the lively passages, and with stirring effect. It will be understood that he did not merely read but also acted. His reading of the storm scene . . . was so vivid and so full of energetic action that his house was carried off its feet, so to speak.³⁸

These astute observations aided Mark Twain in his decision to be a platform performer, but he soon discovered that he was unable to emulate Charles Dickens. The elocution of the time did not appeal to him due to the appearance of artificiality and also reading from a book did not promote enough flexibility to capture an audience. The key to Twain's success in his readings was founded in memorization.

From that point his work continued to be edited and revised during the performances.³⁹ One of his favorite impersonative dialect stories was "His Grandfather's Old Ram." As suggested by Mark Twain "the reader may compare it with the story as told in Roughing It, if he pleases, and note how different the spoken version is from the written and printed version."⁴⁰ (See Appendix A.) Of course, Twain added that he meant the memorization of the platform story to be compared to the orally read version in Roughing It. In his autobiography Twain emphasized this feature as follows:

. . . in reading from the book you are telling another person's tale as secondhand; you are a mimic and not the person involved; you are an artificiality, not a reality; whereas in telling the tale without the book you absorb the character and presently become the man himself, just as in the case with the actor.⁴¹

Mark Twain was firm in his conviction. According to Kraid I. Ashbaugh's research, Twain discarded the book and prepared a manuscript which was written in "large characters, so that it could be read easily in dim light"⁴² The style of the performances was in the form of a nonchalant composure and sometimes lounging manner as he sought the feeling of naturalness, in order to gain rapport with the audience. In spite of an indifference to the audience, they were, according to Ashbaugh's report, held by "the grip of a controller of men."⁴³

Twain had long practice in the use of control--long before he had started the lecture circuit. This point is

particularly emphasized in Alan Gribben's article "It is Unsatisfactory to Read to One's Self: Mark Twain's Informal Readings."⁴⁴ According to Gribben, Mark Twain was adept at rousing the listener's interest with the stressing of words and the use of that "slow, deliberate speech." The characters in the story were symbolically acted with the aid of Twain's gesturing hand-held pipe. In his own way, Twain was able to create the illusion of sharing.

When Mark Twain was performing abroad with his readings the audiences were captivated by his apparent ad-libbing and confidential indulgences of his inner self.⁴⁵ His performances were complimented in return with the world's admiration, love, and respect for him.⁴⁶

A few important clues to Twain's success that have direct bearing upon the concept of impersonation, are to be found in his autobiography. These clues concern the shadings of delivery to achieve the effect of naturalness. Twain openly discusses fictions in oral presentations as he writes the following:

I mean those studied fictions which seem to be the impulse of the moment and which are so effective: such as, for instance, fictitious hesitancies for the right word, fictitious unconscious pauses, fictitious unconscious side remarks, fictitious unconscious embarrassments, fictitious unconscious emphases placed upon the wrong word with a deep intention back of it--these and all the other artificial fictive shades which give to a recited tale the captivating naturalness of an impromptu narration can be attempted by a book reader and are attempted, but they are easily detectable as artifice, and . . . they only get at the intellect⁴⁷ of the house, they don't get at its heart; . . .

In addition to this, Twain ascribes to the use of the pause as a plaything in order to control the audiences' reaction--the "fictitious unconscious pauses." He enlarges on this view:

. . . the pause--that impressive silence, that eloquent silence, that geometrically progressive silence which often achieves a desired effect where no combination of words howsoever felicitous could accomplish it.⁴⁸

Twain notes that he considers the requirements of the story and of the audience and then with clever manipulation he lengthens the pause or shortens the pause and if "the pause was right the effect was sure; [but] when the pause was wrong in length . . . the laughter was only mild, never a crash."⁴⁹

Indeed, the entertainment value of Charlotte Cushman, Charles Dickens, and Mark Twain's impersonative performances won overwhelming approval from society. These famous personages serve to exemplify the styles of performance for the concept of impersonation. It was solely a matter of dependency upon the individual preference, to gain ovation. Within the academic setting, however, these representative types of presentations, including the elocutionary ones, provoked a flurry of controversy and confusion among the educators. The concept of impersonation became enveloped in a clouded, declivitous position. Usually one cannot specifically denote within the discipline of scholarly pursuit the genesis of a course of action;⁵⁰ yet, one cannot

fail to discern that the turn of the century was a period of adjustment. The formation of guidelines, for the area of speech within the universities, was a vital concern.

ELOCUTION, ACTING, ORAL READING, AND THE
CONCEPT OF IMPERSONATION WITHIN
THE ACADEMIC SETTING

Many of the instructors involved in the formation of the newly organized speech departments had background training from the schools of elocution.⁵¹ Perhaps the most impressionable feature that one gleans from this period is that the theories of psychology had advanced and partially merged with the mediaries of elocutionary instruction.⁵²

The School of Expression was the "natural" spring from which flowed the congenial psychological blend of "think the thought." Mind plus body would conform to the approved expression. There was also a reaction to the mechanical system which was too concerned in the outer "form . . . not in the spirit."⁵³ Amid overlays of elocution, acting, platform reading, and psychological aspects, the concept of impersonation was conveyed in classroom instruction in the universities. Thereupon, arose a controversial, eruptive atmosphere that presented itself in the form of a debate. This debate titled "Interpretative Presentation Versus Impersonative Presentation" was printed in its entirety in The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking in 1916.⁵⁴

Previously, in 1915, Maud May Babcock had addressed the problem before those in attendance at the outset of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking in Chicago. The speech was reprinted in 1916 in the speech journal and indicated the reluctance of the members to commit themselves to a position on the subject of impersonation. Babcock states:

From the reports of the Elocutionists' and Speech Arts association it would appear that the members of our profession are divided as to when and where to impersonate and when and where to interpret. At one convention it took three days to force a vote on a motion that the "Bugle Song" should be given subjectively and not objectively, that is, interpreted and not impersonated. Only a few members wished to place themselves on record by their vote--some probably hesitating because it might condemn their own practices, and others not voting because they were unconvinced as to which was the proper method. So the question seems, as yet, to be debatable.⁵⁵

Babcock defines interpretation "as the presentation of any form of literary material . . . without the aid of dress, furniture, stage settings, or of literal characterizations in voice, action, or make-up."⁵⁶ She believes that the audience must imagine through the aid of "suggestion." She continues by defining the concept of impersonation as an "exact, literal characterization in voice, action, and make-up, in realistic surroundings of dress, furniture, and stage settings." Furthermore, the impersonator lives in "flesh and blood." With an attitude of negation, Babcock felt that the concept of impersonation was "baneful to platform presentation."⁵⁷ According to her, the concept of

impersonation destroys "unity and harmony . . . since the mechanics . . . [made] it impossible to pass quickly and unnoticeably . . . from one character to another, . . . without distracting . . . the audience"58

Babcock emphasizes this objection because the audience became confused when the impersonator made transitions to other characters or promoted the exhibition of self as "imitators of bells, bugles, birds, or beasts" Mindful of the past criticism concerning exhibition of form, Babcock firmly believes that it was this route that had brought the "profession into disrepute with the thinking public."⁵⁹ At this point, one may note the fact that it was over fifty years ago that Babcock emphasized the crux of an ongoing problem as she made the following statement:

A question frequently arises in the mind of every earnest, honest student, as to how far one may go toward impersonation in an impassioned description or narration. So long as we remain the spectator, allowing the emotion to affect us as such, and do not become the participator, the illusion will be sustained. In other words, if the scene is held as if enacted, but we do not become an actor in the scene, we may allow our feelings and emotions full rein.⁶⁰

Three months later in 1916, a polite, but firm rebuttal to Maud May Babcock was printed in The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking titled "The Place for Personation" by R. A. Tallcott. According to Tallcott the solution to the problem of the concept of impersonation was simply to expand the term, thus:

The first type . . . interpretative reading; the second, impersonative reading (where only suggestive characterization is introduced); the third, straight personation; and the fourth acting.⁶¹

Tallcott explains that the expansion of the term would then make allowance for "voice and action" and comfortably include all types of literature. However, he did agree to Babcock's "definition of interpretative presentation," but, he felt that this definition should not be the only consideration for the interpreter. The suggestive characterization for the concept of impersonation would then be most effective in plays, novels, and dramatic monologues; whereas, "straight personation," according to Tallcott, would be reserved for "the monologue and soliloquy, [when] a great deal of action and handling of imaginary properties in pantomime is necessary."⁶² With an indication of interchangeable meanings, Tallcott records the terms "impersonation (personation)."

He concludes the article with a reverberating statement as follows:

If personation were something indecent, or positively harmful to education, there would be excuse for staunchly refusing to adopt it; but, on the contrary, it is being shown every day to be not only harmless but a very powerful means for stimulation to the appreciation of literature.⁶³

In 1916, six months later, Maud May Babcock's article "Impersonation VS. Interpretation" appeared in the journal.⁶⁴ The rebuttal to Tallcott retains the initial firm convictions which Babcock had presented in the former article,

"Interpretative Presentation Versus Impersonative Presentation." The favored term "suggestion" is reiterated as well as the stress which has been placed on the use of the concept of impersonation as an "attempt to embody the outside rather than project the soul" ⁶⁵ Babcock felt that the imagination becomes stirred with the use of suggestion; whereas the use of the concept of impersonation receives response only from the visual aspect. The article emphasizes the interpretation of literature, and the concept of impersonation is completely denounced.

Babcock expresses the concern that with the use of the concept of impersonation "the attention [is] directed to the person rather than the thought, . . . the mind of the audience [is] diverted from the what to the how." ⁶⁶ She indicates a firm conviction that literature is to be read with suggestion only and that impersonation is to be left for entertainment. ⁶⁷

Today the Babcock-Tallcott seminal debate rests in the pages of history and stands on record as a permanent reminder that there was not an agreement on the definition of terms. ⁶⁸ This omission of agreeable guidelines for the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation, persistently reflects within the textbooks and speech journals. Among educators, it is a singular matter of attitude and method combined with the societal background for the treatment of the concept.

BETWEEN THE WARS (1917-1941)

The seeds for cultivation of the Babcock-Tallcott issue were submerged in the social conditions between World War I and World War II. It is important to be aware of the overall view of this period. Within the designated years, society experienced the extremes of inflation in the twenties,⁶⁹ to the depth of depression in the thirties;⁷⁰ and Robb aptly comments that "it became necessary to pare down to fundamentals, . . ."⁷¹ In addition, science engendered the radio into the American home, and the advances in motion pictures nearly eliminated vaudeville and the theater,⁷² which in turn, also affected the platform performer.

Educators were forced to "adapt" and "change" in accordance with the credo of the social currents. It is not a surprise then, to detect a shift in emphasis for the teaching of the Art of Oral Interpretation during these turbulent years. The individual, the literature, and the environment became paramount in importance. The shift in emphasis is noted in one of the first textbooks for this era, and it bears upon the concept of impersonation.⁷³

In 1927, Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson were the coauthors of The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading, with the text organized as the authors state, "according to a simple psychological scheme."⁷⁴ These authors allow for student

individuality and also the individuality of the instructor.

Woolbert and Nelson emphasize individuality as follows:

For class purposes probably it will be advisable to follow this order in the main. But every teacher insists that his students are not only a class but a group of individuals, that the teaching of reading and interpretation of all subjects in the curriculum cries out for individual instruction. Accordingly while the system here offered suggests a certain order of presentation, still the ingenious and sympathetic teacher, in dealing with individual cases, will use his own emphasis to suit the needs of the individual.⁷⁵

The nature of interpretation, according to Woolbert and Nelson, admits to the fact that "tastes can differ as the poles" ⁷⁶ They also believe that the perceptive interpreter will recognize the taste and intelligence of the audience and in return, that "your own tastes and your own speech technique come back upon you to determine for you your own ability to entertain yourself . . . to place your own construction upon what you find on the page." ⁷⁷ Make the words live, the authors stress, but use no "his-trionic display, vocal gymnastics, or rare impersonative elaboration." ⁷⁸ Woolbert and Nelson acknowledge that a paradox exists in interpretation. Genuine feelings must be conjured, yet it is an illusion; thus the authors explain that "interpretation, even though it is best when it seems most honest, most sincere, most genuine, most heart-felt . . . is best when it is most artful, artificial, and . . . artistic." ⁷⁹

Woolbert and Nelson favor the view that distinctions are to be drawn between the concepts of impersonation, interpretation, and acting. These three forms are considered as art forms separated by the amount of activity involved and the lines of differentiation may be moved as one feels justified. The criterion to be considered is bound to "good sense and taste."⁸⁰ Woolbert and Nelson explain the differentiations as follows:

Acting uses the whole man; voice, arms, body, face--everything. In addition it may employ costuming, lighting, movement, and one's relation to other people on the stage. It is the fullest form of expression dealing with the reading of "lines." Impersonation is a little less full in its demands: it is acting with the omission of costuming, lighting, stage pictures. Interpretation in turn is impersonation with the omission of walking about, change of posture, and fullness of gesture and facial expression.⁸¹

One is able to compare the variation in the definition of impersonation as a contrast to the definitions in the Babcock-Tallcott debate. According to Woolbert and Nelson, the concept of impersonation may assume the median position between interpretation and acting. The authors offer as an example, "an old man with a weak back," and proclaim that the "impersonation falls flat unless . . . the actions--posture, gesture, and voice" are revealed.⁸² It is a matter of what the interpreter wishes the audience to see. Woolbert and Nelson believe that "impersonation is [the] attempt to make the audience believe they see and hear somebody not yourself."⁸³ In other words, someone that is not the interpreter.

The relationship between acting, impersonation, and interpretation are bound to one another. Woolbert and Nelson state, "Interpretation, especially when part of impersonation and acting, is . . . close, immediate, eye-to-eye, heart-to-heart, mind-to-mind, and soul-to-soul."⁸⁴ In relation to impersonation and interpretation, Woolbert and Nelson recommend direct observation of the actor and the technique that is used, then to employ the vicarious knowledge of the technique as follows:

. . . the interpreter, on the other hand, does not necessarily have to demonstrate all of the activity of the actor; but he ought to know it, and knowing it, he will be able to reveal better the character's proper muscular tensions⁸⁵

If one is concerned with the amount of action to use, the authors advise that one is to "'let your discretion be your guide.'"⁸⁶ Neither the views of Babcock nor Tallcott are fully paralleled with Woolbert and Nelsons' views of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation, but the close link to acting is retained and ample space is allowed for individuality.

In 1930, with a dedication to S. S. Curry, Gertrude E. Johnson submitted the revised 1920 edition of Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation.⁸⁷ This text is primarily composed of new literary interpretative selections to aid in the classroom instruction. Johnson directs the text to the "student's development": an individual task.⁸⁸ One is aware of the addition of new literature while it is

apparent that the major statements of thought, during this time, remain unchanged in the text. References are made to the overall improvement of the individual student as well as to the educators' "confusion in objectives in training."⁸⁹ She also poses the question that was current among the educators: "What shall be done with work in interpretation which is of an impersonative character?" Johnson addresses the problem and states:

It seems . . . there is no real agreement as to whether we shall stress form and manner of delivery in a course called "Interpretative Reading," or whether we shall stress certain activities having to do with the impression part of education, understanding of the material.⁹⁰

Johnson believes that bodily response is not hindered with the use of a lectern and that "there need be no repression in such response." She further believes that the tendency is "to act" especially with presentation of the monologue "where character and situation are strongly objective."⁹¹ The author advises memory of literature that is "of the impersonative" However, Johnson adds that "it [should] be noted that only a very small proportion of material falls under this type." Characters in plays, characters with obvious dialects and monologues are ideal for instructional material.⁹² However, the source of difficulty may rest in the student's ability. Johnson believes that "unless one is gifted naturally with the impersonative instinct . . . it is most unlikely that any amount of training

or coaching will make one successful in presentation of this sort."⁹³ She stresses that it is desirable "not to over impersonate; the interpreter must remain interpreter."⁹⁴

Johnson states:

As a medium of training, every student should be required to give impersonative treatment of . . . material. . . . Their impersonative powers should be developed in every possible way.⁹⁵

Extreme difficulty arises, Johnson believes, when the interpreter fails to distinguish that a selection "is to be an acted (impersonated) one or an interpretative one." But, the variety of selections cannot allow for set rules. Variations occur, and the first-person featured in a story, prose, or verse as well as monologue, submit to impersonative treatment.⁹⁶ Johnson notes the small percentage of bodily activity that is incorporated for instruction in the textbooks and she addresses the educators to "be alive to the need for finding a method of attack on the physical problem . . . that shall aim at the total response of the physical organism."⁹⁷ Johnson states"

There should be included in all practice . . . I do not mean that such practice should be confined to classes in acting or pantomime . . . some effort to increase bodily facility in all its elements, including facial response.⁹⁸

If one is in a position to judge the students, Johnson firmly believes "that more attention [should] be given to the spirit of the selection and less to the manner of the delivery, to the end that more naturalness and less artificiality may result."⁹⁹ She asserts that one of the

purposes of this text is to present literary material to aid the student, in order "to give adequate expression . . . [therefore] many of the artificialities with which interpretation is saddled may be stopped at the source."¹⁰⁰

In the text, Johnson includes a helpful reference list of authors and book titles to be selected for presentation when one desires a dramatic impersonation, a humorous impersonation, or child impersonations.¹⁰¹ The avoidance of excesses and cautious, tasteful performances are reminders during this time, and serve as reflective warnings of the elocutionary period. The concept of impersonation continues to remain a fertile area for discussion.

In 1932, Wayland Maxfield Parrish, author of Reading Aloud: A Technique in the Interpretation of Literature, reminds the reader that one should avoid "vulgar excesses."¹⁰² He believes that the premise of "good taste, in recitation . . . requires that nearly all [overt] responses be inhibited."¹⁰³ Furthermore, Parrish emphasizes that the "branch of interpretation which is called impersonation . . . includes acting."¹⁰⁴ Parrish states that it is solely dependent on convention:

It is conventional for the actor to appear in costume and make-up, and to make himself a part of the scene as conceived by the director of the play. He leaves little to suggestion, but acts out all the movements of the character whom he represents. But a reader does not, or need not, use such aids to expression. . . . But there is no essential difference between one kind of interpretation and the other.¹⁰⁵

Parrish notes that "the conventions of acting are well established, and may be learned from any one familiar with the ways of the theatre. But the conventions of public reading are uncertain and undefined."¹⁰⁶ He concludes that "it is impossible to lay down laws to govern in all cases the proper degree of impersonation, and the appropriate quantity of emotion and gesticulation."¹⁰⁷ Parrish includes in this text a plan for study, criteria for the impersonator, and selections for practice (see Appendix B).

Thus far, the educators have not been in total agreement and this becomes increasingly apparent in The Quarterly Journal of Speech--the vehicle of communication within the speech profession.

In 1934, Annie H. Allen comments, "If ever a term needed definition, it is surely the term impersonation."¹⁰⁸ Allen's article "The Impersonation of Plays" is a direct appeal for sanction of the use of the concept of impersonation. The advantages to the student would be beneficial, and Allen appropriately adds that it "involves no expense."¹⁰⁹ She states her definition for the solo performer of impersonation of plays to be inclusive of the following:

. . . every type of platform presentation of a play wherein one person, free from the book, takes all parts, not confining himself exclusively to vocal expression, but using action more or less freely.¹¹⁰

Embodied in a lack of guidelines, Allen's article proves to be the resultant response that was due to a fruitless search for "an extended statement of . . .

principles and rules"111 Allen's following statement infers that one may visualize the difficulty as essentially chasmal:

The technique of the impersonation of plays presents to some instructors and students a difficulty so bewildering that I am discussing it at some length, though by no means exhaustively, even at the risk of saying, for some, the unnecessary.¹¹²

One may further note that the inference alludes to the complexity of the teaching of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation during this time.

The educator, Argus Tressider, chooses to avoid the subject. The 1940 edition Reading to Others by Tressider emphasizes the educator's dilemma of disagreement with the "subject-matter [for] a course in Oral Interpretation."¹¹³ It is interesting to note that with every opportunity available, when writing about interpretation and acting, Tressider becomes one of the first authors who diverges from the common course of discussion: the word "impersonation" does not appear within the content of this text. There were apparent problems with the concept.

In an attempt to alleviate future problems with the concept, Gertrude E. Johnson, in 1940, compiled and edited Studies in the Art of Interpretation.¹¹⁴ She brought together the "controversial" problems in the study of interpretation, in which Part II is devoted to "Impersonation." Johnson notes the following reasons for the inclusion of the concept of impersonation within the textbook:

While many feel that the problems mentioned in this section are "old stuff" or "all solved," attendance at one declamation contest in almost any State will serve as proof positive to the contrary. Some advocate complete impersonation as the only desirable form of training, while others feel that no impersonation should be taught in a course in interpretation. Many teachers are still earnestly desirous of knowing what is meant by the term "impersonation" and are still asking what are its limits and when it is advisable.

Johnson continues:

While this section may not "settle anything," it does contain more collected viewpoints than have ever before been available in any one place, and both sides of the case are argued. It is our hope that the reader may be able to chart a clearer course and move with more assurance if he will study the following opinions.¹¹⁵

Johnson has intervened after a twenty-five year interval, to allow the reader the opportunity to peruse within this text--once again in the entirety--three of the 1916 speech journal articles that feature the Maud May Babcock-Rollo Anson Tallcott debate, and also the 1939 article written by Annie H. Allen. All of the articles have been reviewed in this thesis.

One of the other featured articles was written by an exponent of the Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word, Phidelah Rice.¹¹⁶ A student of Leland Powers, he was an extremely successful reader, well known for his technique in the use of impersonation.¹¹⁷ In the article, "The Art of Impersonation in Play Reading," Rice describes the unique technique of the art specifically as he had emulated Leland Powers, saying, it was purely in the mind. One step

beyond the actor, Rice explains that the technique seldom requires "a costume change, [and] . . . vocal, facial, and posture shift[s] [were] constantly employed."¹¹⁸ However, he indicates that the time-consuming practice to develop characterizations would prove to be a drawback to some students.¹¹⁹ In an insightful awareness, one can consider that the foregoing statement presents a practical focus for the educator to embrace when considering the concept of impersonation for classroom instruction.

An impartial balance of selected views allows Johnson to include in her book "Interpretation or Impersonation," which had been printed in the 1930 text Handbook for Teachers of Interpretation by Maud May Babcock. Basically, the attitude of Babcock is unchanged in the format and the stress is placed on a repeated appeal to show the "inner man," when one interprets for an audience.¹²⁰ The guiding words that the author relates for the reader to remember are: "Gumption--Common Sense."¹²¹ Johnson also includes three pages from the 1932 edition of Reading Aloud: A Technique in the Interpretation of Literature by Wayland Maxfield Parrish, already reviewed in this thesis, and which allows the reader, once again, to place into consideration the emphasized terms "convention" and "good taste."¹²² Another selection Johnson included is the essence of tradition.

Originally written in 1896 and alluding to tradition, "Personation and Participation" by S. S. Curry, includes the term "participation" to add clarity for the reader. Curry states: "The mind's attitude in speaking the quoted words may be called Personation, . . . speaking the subordinate clauses may be called Participation."¹²³ He explains:

One reveals our conception of a character and our identification with the processes of his mind and his modes of expression; the other shows our own feeling, our sympathetic or dramatic participation in the scene, our response not only to the character or characters, but to every event and situation.¹²⁴

The author asserts that "participation" is useful because it "is continuous, and applies to every form of expression." Curry also believes that "personation, on the contrary, must present a definite conception of a character."¹²⁵

Curry comments that the mode of the impersonator is one who is able to take the part of several characters while standing or seated and perhaps with a "chair . . . hat, coat, gloves, desk or table" He provides amplification to this statement and explains that the emphasis of differentiation between characters is a matter of the use of "exaggeration" with the "voice" and also "pantomimic bearings," but, there must be a balanced harmony.¹²⁶ The emphasis on the word "participation" fails to be repeated in the ensuing article by Gertrude E. Johnson, however one is allowed an extended view of the teaching situation concerning the concept of impersonation.

Gertrude E. Johnson introduces her viewpoint in this compiled edition under the title "Impersonation, A Necessary Technique," to appease the educators who felt that the complexity of the concept of impersonation would be simplified if it could be taught in either the Dramatic Art or the Fine Arts departments.¹²⁷ She draws attention to the fact that not all "colleges and universities . . . have . . . Dramatic Art nor . . . Fine Arts departments"

Furthermore, the format for impersonative training within these departments would be unacceptable. Johnson notes that there would not be "one theater set-up remotely interested in the field of interpretation per se"¹²⁸

The reason was one of logic. If the concept of impersonation was to be placed within the boundary of theater, it would be taught as "acting."¹²⁹

Johnson presents the views from the general conception of training to aid the student, and points out that the type of literary selection is the determinate factor for the presentation of either complete impersonation, partial impersonation, or interpretation. She focuses on her perspective and asserts:

In complete impersonation we do for and before an audience for them to watch as they watch a play.
 In partial impersonation we do for and to them,
 and in interpretation . . . we do with them¹³⁰

Johnson distinguishes the use of complete impersonation with the presentation of plays, monologues, or selections that feature one character. When more than one character is

to be presented, she believes that "this type of presentation presupposes . . . dramatic instinct . . . skill and continued practice . . . that the techniques . . . may be mastered."¹³¹ Johnson incorporates "complete impersonation (acting)" for identification of the term.

The term "partial impersonation" is reserved by Johnson for use in monologues that do not refer to the requirements of the stage, and yet a character speaks. The distinction is in the direct, addressed approach to the audience. In both recommended approaches, she refers to "moving about" either to relate characters, or "as a 'character' should move"¹³²

The interpreter, on the other hand, does not completely assume characters or move as on a stage. Instead, the audience assumes the scene in the use of imagination, and as a result of the interpretation.¹³³ Although the statements by Johnson indicate affirmation and direction for the use of the concept of impersonation, one is able to perceive the basis of the academic problem with the ensuing remarks from Walter Bradley Tripp.

Inclusion of the article, "Impersonation Versus Interpretation" by Tripp, is an effort to provide "common ground" within the speech profession, or, that purports "to effect a compromise."¹³⁴ Tripp acknowledges that the use of the concept of impersonation is an individual judgment and that the difficulty rests upon one's subjective interpretation

of the subject matter which ultimately results in a variance of opinion. The problem is defined as the amount of impersonation to use for characterization in an interpretation. Tripp believes that the solution to this dilemma is dependent upon "the right relation of three factors entering into combination--speaker, subject, and hearer."¹³⁵ The ability of the speaker is a prime factor. Tripp assuredly advises:

If the pupil has but little ability to impersonate well (and it should clearly be understood that this is no criticism of the pupil), reduce the percentage of impersonation as low as possible . . . or . . . eliminate it altogether. Even a mediocre interpretation is infinitely better than a bad impersonation.¹³⁶

The potential of the subject matter is the second factor for consideration by the student. Tripp suggests the following:

. . . purely subjective literature as being less adapted to a high degree of the impersonating quality, even though dealing directly with characters. On the other hand, certain types of vivid narration, in which the human element plays a strong part; humorous material which appeals to us through a keen sense of the personality and idiosyncrasies of character . . . all are capable of, and adapted to . . . impersonation¹³⁷

The possible bias and intolerance of the audience, is the third factor, and Tripp maintains that the "conditions of the occasion--environment, time and place . . . are to be considered." Tripp concludes the article with the belief that the decision for the use of the concept of impersonation is to be firmly placed upon "common sense, good taste, and an appreciation of one's own ability"¹³⁸ One

may note with interest the repetition of the terms "common sense" and "good taste" in the article and the stress that the author places upon both the instructor and the student to be equally responsible and aware of ability and the place for the use of the concept of impersonation.

The final article that Johnson includes in the text, adds not to the thesis statements concerning the academic setting and the educators' views, but one may infer, is simply to offer the opinions of a poet. In the article "Poetry as a Spoken Art," Amy Lowell expresses the view that one must not confuse the impersonator with the oral reader. Lowell believes that the solo impersonator uses the actors approach, however, when one is reading, "one must not act."¹³⁹ It is interesting to put the ideas of a poet in with the debate by academicians. Lowell states:

Art has fashions; or if you prefer the term as more dignified, it is subject to the law of evolution. Differences are constantly being evolved; some are real changes, some only samenesses with a twist to them.¹⁴⁰

The concept of impersonation continued to be a source for discussion surrounding divergent views. Individualism was an obvious aspect. The problem remained unresolved and continued into the next era.

ENCOMPASSING WORLD WAR II (1941-1960)

One should be tolerant of the fact that social conditions and the inevitable evolutionary changes of teaching

methods are bound together in a slow process, and that there is a lack of an abrupt line to indicate change. However, one must not overlook with indifference the phenomenal growth that occurred in the college enrollments nationwide at the beginning of this period. The former military students had deferred their educations and they were older. Robb believes this time was "a period of self-appraisal and self-analysis for [the] educators."¹⁴¹ The speech departments diversified offerings as a direct response to the students' desire for specialized training in order to have lucrative positions in life.¹⁴² Bahn and Bahn enlarge upon this view by referring to the growing positions in the fields of radio and television during this era:

Of the utmost importance was good diction, . . . the microphone magnified every error. . . . Certainly the popularity of radio in the twentieth century brought a new challenge to the art of interpretation.¹⁴³

While radio emphasized voice quality, television brought a visual aspect to be considered. Bahn and Bahn point out that "with the advent of television, another adjustment had to be made; once more the performers were seen as well as heard."¹⁴⁴ The point is equally applicable to the popularity for the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation. Robb asserts that this period was a time of dilemma for the educators: "a process of self-development for the 'good life' against a materialistic philosophy . . . that every graduate be prepared

to make a good living."¹⁴⁵ As a contrast, one may note with interest the alignment of the textbooks with the reflection upon the past elocutionary period rather than in relation to the impending social background.

One such text, published in 1941, Literature As A Fine Art: Analysis and Interpretation by Cornelius Carman Cunningham, refers to the elocution period.¹⁴⁶ Cunningham writes from the aesthetic viewpoint. The chapter titled "The Technique of the Literary Artist," is emphatic when Cunningham impresses the reader in bold type: "NO SINGLE PART, PHASE OR ASPECT OF IT SHOULD CALL ATTENTION TO ITSELF FOR ITS OWN SAKE!"¹⁴⁷ Cunningham precedes this exclamatory sentence with words of warning concerning the excesses of the impersonators that they "resort to various artifices, including stage-settings, costumes, posturizings, outward gesturings, and the performance of diverse vocal feats." These excesses, Cunningham believes, are the sources that tend to reduce "oral reading as being at its worst a mere stunt and at its best a poor substitute for acting."¹⁴⁸ The basis for criticism of oral reading, Cunningham believes, stems from these performances. He substantiates this thought with the following statement:

Probably many of those who say that literature should not be read aloud base their feeling upon the experience they have had in listening to--or, more accurately, looking at--the performances of these flagrantly bad artists.¹⁴⁹

Cunningham continues in this tone and places the emphasis upon the word "subordination": that the artist may be an "undisturbed projection of the content of his art" ¹⁵⁰ For this thesis, it is of interest that Cunningham chose that the word "impersonation" not have a place of reference in the Index.

A second edition of Reading Aloud by Wayland Maxfield Parrish was revised and published in 1941. Parrish states in the Preface:

Nor have I found any reason to alter the plan, the method, or the approach to interpretation originally presented. The numerous users of the book who have been kind enough to give me their comments and criticisms on it have not suggested any such change. ¹⁵¹

However, Parrish explains that "I have made more or less extensive revisions of Chapters . . . XIV" ¹⁵² This chapter is titled "Impersonation and the Art of Interpretation." Both the 1932 edition and the revised 1941 edition retain the subtitle "The Relation of Reading to Acting," in the chapter titled "Impersonation and the Art of Interpretation." Deliberate revision of sentence structure for clarification adds support to this thesis.

It is important to note that Parrish found it necessary to revise a sentence in the 1941 edition with obvious nuances for the progressive clarification of the concept of impersonation. On close examination one may detect the differences between the following sentences, in which the 1932 edition states:

Elaborate and somewhat artificial distinctions have sometimes been set up between reading and impersonation, and between impersonation and acting, as if they were quite distinct arts. But it must be apparent that they differ not at all in the means by which they imitate, or the method of their imitation, and only slightly in the objects which they represent.¹⁵³

In the 1941 edition Parrish states:

Elaborate and somewhat artificial distinctions have sometimes been set up between reading and impersonation, and between impersonation and acting, as if they were quite distinct arts. But it must be apparent that they differ not at all in the means by which they imitate, or in the objects which they represent.¹⁵⁴

The slight shift in emphasis becomes more apparent with the inclusion in the 1941 edition of the subtitle "The Reading of Plays" in the chapter "Impersonation and the Art of Interpretation." Parrish emphasizes in this edition, the differences between reading and impersonation and between impersonation and acting as solely dependent upon the term "manner." To clarify this statement, Parrish believes that "this difference arises from the fact that the reader is not a part of the scene which he presents." He elaborates on this point:

Interpretative reading implies (1) a work of literature, let us say, a play; (2) a hearer, or group of hearers, an audience; and (3) an intermediary who clarifies, illuminates, and intensifies the work of literature for the audience. He is the interpreter. He is a teacher and a critic. He comments on the play. He shows us a scene, with characters in it--persons moving, feeling, and speaking. But he is not part of the scene. He is not one of the characters. Certainly he is not all of them by turns.¹⁵⁵

"The play," according to Parrish, "must take place in the hearer's mind." He further advises, in the 1941 revised

edition, that the response of the face, body, gestures and voice should be an extension of "sympathy with the character" ¹⁵⁶ But he reiterates that the projection of self "violate[s] both good taste and good art" Parrish focuses on this point:

Do not then try to set before our eyes what we ought to be allowed to keep in our mind's eye. Trust our imagination; don't destroy it. Let us keep the picture in our minds. Don't try to build it around yourself; don't try to put yourself in it. Try rather to project it; that is, to throw it out from you. ¹⁵⁷

The key, the author believes, is to hold a book in addition to full memorization of the material. The use of the book assures the interpreter and the audience that the focus is on the script. Parrish explains, "A book in your hand will be a constant reminder . . . that you are trying to display, not yourself, but a scene from a printed play." ¹⁵⁸ In concise terms, he continues:

Reading and acting are alike in method, subject matter, media, and effect. But they differ in manner, since the actor is in the play while the reader merely shows us the play. ¹⁵⁹

Clarification was the purpose for Parrish's revised text, and this was also true for an additional text that was brought forward during this time for classroom instruction.

In 1942 Margaret Prendergast McLean, author of Oral Interpretation of Forms of Literature, corrected the 1936 edition of this text. One of the obvious features of the textbook is the incorporated use of the word "impersonation." One may discover the link to this occurrence in

the Acknowledgments to the text. McLean refers to Leland Powers and states:

My deep debt of gratitude is to the late Leland Powers of the Leland Powers School, Boston--one of the finest, most skillful, and most inspiring dramatic artists of all time--who gave me the basic and fundamental principles underlying the art of oral interpretation of literature, and who taught me how to apply those principles to given selections.¹⁶⁰

McLean believes that "much of our literature is fundamentally dramatic and must have the living voice and speech and proper bodily reaction to bring out its richest essence and its deepest truths."¹⁶¹ The terminology is explicit in the text when McLean relies on the use of the dictionary to define the term "impersonate." She emphasizes with a footnote reference to the definition that the use of an asterisk denotes the connection that she believes exists between impersonation and acting. McLean notes that "impersonate is used in accordance with the following definitions":

"To invest with personality. To assume or *act the person or character of." Webster's New International Dictionary.

"To represent under the form of a person. To take into or unite with, one's own person or character. To appear or *act the character of; represent the person, character or *actions of." The New Standard Dictionary.¹⁶²

In this edition, McLean extends helpful suggestions to the student for the presentation of stories. The general rule, she believes, is that one is to present no more "than a suggestion of characterization or impersonation . . . since there is great danger of overdoing it" Furthermore,

McLean advises that it is desirable "to impersonate too little . . . than too much."¹⁶³ She comments on the limitation for the use of the concept of impersonation to instances of "satire or humor" when one presents "orations, speeches, or addresses."¹⁶⁴ Specific instructions with teaching materials are given in this text and the use of the concept of impersonation is limited by exemplary rules that McLean wishes the student to follow. When one is presenting an essay, according to McLean, one is not to use the concept of impersonation.¹⁶⁵ In addition, a study of character is involved in the use of the concept of impersonation, but when one presents a ballad, McLean believes that "the fundamental purpose . . . would be lost if its characters were impersonated."¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, she comments on the depth of emotion concentrated within a lyric poem, but explains, "There should be no real impersonation in a true lyric."¹⁶⁷ According to McLean, one should suggest the characters within epics but restrict the use of impersonation.¹⁶⁸ In addition, she advises the use of suggestion with the presentation of monologues. McLean explains:

The more an interpreter can suggest a character by thinking his thoughts and experiencing his emotions, and then reveal them in the tones of the voice, the expression of the face, and the general bodily attitude, and the less he does of additional things, the better.¹⁶⁹

In the chapter "Dramatic Literature," McLean proffers a straightforward view that "the presentation of an entire play, from memory, by one person, in which all of the

characters are impersonated, [as] the most intricate and highly specialized--and undoubtedly the most difficult--form of oral interpretation of literature."¹⁷⁰ It was this form in which McLean gives due credit to Leland Powers as her instructor. Both McLean and Phidelah Rice confirm that Leland Powers' technique requires the audience to complete the scene. Within the discussion, McLean stresses the use of suggestion and "unimpeachable good taste and judgment."¹⁷¹

McLean embraces the concept of impersonation for discussion but, on the other hand, advisable areas are delineated in order to gain credence for an acceptable performance. By contrast, an obvious confusion occurs with the inclusion of a revised edition for classroom instruction.

The 1915 edition Interpretation of the Printed Page, by S. H. Clark, was revised and brought forward for educational purposes in 1940 by Maud May Babcock.¹⁷² The writer has arbitrarily placed discussion of this text in this dated position to ensure continuity of attitude as evidenced in two speech journal articles, and which becomes more pronounced in the textbooks. The revised edition by Babcock appeared in 1940 and was reprinted in 1945 and 1946. The honored value of the edition is enhanced with the inclusion of a tribute to Professor Clark in the Preface.¹⁷³

The revised edition is obviously obscure concerning the concept of impersonation. One may claim that the obscurity is due to an editor's error, but past history

allows that one may assume there is a submerged intention that is valid. The Index indicates that one may locate discussion of the term "impersonation" on page 234 of the 1946 edition, but with a "sleight-of-word procedure" it is discovered that the term has disappeared without a clue into new subject matter. Careful examination reveals that impersonation is to be located in the text, but under a subtitle several pages later in the chapter "Emotion." However, the concept of impersonation is not discussed in the chapter and only alludes to the thought that Babcock wishes the student to become involved in the expression of feeling.¹⁷⁴ She explains the extent of her revision in the Preface:

I have taken the liberty of changing many of the examples, of elaborating material which seemed necessary to make the text clearer, and or rearranging the contents to conform with present psychological practice. I have also added new material for examination.¹⁷⁵

Babcock continues with the comment that the conception is Professor Clark's. The text relies upon the earlier conception of oral interpretation and mystically imparts in the revision the elusive nature of the use of the concept of impersonation. However, the inclusion of the concept for discussion is solely dependent upon the attitude of the educator, but one cannot overlook that this attitude becomes far-reaching in scope.

Indicative of this trend, and submitted for illustration, are two articles that appeared in the February 1942 edition of The Quarterly Journal of Speech. Neither

The Lowrey and Johnson text, published at this same time refers to the concept of impersonation but it is a de-emphasized, limited reference. Sara Lowrey and Gertrude E. Johnson, coauthors of the 1942 text Interpretative Reading: Techniques and Selections, express concern for the educators who show dissatisfaction with teaching techniques. Both the student and the teacher, according to the authors, remain aloof to the technical means for attainment of a satisfactory performance.¹⁸¹ Reference to the concept of impersonation is not included in the Index however a brief reference is given to Leland Powers' impersonative treatment.¹⁸² In the chapter "Technique of Thinking for Interpretative Reading" Lowrey and Johnson quote several select pages taken from "impersonation: A Necessary Technique" in the 1940 edition Studies in the Art of Interpretation by Johnson. The authors, Lowrey and Johnson, cut the reprinted information in order to include only the discussion of the delineation of the actor's realm and the realm of the interpreter.¹⁸³ There is an obvious exclusion of the information by the authors concerning the concept of impersonation, and the emphasis has been lessened. Lowrey and Johnson therefore emphasize that the two realms of acting and interpreting are within specific boundaries with definite lines of demarcation. They define the limits of interpretation by that for character representation; when one changes the voice, assumes different postures, and

article gives direct favorable or unfavorable reference to the concept of impersonation and yet the authors, Cornelius C. Cunningham and J. T. Marshman, are concerned with the bodily response of the oral interpreter which is related to the technique of impersonation. A general, prevailing attitude of omission is indicated.

The article "The Sepia School of Interpretative Reading," by Cunningham, refers to those who interpret with a manner of rigidity in the presentation and he stresses the achievement of a creative balance.¹⁷⁶ But the technique of the performance, according to Cunningham, should be submerged in an outward response that has been "awakened" from an "aesthetic perception."¹⁷⁷ In the same speech journal, J. T. Marshman appeals for focus on the literature and not on the interpreter in his article "The Paradox of Oral Interpretation." Marshman believes that the "reader should do nothing with voice or gesture for show." He states, "There must be no display of any kind."¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, Marshman indicates an all-inclusive concern for the audience, the student, and the educator when he reveals:

If we are to overcome audience inertia and find an emphatic response, it will be necessary for every student and teacher of oral interpretation to develop a synchronized mental and physical technique without making hard and fast rules, for standardizing an art tends to mar the art.¹⁷⁹

Marshman further substantiates the omission of the concept of impersonation when he states that "mental and physical techniques are one"¹⁸⁰

particular traits of the characters, one should be especially alert to the fact that the audience may divert attention to the performance and not the content of the literature that is presented. Lowrey and Johnson enlarge upon this point of view stating the following:

The broader the reader's characterizations, the nearer he approaches the technique of acting or impersonation. . . . As long as the reader's concentration is on picturing the characters to the audience, reflecting what he sees and hears, sensing in the muscles as he imagines the characters in the situations described by the author, the more likely he is to read effectively.¹⁸⁴

Lowrey and Johnson believe that the interpreter "reacts" rather than acts. In relation to this, the authors also assert that actors, impersonators, and interpreters benefit from exercising a simulated, rhythmic performance of the attributes of a character, but for the actual presentation, the interpreter should reduce excessive action.¹⁸⁵ The key, they explain, is for the interpreter to retain "the point of view of sharing reactions with the audience and not of performing . . . for the audience." When depicting characters, the authors suggest the use of an "off-stage" focus which visualizes the scene on the wall in back of the audience.¹⁸⁶ The warnings of excessive action, according to Lowrey and Johnson, promote the student's self-conscious, rigid performance; whereas they believe that "flexibility of form and spontaneity of expression may at times justify informal bearing and literal actions."¹⁸⁷

Severina E. Nelson, coauthor of The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading revised the 1945, third edition. The editor explains the circumstance in the Foreword:

Miss Nelson, for a number of years one of Dr. Woolbert's colleagues . . . has performed the task of revision wholly in the spirit of the original work. She has a clear comprehension and a fine appreciation of what her coauthor . . . [Charles H. Woolbert] would probably have done in improving the book had he been spared to co-operate with her.¹⁸⁸

Nelson explains in the Preface that the "fundamental philosophy . . . remains substantially unaltered." According to Nelson, the only changes are "for the sake of clarity and completeness of treatment," but the basic thought remains "sound and practicable."¹⁸⁹

Nelson no longer deems it necessary, in her revised edition, to devote attention in the Contents to the chapter titled "The Relation Between Interpretation, Impersonation, and Acting," as recorded in the 1927 edition. There is an obvious change of emphasis. However, Nelson retains discussion of the concept of impersonation under the italicized subtitle "Technique Involved in Interpretation, Impersonation, Acting," in the chapter titled "Nature of Interpretation."¹⁹⁰

Nelson provides in the 1945 edition, further clarity for the pronounced differentiation of the three arts while retaining the major thought of the 1927 text. She chooses once again to help the student understand the differences

that exist "by working in both directions from impersonation."¹⁹¹ It is interesting to note that Nelson no longer retains the statement from the 1927 text that "Impersonation is a little less full in its demands; it is acting with the omission of costuming, lighting, stage pictures."¹⁹²

She explains in the chapter titled "Nature of Interpretation" that the "projection" and "activity" are the differentiating features:

The interpreter . . . recognizes his audience in a more direct manner than either the impersonator or the actor. Consequently, in interpretation, there is a balance of communicativeness and projection,--an interplay of the two. Impersonation is more indirect and involves a more complete characterization; that is, the impersonator uses more facial expression and bodily gesture and exercises greater liberty in moving about the platform. The impersonator is trying always to imitate a person. We should never speak of the impersonation of a poem. Acting is the least direct of these three arts.¹⁹³

Nelson includes in the 1945 text, the exact published explanation of the impersonation of an "old man with a weak back," as it was printed in the 1927 text, but changes "reader" to "performer" in the 1945 text.¹⁹⁴ According to Nelson, the differentiation is solved between interpretation, impersonation, and acting when one views the three in terms of "projection and amplification of the voice and body," in order to relate to "the audience and the intention of the performer."¹⁹⁵ Included in this thesis for the purpose of comparison is the following statement by Woolbert and Nelson from the 1927 text:

There are in fact no hard and fast lines of demarcation among these three for the problem as to which of these to use is solved always in terms of the audience to which they are to be addressed and the intention of the reader.¹⁹⁶

Nelson changes this statement for clarification and in the 1945 edition says:

There are in fact no hard and fast lines of demarcation among these three, for the problem of how much projection and amplification of the voice and body are necessary is solved always in terms of the audience and the intention of the performer.¹⁹⁷

But she recognizes that they are different when she says that the instructor who has not learned proper methods of oral reading consequently lacks "good taste, not only in interpretation but also in impersonation."¹⁹⁸

The term "impersonation" retains a place of reference in the Index of the 1945 text.¹⁹⁹ The revised text by Nelson allows the overall point of view that impersonation remains an active area for discussion, but with subtle alterations.

A year later another author chose to de-emphasize the use of the term "impersonation." Jane Herendeen, author of the 1946 edition Speech Quality and Interpretation: Theory, Methods, Material, allows the student to read a concise definition with the reference "Impersonation" as recorded in the Index: "(assuming, or acting in the person or character of another)."²⁰⁰ Herendeen refers the term to the chapter "Problems of Interpretation," but in fact, the chapter only alludes to the term "impersonation" as she

explains the interpretation of individual characters such as "Mr. Dick in David Copperfield" or "Tennyson's 'Ulysses'" and more explicitly, characters in plays.²⁰¹ But when Herendeen devotes discussion to the problem of the portrayal of the opposite sex and encourages the student, she believes that he "may not express the opposite sex with literalism, but he will do better: he will through art create an illusion of it."²⁰² She chooses to discuss both "impersonation" and "pantomime" with the presentation of characters in plays, and the coalescence marked by the use of suggestion and incompleted action: "characters are compressed into the single personality of the reader."²⁰³ Herendeen refers to Leland Powers and states the following as an example of the overlays of discussion concerning "impersonation" and "pantomime":

Mr. Powers' art lay largely in impersonation. His rich tone was colored with subtle feeling. His pantomime was tempered for platform expression, but even when the action was not demonstrative it revealed the whole man in expression. As a persistent student of his material he commanded an all-pervasive empathy.²⁰⁴

Herendeen chose not to emphasize the concept of impersonation, but she did not omit the subject. Perhaps one can understand this attitude when a quiet resolution seemed to occur in an address given by Sara Lowrey in 1947. Lowrey used the title "Impersonation as a Style of Interpretation" when she addressed the Convention of the Southern Speech Association on April 11, 1947 and the same year it was

published in the September issue of The Southern Speech Journal.²⁰⁵ Although Lowrey stated that the title was given to her for discussion, she nevertheless gives ample support for the use of the concept of impersonation. She believes that "acting and impersonation are forms of interpretation." She further states that lines of demarcation cannot be drawn and that "there is a great deal of overlapping among these forms of interpretation."²⁰⁶

. . . the best acting is that which subtly reveals the mind or the spirit of a character. It would seem obvious then that an adequate style of impersonation would have as its objective the interpretation of the thoughts and feelings of a character. The putting on of outward forms seems to be missing the point whether one is acting, impersonating, or interpreting.²⁰⁷

The prevalent question of the time is asked: "How far should one go in the literal actions or movements of a character?" Lowrey answers the question liberally:

This is a question each reader must decide for himself as he considers the material and other elements of the total situation. The reader's own aptitude, skill and desire are contributing factors. So are the occasion and the room in which his performance is given.

She continues and explains:

There are few arbitrary rules, if any. There is good taste and bad taste; taste includes among other things suitability to the individual and to the occasion.²⁰⁸

A less liberal attitude and viewpoint is indicated in another text published in 1947 which includes a diagram of boundaries for the student to follow. Coauthors Lionel Crocker and Louis M. Eich include the diagram in their

1947 edition of Oral Reading.²⁰⁹ It was not a new concept to include diagrams for the student to study the boundaries in oral interpretation. Rollo Anson Tallcott had found it a useful device to support and illustrate his original 1916 views that were subsequently published in his 1922 text The Art of Acting and Public Reading: Dramatic Interpretation.²¹⁰ Tallcott's diagrams are provided for perusal in this thesis and may be studied as a comparison to the diagram which appeared in the text by Crocker and Eich twenty-five years later. (See Appendix C.) The diagram which Crocker and Eich include indicates that the authors believe that the range for impersonation varies between that of the public speaker and the actor and mediates within the realm of reading.²¹¹ (See Appendix C.) The use of the concept of impersonation, according to Crocker and Eich, is dependent upon "degree" and memorization. Memorized material has the feasibility for greater ease of flexibility in the use of the concept of impersonation; however, Crocker and Eich warn that "this type of impersonation is often carried too far." According to the authors "there should be little movement; for the most part the reader should sit or stand in one position." They judiciously warn that "it is better to err on the side of too little impersonation than on that of too much."²¹² They explain their views:

As we come to dialogue in prose and poetry and to plays read aloud, we are still in the realm of reading, but we are fast approaching the province of the actor.

We begin to impersonate another, not so fully as the actor does but, still, to some extent to assume a personality distinct from our own. The degree of this impersonation, how far toward acting we may go, is . . . a graduated progress.²¹³

This text suggests, with a footnote reference, that one may gain additional information by reading "The Art of Impersonation in Play Reading," by Phidelah Rice. Crocker and Eich also stress "restraint" and "control."²¹⁴ The authors expand upon their view in the discussion of the reading of narrative prose with dialogue, and they prophetically state that the student "will face the problem of impersonation"²¹⁵ They suggest a "speaking-reading conversational method" of presentation, and according to Crocker and Eich, the successful presentation is totally dependent upon that "[of] the degree to which you carry your impersonation of the characters of the story" They explain by the listing of three mutually dependent aspects: "(1) your native gift for mimicry, and (2) your freedom from book or manuscript. Most important of all . . . your ability to share the story with your listeners."²¹⁶ The use of introspection by the student, according to the authors, will reveal "limitations as to voice, stature, and personality."²¹⁷ This in turn will aid the selection of a piece of literature suitable for presentation.

Crocker and Eich emphasize that the task is not easy. They suggest the following when considering the selection of a play:

. . . a small number of characters is preferable. Too many make the problems of impersonation more difficult and add to the danger of confusion in the mind of the audience. Many readers prefer the dominant-character type of drama, in which one person is supreme and all other people and all the events revolve around the central figure. If this central character is distinctly set off from the others as, for example, by marked eccentricity, the task of the reader is greatly simplified.²¹⁸

The authors give consideration to the portrayal of characters and they suggest indicating characters by slight variations of characteristics in order to depict the changes. But, Crocker and Eich believe that "the problem of how far one can go in suggesting the voice and personality of a particular character is one on which the experts have ever been at loggerheads." They warn that one must not overstep the boundaries: "Suggest rather than act."²¹⁹ In the same tone, Crocker and Eich believe that the interpreter "comes perilously close to the realm of the actor" when presenting the character in a dramatic monologue, such as "My Last Duchess" by Robert Browning.²²⁰

One receives the impression that the concept of impersonation is indeed favored; that is, until Cornelius C. Cunningham's article, "Trying to 'Pos the Impossible'" was published in 1948. It is "simply impossible," Cunningham believes, to have one student depict several characters, and he gives vent to his attitude:

The teachers of Oral Interpretation who instruct students to "impersonate" the several characters in a play they are interpreting to an audience are wrong, deeply, profoundly, intrinsically wrong. They are

asking the students to "pos the impossible," to do something which, in the very nature of things, can not be done.

Cunningham continues:

To be the prisoner one moment and the chaplain the next, as the interpreter who uses the impersonative actors mode seemingly tries to be, is simply impossible, that is all. There the matter is at an end--a dead end, into which teachers of Oral Interpretation should cease to drive their students.²²¹

Impersonation cannot be accomplished because it is the mode of the actor, but Cunningham firmly asserts that it is "one kind of interpretation": meant for the stage. The solution to the problem according to Cunningham, is to use the overall view of "interpretative-reader as artist" and to allow it to evolve around another view that "suggestion takes the place of personation."²²²

In 1950 Margaret Robb reported the results of a survey in "Trends in the Teaching of Oral Interpretation." Robb states that "there are also courses in impersonative reading, [and] dialect reading"²²³ She reveals the information from the perusal of catalogues and from contact with the educators. There is a tendency for this article to create within one the sense of a surge of energy and expansion. But according to Robb, "Although every teacher is convinced that oral interpretation has much to contribute, there is a difference of opinion as to what the major emphasis should be in teaching it."²²⁴ This statement is allied to a footnote reference in the 1952 textbook Interpretative Speech by Lionel Crocker. In the text Crocker

chose to include a footnote reference to Gertrude E. Johnson's Studies in the Art of Interpretation for the student to review the chapter concerning impersonation in order that an understanding be gained from a wider viewpoint.²²⁵ In the footnote Crocker states, "There is no more controversial topic in the field of oral interpretation than this one."²²⁶ The topics listed for discussion are Interpretative Reading, Impersonative Reading, Straight Personation, Acting.²²⁷ Borrowed from the past, in the realm of twenty-eight and thirty-five years, and given a slight twist in meaning, Crocker pursues explanation of impersonative reading, and intriguingly links the information with the popular stage, screen, and television star, Charles Laughton.

With a congenial blend, Crocker asserts that "When we mingle interpretation with impersonation we have impersonative reading." He states the following:

It is possible when there is conversation in the passage to be read for the reader to indicate by gesture, posture, and voice another character for the listener to imagine. Charles Laughton has delighted thousands by his impersonative reading in several seasons of reading from the public platform. His tours were tremendously successful.²²⁸

Crocker continues:

. . . Mr. Laughton. The man behind Bligh, Rembrandt, et al., appeared genial, informal, and unassuming on a studio stage before a plain curtain. He alternatively leaned on and bounced away from two tea tables pyramided one upon another and read, or rather pretended to read, most of his selections. He gestured with expressive hands, hemmed, hawed, cleared his throat,

snapped his fingers, shook horn-rimmed glasses, whispered, shouted, paused and raced in turn--and out of solid, sound, classic words and ideas came character, scene, and mood sharp with insight, humor, and unfailing fascination.²²⁹

Crocker is explicit with the use of the word "suggestion" and the ability of the audience to use their imaginations. "The difficulty arises," according to Crocker, "when we try to mix impersonative reading with acting." Dialects can be suggested, characters can be suggested, but Crocker believes that "the devices of the actor will interrupt the free flow of the imagination." He suggests a directional path, beginning with Interpretative Reading, to Impersonative Reading, then to Straight Personation, and finally to Acting. He believes that "the reader is no one but himself when he interprets." On the other hand, "The actor takes but one part and stays in that part during the entire evening."²³⁰

Crocker enlarges upon the viewpoint concerning the various degrees as follows:

The difference between the various degrees of impersonation and interpretation is in the relation of the audience to what is being done. When the audience reacts completely through its imagination to the word of the interpreter, who may be seated in his chair, we have interpretation. When the audience is helped by the interpreter by means of voice, body posture, and gesture and head movement to indicate the characters we have impersonative reading.

Crocker continues:

When the reader takes a position upon the stage and places his characters in definite relationship

to one another and addresses them on the stage as if they were there, trying to make the audience see the imaginary character which the reader may have suggested by means of a shawl or a hat, . . . we have impersonation. The next step is that of acting.²³¹

Crocker promotes and gives encouragement to the student for the use of the concept of impersonation, and for the author, it is an integral part of the teaching of oral interpretation.

In the 1952 edition Oral Interpretation, Charlotte I. Lee states, "Somewhere between acting and the oral interpretation of drama comes the art of impersonation, or monodrama."²³² Lee believes that "acting, mono-acting, and interpretation of drama--are mutually related, [but] each is a distinct art in itself."²³³ The student must choose which of the three lends most appropriately to the situation. But once the decision is made, according to Lee, the student "must be true to the principles of that art." The stressed area of concern for Lee is in the art of interpretation which evolves around the word "suggestion." With the concept of impersonation one uses some properties and Lee explains that in this event the interpreter's "contact with the audience is secondary."²³⁴ The use of the script for the technique of the impersonator lacks explicit guidelines within this text. Instead, Lee asserts that the interpreter "takes his script with him to the platform, and its presence establishes him immediately as a middleman who is re-creating characters and situations."²³⁵ She states:

The monoactor . . . concentrates on only one character; selects and uses appropriate details of properties, costumes, make-up, and scenery; and creates the other actors in imagination, while keeping the focus of attention constantly on the single character that is visible to the audience.²³⁶

One is able to discern from the textbook the fact that the performance must be in accordance with taste that evolves around the word "unobtrusive," for complete acceptance by the audience.²³⁷ The concept of impersonation is listed explicitly within the Index of the text, but the discussion concerning the concept is confined to the monologue for the presentation. The concept of impersonation is contrasted with "suggestion in interpretation."²³⁸ Lee chooses omittance of a link to bind characterization with the concept of impersonation. In the use of understatements for establishing characterization, Lee believes that the student "must remember that his aim is to suggest and not to assume character." This stance in the text covers the establishment of characterization of the opposite sex, old age, and the use of dialect.²³⁹ Indirect alliance to the concept of impersonation is given attention with guidance for the use of the reading stand and Lee believes that if "the interpreter uses no reading stand, he may move as he pleases for variety and relief, being careful only to avoid any movement that might become explicit for a character, or distracting to the audience."²⁴⁰

Lee helpfully guides the student so that characters may be analyzed. She believes that a successful performance

is accomplished by "being careful to suggest, by voice and body, both general traits, such as sex and age, and whatever individual differences the characters display." The basic question is, according to Lee, "'How far must I go to make this character--and his relationship to the whole play--clear and convincing for my audience?'"²⁴¹

The foregoing question should be retained, to blend with the educators' views as stated by Lee in the Appendix, which gives a brief review of the theories of oral interpretation. Lee believes that:

Most teachers today, when questioned about their approach to interpretation, are quick to say that they are "eclectic" in their method, by which they mean that they select what seems sound from the theories of the past, balance these ingredients against one another, and blend them into a modern philosophy. This selectivity of approach is an indication of strength and maturity.²⁴²

Furthermore, the interpretative presentation is a communion of voice, body, mental discipline, and projection, according to Lee, "in order that the material may call forth the desired logical, emotional, and aesthetic response from the audience."²⁴³

Gail Boardman, in the 1952 textbook Oral Communication of Literature, allows full reference in the Index to both the term "impersonation" and the term "impersonator."²⁴⁴ Boardman expresses the following concerning the concept of impersonation:

Much discussion has arisen as to the relative merits of interpretation and impersonation, but it all boils down to one distinction. Many oral readers prefer to

suggest an emotion, thought, attitude, or action by a slight facial or vocal expression, whereas others wish to use larger and broader expression. The final decision as to the degree of impersonation actually rests with the reader. There are no prohibitive laws; it is a matter of judgment. Both interpretation and impersonation are legitimate techniques.²⁴⁵

Historically, Boardman notes the favorable and unfavorable periods of popularity for monodrama and chooses to discuss the concept of impersonation as a corresponding procedure in the Art of Oral Interpretation. Although she discusses monodrama as the assumption of one character and adheres to the prevailing view of the use of suggestion for interpretation, she allows distinct freedom for the concept of impersonation. Boardman states the following:

Impersonation is the form of interpretation in which the oral reader may portray many characters. There are different degrees of impersonation, ranging from the broadly realistic to subtle suggestion bordering on pure interpretation. The impersonator, in revealing many characters, is usually limited in costume and make-up because of lack of time for changes. He is allowed as much leeway as he chooses in other respects, such as voice, bodily activity, and manner. He may or may not use a book and lectern. He indicates entrance and exits and the distance and location of imaginary persons by the direction of his glance, by tone and volume of voice, and by the turning of his body and the use of gesture. For example, if he pretends to shake hands with an imaginary character, his glance and his voice must suggest that the character is no farther away than arm's length.²⁴⁶

The student must choose whether to use the concept of impersonation and the freedom of decision is solely dependent upon the literature, the type of audience, and the ability and intention of the interpreter.²⁴⁷

In their revised 1953 text Interpretative Reading: Techniques and Selections, Sara Lowrey and Gertrude E. Johnson enlarged the Foreward in an analytical comparison to the 1942 edition.²⁴⁸ The new edition created a confusing twist or crossover of endeavors between the actor and the interpreter. The authors impress the student that "interpretative reading is not acting." However, the actor Charles Laughton figures prominently in the discussion and forms a tangible bridge to oral interpretation. Lowrey and Johnson believe that Charles Laughton's performances served directly "for spearheading, . . . the revival of the art of reading on the professional stage." The authors use the word "popularity" to describe oral interpretation during this time. They further state their persuasive views concerning the actor and the interpretative reader:

The dramatic schools of England have kept interpretative reading in its rightful place as an integral part of the training of actors. Perhaps that is why some of the finest recorded poetry reading available is done by actors.

The authors continue with a twist or crossover of images:

While such reading is of great worth, it should serve as a challenge to teachers of Interpretation. Can we afford to let the professional aspect of our work be taken over so completely by actors? Should not we too be doing as well as teaching our art? It would be a sad commentary on our attitude if we had to accept this cryptic judgment. . . "those who can, do; those who can't, teach"²⁴⁹

This revised text includes the addition of a chapter titled "Bodily Action in Interpretative Reading." The authors discuss the use of direct and indirect eye contact

with the audience. Lowrey and Johnson believe that judgment for the decision of eye focus "depends in part upon the material." With this in mind, they briefly mention the concept of impersonation:

We like the term mediate to describe the reader's relation to the audience. The public speaker may be direct; he talks to the audience. The actor and impersonator are indirect; they perform for the audience. The interpretative reader may at times seem direct, at other times indirect but should always seem to be sharing experiences with the audience²⁵⁰

Although the concept of impersonation has not been totally forgotten, Lowrey and Johnson prefer to include it with extreme brevity, and in keeping with the social context they proceed to enlarge upon the popularity of the actor, Charles Laughton. While it may seem irrelevant for this thesis, it is important to be aware of the impact of oral interpretation textbooks upon speech training in general during this time.

Lester Thonssen and Howard Gilkinson, coauthors of Basic Training in Speech, record in the 1953 text a prominent position for the concept of impersonation in the Index reference.²⁵¹ In the chapter titled "Reading Aloud" discussion is given to the interpreter and the allied "arts of impersonation and acting." Thonssen and Gilkinson believe that "distinction is made chiefly on the basis of the fullness of action of the speaker."

The impersonator gives a rather full imitation of the actions of a character, with or without the aid

of costume and make-up. The actor, of course, gives the full action of a character, and the total illusion of the play is heightened by the effect of costume, lights, scenery, and the corresponding and reciprocal actions of other characters in the scene. The physical activity of the interpretative reader is more limited in scope. He employs suggestive activity of face, voice and body, leaving much to the imagination of his listeners.²⁵²

Thonssen and Gilkinson state: "Perhaps the distinction between reading, impersonation, and acting is purely a matter of convention, or possibly there is some deeper psychological reason for it."²⁵³

For Wayland Maxfield Parrish, the lapse of twelve years reveals that his attitude toward the concept of impersonation remains undisturbed in the 1953, third edition of his textbook Reading Aloud. Parrish retains the basic attitude toward impersonation as expressed in the 1941 text. The prominence of "impersonation" as listed in the Index as well as the retention of the chapter retitled concisely as "Impersonation" are indications of the author's unchangeable attitude.

The basic philosophy of the book, . . . remains unchanged. I still believe that our first and foremost task is to teach effective expression of simple, logical meaning, whether in conversation, oral reading, or acting; that some study of voice, pronunciation . . . should precede the study of serious poetry, with impersonation and acting coming later²⁵⁴

In the chapter "Impersonation" Parrish chooses to revise the italicized subtitle "Art is Not Reality" and asserts: "In neither lyric nor dramatic poetry should the reader try to trick his audience into thinking that he is

someone other than himself."²⁵⁵ The student is provided practice selections which Parrish includes in the chapter while he retains the "Plan of Study" and "The Criteria" unchanged from the 1941 edition.²⁵⁶

In contrast, during an eight-year interval, Lionel Crocker and Louis M. Eich include "several . . . changes" in their 1955 text.²⁵⁷ In the second edition of Oral Reading close examination reveals that the concept of impersonation has, indeed, lost a place of reference in the Index.²⁵⁸ However, the original discussion in the chapter "The Provinces of The Reader, The Actor, The Speaker" is retained verbatim, as well as the diagram of differentiation concerning the three realms. The assignments at the end of the chapter are directed to the student with a new approach for helpful differentiation. The suggestions are: read a book on acting; read comic strips as though one is reading to a child; and, locate reviews of Charles Laughton's performances as well as the current actresses performances.²⁵⁹ An extension to the chapter, titled in the 1947 text "The Reader's Relation to the Author," is retitled in the 1955 text, "The Reader's Relationships" which includes an exemplary program of one of Laughton's performances. Due to the impersonative implications, the sample program is included as follows:

Several limericks
Fables by Aesop and Thurber
"To His Coy Mistress"

Selection from Thomas Wolfe on Trains
 Selection from Pickwick Papers on Christmas
 The Chorus from Henry V
 Act I, Sc. ii and Act III, Sc. i from A Midsummer-
Night's Dream
 Daniel 3: "Three Hebrew Children in the Fiery
 Furnace"
 Psalm 139
 Jammes's "The Little Prostitute"
 Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address"²⁶⁰

A review of the speech journals reveals that E. James
 Lennon and William W. Hamilton are the coauthors of the
 article "Charles Laughton's Interpretative Reading" in
The Speech Teacher, March 1955. They give credit to Laughton
 for the impersonative treatment of "the Devil in Shaw's Don
Juan in Hell" The authors provide the following
 report on Laughton's treatment of narration:

Most of the time he is reading, Laughton looks
 directly at his hearers and seldom uses the techni-
 que of location or angles of vision to differentiate
 between characters. He creates his scenes in the
 imagination of the audience rather than in what is
 visible on the stage.²⁶¹

Lennon and Hamilton do not stress information concerning
 the concept of impersonation, however they relate Laughton's
 physical appearance as "alert" with an outstanding coordina-
 tion of "facial expressions and head movements" during the
 program. Lennon and Hamilton report the following program
 with overtones of impersonative treatment:

From Thomas Wolfe's Of Time and the River he [Laughton]
 presents eerie impressions of a train rumbling across
 the moon-drenched American landscape, from Hans Chris-
 tian Andersen the inspiring simplicity and charm of
 "The Nightingale," from the Bible the lively spectacle
 of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendego, and from Lincoln
 the "Gettysburg Address."²⁶²

Another textbook published in 1956 allows one to surmise that the overwhelming response to Charles Laughton's performance elevated the desire to illuminate the concept of impersonation. Communicative Reading by Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen focuses prominent reference upon the concept of impersonation.²⁶³ Not only is it listed in the Index, but extensive discussion of the concept is included in the chapter "What Is Interpretative Reading?" An informative diagram is also included with finely etched categories manifested in explicit statements. The use of memorization is designated as well as the designated use of stage effects (see Appendix D). The term "Impersonative Reading" is harmoniously settled between "Acting and Interpretative Reading." Aggertt and Bowen give the following explanation of the chart:

The . . . chart indicates a number of the differences between acting and interpretative reading and reveals that another form of platform presentation, called impersonative reading, stands between the two and has some of the characteristics of each. On the chart we represent a gradual progression from acting, through impersonative reading, to interpretative reading The classifications on the chart are arbitrary and are intended only for the purpose of clarification of these art forms which often overlap.²⁶⁴

Aggertt and Bowen explain that "When interpreters use impersonation, they use comparatively little." They further assert that there is disagreement "as to how much impersonation, if any, should be used by the interpretative reader." According to the authors, the best advice is to "impersonate

only when you feel that you can best communicate the content of a particular selection to a particular audience by doing so."²⁶⁵ They recognize and sustain their views that the audience has the ability to use their imaginations and that the interpreter should incorporate restraint during the presentation. Aggertt and Bowen state their attitude and views concerning the concept of impersonation:

. . . individuals, because of personal taste, disagree as to how much impersonation, if any, should be used by the interpretative reader. Some go so far as to contend that the reader should never, in any circumstance, use any degree of impersonation. Others seem to make little distinction between acting and interpretative reading. A more sensible approach to this disagreement in theory would be to recognize that the relationships between the reader, the selection, and the audience should determine the form of presentation.²⁶⁶

The attitude is broadly acceptable for the concept of impersonation. Aggertt and Bowen provide clear, explanatory statements:

The forms of impersonative reading are similar to both acting and interpretative reading. Impersonation means simply the assuming of a character not one's own. The impersonative reader, like the actor, memorizes, portrays, and possibly uses stage effects. Like the interpretative reader, on the other hand, he requires a rather direct contact between himself and his audience, and he works alone.²⁶⁷

The authors do not deviate from the stance that the interpreter "suggests," "shares" the literature, and the audience in turn uses imagination to complete the presentation. "Great art seems artless," according to Aggertt and Bowen.²⁶⁸ The prime concern should be the "content" of the

literature and not the "technique alone."²⁶⁹ The authors also believe that "We speak, as we think, with the whole of the body." Aggertt and Bowen believe that the interpreter should use caution with dialogue in narrative prose and inevitable characterization. "Do not try to become the character," the authors warn the student. They also believe that the amount of activity is totally dependent "upon the degree of impersonation" and the requirements of the story.²⁷⁰ Their guidance extends to the concept of impersonation in the reading of poetry. Aggertt and Bowen use prompting cues in the form of footnote references in order to guide the student in the directed reading of the poem "Simon Legree ** A Negro Sermon" from The Booker Washington Trilogy. One may realize the effectiveness of this approach in the following directions:

This poem calls for a great degree of impersonation: in so far as you seem able to get audience acceptance, become the preacher. Use the chanting rhythm and a deep, full, resonant voice. Use generous visible action here and at just about every opportunity. Try to use a voice which bespeaks the cocky, insolent conceit of Simon.²⁷¹

The reading of drama allows the fuller use of the concept of impersonation, according to Aggertt and Bowen, with the provision that the interpreter maintains his "own identity and [does] not attempt to 'become' the characters"²⁷² The play, The Green Pastures by Marc Connelly, allows the student, through helpful footnote directions, to practice the use of the concept of impersonation

with the dialect of the character Deshee. According to Agger^{tt} and Bowen, it is the speech of this character that "offers fine opportunities for colorful suggestive gesture and facial expression." The exemplary speech by Deshee is as follows:

Dey wasn't nobody in N'Orleans on "count dey wasn't any N'Orleans. Dat's de whole idea I tol' you at de end of de first Chapter. Yo' got to git yo' minds fixed. Dey wasn't any Rampart Street. Dey wasn't any Canal Street. Dey wasn't any Louisiana. Dey wasn't nothin' on de earth at all caize fo' de reason dey wasn't any earth.²⁷³

The same year that Agger^{tt} and Bowen emphasized the concept of impersonation another text was featured for classroom instruction. As the sole, surviving author, Severina E. Nelson brought forward the 1956, fourth edition of The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading by Charles E. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson. Nelson records in the Preface:

These pages, packed with Woolbertian philosophy, seem to enjoy an unbelievably enduring and ever increasing popularity as they approach their thirtieth year.²⁷⁴

Weighted with the responsibility to bring the textbook into the social current with up-dated material, Nelson uses subtle but noticeable changes for the concept of impersonation.²⁷⁵ The following was printed in the 1956 text:

. . . the interpreter recognizes his audience in a more direct manner than either the impersonator or the actor. Consequently, in interpretation, there is a balance of direct communicativeness and projection--an interplay of the two. Impersonation is more indirect and involves a more complete characterization;

that is, the impersonator uses more facial expression and bodily gesture and exercises greater liberty in moving about the platform. The impersonator is trying always to imitate a person. We never speak of the impersonation of a poem. Acting is the least direct of these three arts.²⁷⁶

The injection of the word "direct" to define the distinction between interpretation and impersonation as the basis of "communicativeness and projection;" the new emphasis by the use of italics for the word "person" as the boundary for the impersonator; and the positiveness of the word "never" in the "impersonation of a poem," are indications of the continued effort by Nelson to clarify and refine the concept. However, she chose to omit the following sentence as it is printed in the 1945 text: "The significant difference that exists between these arts can be understood by working in both directions from impersonation."²⁷⁷

Nelson also chose the inclusion of other noticeable changes.

The chapter "Visible Action," in the 1945 textbook, Nelson retitled "Meaning Through Bodily Movement" in the 1956 edition. The basic statements have been retained, but the directed practice exercises for the student to follow, namely, "first, as an actor; second, as an impersonator; third, as an interpreter," Nelson selectively reduced in number. From the original twenty-eight sentences, twelve are listed in the 1956 text. One may assume that the significance is merely a lessened focus on this type of practice. Six of the transferred sentences are listed as examples:

1. You cur! Strike that little boy again and I'll thrash you on the spot.
2. Look! my lord! It comes!
3. Wait! Look! Oh, oh, how terrible!
4. It is my lady! Oh, it is my love!
5. With him? It is not possible.²⁷⁸
6. O that I had wings like a dove!

Warning of "good taste" Nelson chooses to transfer verbatim from the 1945 text as well as transfer the practice materials with the selections from The Merchant of Venice and Macbeth by William Shakespeare. Nelson no longer suggests, in the 1956 text, that the student practice with changes of technique for these selections, namely, "first as an interpreter, then as an impersonator, and finally as an actor."²⁷⁹ The emphasis is toward the interpreter using control and the impersonator using more bodily activity. She refines the concept of impersonation with instruction for the presentation of the character Shylock, in The Merchant of Venice:

The . . . passage from Shakespeare will be simpler for the interpreter because he can keep most of his visible activity confined to the facial expression; the impersonator, . . . will find it effective to assume a particular posture, to hunch the shoulders, to use the hands in dramatic tension, to glance askance . . . even to spit²⁸⁰

One may note the obvious freedom for the impersonator in the foregoing discussion as compared to the instructions for the interpreter; yet, according to Nelson, impersonation is a valid area of oral interpretation.

Another textbook published in 1956 offsets Nelson's view with restriction. The Art of Reading Aloud by the late

John Dolman, Jr., was posthumously published in 1956. Dolman was a noted teacher of speech and drama and his philosophical-textual remarks extend from a balanced view of both acting and interpretative reading, and involve the concept of impersonation. Dolman explains:

Even in the days when Elocution enjoyed great popularity, most of the better artists made, or tried to make, a distinction between interpretation and impersonation, or between interpretation and acting. Impersonation was generally understood as the imaginative part of individual acting, irrespective of costume, make-up, scenery, and the presence or absence of other actors. The impersonator, or actor, was supposed to lose himself imaginatively in the character, and project himself objectively as such. The interpretative reader, or elocutionist, or recitationist, or declaimer, was supposed to be imaginative in a more restrained way, stopping short of full impersonation.

Dolman continues:

The idea that he should refrain from outright exhibitionism is by no means new, and was proclaimed by many old-school platform artists who, if judged by present-day standards, would themselves seem to most of us decidedly exhibitionistic.²⁸¹

The interpreter's responsibility is to be true to the interpretative situation and not to "wobble" between acting and interpretation which culminates in audience confusion. "Expection" is the basis: acting from the actor and reading from the interpreter. Dolman believes that audiences do "not know how to adjust themselves to purposes and standards which do not stay put." The result can only climax in hybrid art which is void of standards.²⁸² The standard, then, is for one to be conversant and willing to share with

the audience and to be part of the audience during the presentation. One may use imaginative interpretation, but must also use restraint with a restrictive standard of good taste. Dolman believes in animated, responsive reading, but he states:

Our concern in this book is not with acting, nor with any of the hybrid forms, good or bad. It is with reading--formal or informal, quiet or lively, impromptu or well prepared. It is with thought-getting and thought-sharing; but not with impersonation, nor with any other kind of exhibitionism.²⁸³

Dolman substantiates this statement with a lack of reference in the Index for the concept of impersonation.

Three years later, Charlotte I. Lee submitted an additional text for the study of oral interpretation with classroom instruction for the concept. With a firm stance in her 1959, second edition, Oral Interpretation, Lee chooses to retain her attitude toward the concept of impersonation by limiting it to the presentation of monodrama, submitted verbatim from the 1952 text. She retains the statement, "Our concern here, obviously, is with interpretation."²⁸⁴ While the concept has not been omitted by Lee, another text indicates an attitude of avoidance of the subject for discussion. The authors of the 1959 text, Literature as Experience, Wallace A. Bacon and Robert S. Breen, choose to omit the concept from the Index as well as from discussion in the context. Bacon and Breen state in the Preface:

. . . surely it is absurd to center a whole curriculum in interpretation on the problem of performance before audiences when it is only the most exceptional student who is ever likely to spend his life in such

performance. If, on the other hand, "performance" or "communication" is more narrowly regarded as submission of oneself to a literary text by way of a direct expression of the text, . . . any student may look forward to a long life of oral performance even though his critical self may be the sole auditor.²⁸⁵

However, the authors discuss imitating the emotions as they occur in the literature and that there must be an "emotional participation," or an "emotional aura" which envelops the reader and the audience.²⁸⁶ But, Bacon and Breen believe that "instruction in the last analysis must be left to the good teacher in the classroom."²⁸⁷

The 1959 text, Theory and Technique of Interpretation by Martin Cobin, directs the student to use the concept of impersonation with the oral interpretation of lyric poetry. The nature of lyric poetry exposes the personal elements of the poet, and Cobin expresses his justification for the concept:

The reason less objection has been raised here is that the subjective nature of the lyric poem provides little information concerning the externals of the "speaker." When you identify yourself with the "speaker" of the lyric, . . . you are only identifying yourself with the internal thoughts and feelings. . . . To say that you can and even should employ techniques of identification with lyric poetry, must be understood as relating to the internal aspects of the "speaker" only. You are in no sense justified in distracting attention from the material, where it belongs, to yourself and your techniques, where it does not belong.²⁸⁸

The focus of attention must be on the literature and involve "sensitivity" and "propriety." According to Cobin, "Taste is not only an individual matter but is socially

conditioned." The judgment for an acceptable presentation is totally dependent upon the "social framework." Cobin accentuates the importance of the societal background as it affects the oral interpreter:

Illustrative of this are such factors as physical behavior and impersonation, . . . Our reactions to the physical behavior of actors in the early silent movies clearly point up the fact that tastes change. Interpreters have long discussed the extent to which they considered it proper to engage in impersonation. That is, when reading words which are written as dialogue, to what degree should the interpreter stop sounding like himself and assume the character of the speaker of the dialogue? The answer does not lie in any directive to impersonate always or never. The answer can be found by a consideration of propriety. What is desired is that degree of impersonation which most forcefully focuses the attention of the audience upon the intellectual and emotional significance of the material.

Cobin continues:

Just what this degree is, however, can be determined only by an interpreter who is sensitive to audience taste and who is ready to accept the fact that there may be definite variation in taste from one audience to another.²⁸⁹

The following comments by Cobin bear upon the concept of impersonation and concern the changeable aspects of taste for physical behavior and the variations which occur both from the aspects of audience and the element of time:

. . . the student of interpretation must be cautious about taking advice from earlier writers on the subject of physical behavior. . . . any writer on the subject is reluctant to be very specific for fear of becoming dated and appearing ridiculous in the eyes of later readers who are unaware of the changes wrought by time.²⁹⁰

Social background and differences in sensitivity are the contributing elements, according to Cobin, that "makes

interpretation particularly interesting. This is also what makes it impossible to teach or learn a sure-fire method." Thus, the author stresses: "All discussion of technique in this textbook must be considered as a probing of possibilities, rather than a statement of laws which must be followed in order to get the proper results."²⁹¹

Cobin advocates the use of "suggestion" and he believes that "there will be times when the interpreter will come close to acting." It is "[also] important," according to Cobin, "not to get lost in an adoration of purity of form for its own sake."²⁹²

An article by Hugh Dickinson reflects upon the preceding statement. "Readers or Rhapsodes?" was published in The Quarterly Journal of Speech in October, 1959.²⁹³ The article gives credit to the interpretative efforts of the British-born actor Emlyn Williams and his impersonations of Charles Dickens. Dickinson reports that Williams subordinates himself to the text and its intent. Dickinson further states:

He [Williams] uses stage areas, effect-lighting, posture and gesture and business--all meagerly. Yet some will undoubtedly insist that what he does is not interpretation, but acting.²⁹⁴

Dickinson believes that "it follows that the aural and the visual belong together in interpretation."²⁹⁵

The span of years to the 1960's has not solved the initial controversy. One leaves this era with the lingering

thought that the concept of impersonation has undergone interesting and subtle changes in attitude and method in spite of the fact that the authors insist that the use of suggestion is imperative. The models with wide public popularity also aid to instill and provoke the counterexamples of interpretation due to their orientation in the field of acting. Further insight into this academic dilemma may be gained through two articles published in 1959 in the journal Western Speech. "Teaching Oral Interpretation" by Irving Deer advances the crux of the problem:

There is a pronounced tendency among some teachers of general speech to treat the oral interpretation of literature as a poor relation of the forensics family. Not only do they doubt its value; but also teachers, coaches, and judges are not even sure that it can be taught or evaluated. It seems to them to be a ghost from the days of elocution rather than a living part of modern speech training. Uncertain of what it is, they teach it as if it were a cross between radio announcing and acting.²⁹⁶

Deer cites as the basis for this attitude the educators who apparently are uncertain of the goals and the proper evaluation for oral interpretation.

The second article, "Teach Ideas?" by Jere Veilleux concerns the political and social atmosphere in relation to the speech courses; however, the statements would be filtered to the study of oral interpretation. Veilleux states the following:

The problem is rooted in the fact that our national political and social configuration has changed immensely over the past twenty years while both the content and the method in speech courses have remained

static. This failure to adapt our curriculum to the changing modern world is reflected directly in our basic course.²⁹⁷

This perspective allows one to gain insight into the next era as change produces increasing, spasmodic appearances of the concept of impersonation for discussion in the literature.

CONTEMPORARY PERIOD (1960-1984)

The 1960 edition Skill in Reading Aloud by Joseph F. Smith and James F. Linn includes words of warning to the student.²⁹⁸ Smith and Linn advise that the oral interpreter should "avoid anything that draws conscious attention to . . . 'performance.'" They state that undue emphasis on performance "is the basis for the strictures against impersonation as contrasted with interpretation, the defense or refutation of which have occupied so many theoreticians for so many years." The authors follow this statement with a footnote reference that indicates their attitude and which serves to broaden the use of the concept of impersonation:

Despite all the pages written to the contrary, these two words do not have concrete and specific referents--a statement implicitly proved at every speech contest or festival where participants enter "interpretative reading" and/or "impersonation" events (maybe we should add "declamation"). Judges, teachers, students go round and round on the matter and arguments are perennial. We feel that trying to prescribe oral reading skill in opposing terms of "interpretation" and "impersonation" is futile; it puts the cart before the horse and leads to unsupportable arbitrariness and woe-ful disregard for listeners.

Smith and Linn continue:

After all, what on earth is oral reading skill for but to enable a person effectively to read a text to listeners? Isn't it, then, an inescapably sound principle that a reader should orally present the chosen text in whatever manner will most completely communicate his comprehension of the text?²⁹⁹

The foregoing discussion answers the question of the differences "between interpretation, impersonation and acting." The authors then link this discussion to storytelling and the student is directed to suggest with "modified posture, characteristic gesture, . . . dialect and vocal quality."³⁰⁰ However, Smith and Linn allow the use of costume for "unusual circumstances" and state the following for illustration:

If you are a male and have been asked to read selections from Charles Dickens on February seventh, when Dickensians forgather to eat roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and to toast the "immortal memory" of their favorite author, you might enhance the effectiveness of your reading for that occasion by dressing and making up like Charles Dickens. (By the way, we might mention here that Dickens, in his time, was almost as famous for his reading of his owrks as he was for authoring them.)³⁰¹

The 1961 text Interpretation: Writer, Reader, Audience by Wilma H. Grimes and Alethea Smith Mattingly omits discussion of the concept of impersonation, but provides pronounced links to acting.³⁰² Grimes and Mattingly also list Raymond Massey in his portrayal of Lincoln with Charles Laughton and Emlyn Williams as professionals who enter "the service of literature." They also express their belief that the "interpreter must listen and watch other interpreters and

actors, and become acquainted with many types and moods in literature, and in short, immerse . . . in the art."³⁰⁴

The audience must use their imaginations through the aid of suggestion. All overt action by the interpreter is restrained and subordinated to the literature, so that the audience loses the presence of themselves and the interpreter and becomes absorbed in the literature.³⁰⁵ These words of advise to the student are counter to statements which allow the student more freedom in an additional 1962 textbook. In the Preface of Reading Literature Aloud by Lawrence H. Mouat, he directs the course of the thought along a "middle ground" and strives to secure the student's independence.³⁰⁶ Mouat believes that "tools, not rules" should be the basis for the encouragement. An example that one may refer to for this belief occurs in the "Introduction" to the student as he states:

When you read dramatic literature you will probably prefer to have your listeners see the characters in you; while reading nondramatic material you may wish to have your listeners see the characters through you. If, on the other hand, you choose to dramatize a lyric, or prefer to suggest rather than to become a character in a play, your interpretation will be altogether different.³⁰⁷

According to Mouat, "There are no set rules for body behavior any more than there are for vocal manipulations." He extends this view:

Unless you are acting or impersonating or participating in a staged reading you should not be overly concerned with locomotion. Usually the interpreter is confined to a limited area and to limited movement. Occasionally, you may wish to move from one

side of the platform or reading area to the other in order to give another part of your audience a chance for closer contact with you or to indicate that you have finished with one major mood or thought and are going on to another. When you do move for such reasons, be sure that here too, as in the case of gestures, you are not distracting. Your audience wants to hear what you read rather than to watch your physical maneuvers.³⁰⁸

Mouat discusses characterization in the practice material and provides variable use of the concept of impersonation:

You will find one problem to solve: the maintenance of consistent characterizations for the several characters in describing their movements and in reading their lines. You need not (probably should not) impersonate. Suggestion is sufficient. But once you have found a satisfying vocal pattern for each character, practice until you can reproduce it at will.³⁰⁹

Mouat approves the impersonation of the opposite sex providing the interpreter is an "accomplished impersonator."³¹⁰ It should be noted that he does not include a reference Index with this edition, but he does provide reference statements to the concept of impersonation, while another text published in 1963 avoids the concept.

The Oral Interpretation of Literature by Chloe Armstrong and Paul Brandes omits the concept of impersonation in the Index and the concept is not given acknowledgment anywhere in the text. Broad statements are made, however, which give the student a freedom of choice. Armstrong and Brandes state:

As interpreter, as speaker, as actor, and as critic, the oral reader has a unique role to play. He provides

the medium by which the experiences of the author may become the experiences of the audience. His listeners are fortunate, for the reader not only chooses materials which he thinks are suitable to his particular talents, but the fact that he has the opportunity of sharing encourages him to draw freely from any style of presentation he chooses to impart his interpretation to his audience.

They continue:

Without such motivation, the interpreter might never achieve the variety of style of presentation that the selection requires.³¹¹

The authors allow for freedom, but they also issue words of restraint. Armstrong and Brandes believe that "anything the reader does which attracts attention to himself and away from his selection risks interference with successful imagery."³¹² They also believe that "in both body and voice, the interpreter should remain unobtrusive."³¹³ This attitude of freedom combines with statements concerning a lack of definite answers which serve to place the decisions solely dependent upon the student. They then place the student at the mercy of "the weapon of criticism" for wrong decisions.³¹⁴ The authors quote Emerson for words of encouragement: "'Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.'"³¹⁵

The use of good judgment and good taste are stressed by Armstrong and Brandes. However, they omit mention of the concept of impersonation, but offer their views concerning acting and interpretation as follows:

There is no need to prolong the discussion of the difference between acting and interpretation.

The closing of this argument is long overdue. It seems rather an easy task to distinguish the actor on the stage, in costume and makeup, creating a character from dramatic literature, from the oral interpreter who is also creating characterization, but with less assistance from the physical aspects of theater. However, the oral interpreter makes use of many of the same methods of the actor in his preparation and presentation. Many have been saying for years, and rightly so: The oral interpreter has much he can learn from the actor, and the interpreter has a great deal to offer the actor in turn. The attempt to distinguish between the two and say, "Never the twain shall meet," has been more confusing than illuminating.

Armstrong and Brandes continue:

Often this approach has led to false concepts of what constitutes good oral interpretation. The conclusion is sometimes drawn that anything that is alive and animated, be it good or bad, is acting, and any performance that is dull and dead is interpretation.³¹⁶

One may assume that the subject concerning the concept of impersonation is submerged between the discussion of acting and interpretation. The same attitude toward submergence of the concept may be noted in the textbook by Don Geiger. Geiger, the author of The Sound, Sense, and Performance of Literature, expresses his views in the 1963 edition with the statement, "Oral Interpretation, then, is an unformulable amalgam of acting, public speaking, critical reaction, and sympathetic sharing."³¹⁷ In addition to this, the text fails to mention the concept of impersonation regardless of the fact that the title contains a bonding tie to the word "performance." The planned audience for the text is primarily the advanced as well as the beginning student

and, of course, the instructor. Geiger presents his attitudes and methods with these readers emphasized in the Preface to the text. However, all connections which Geiger gives to attributes for a successful presentation of literature are attributed to the areas of acting and interpretation. To counterbalance omission of the advantageous areas for discussion of the concept of impersonation, Aggertt and Bowen published their second edition substantiating affirmative attitudes and methods. The 1963 edition of Communicative Reading displays progressive revision and clarification of the concept.³¹⁸ Aggertt and Bowen revise the chapter "What is Interpretative Reading," as recorded in both the 1956 and the 1963 edition. They eliminate the use of the chart which features "Impersonative Reading" and in substitution use clarifying statements for the use of the concept.

Aggertt and Bowen explain, "Interpretative reading is . . . not acting." They remain explicit on this point. But they also say, "Both the reader and the actor use impersonation--the assumption of the traits of another personality." The interpreter, according to the authors, "uses impersonation only when trying to suggest a character and then uses only selected elements of characterization." The distinguishing features between acting and reading are fully absorbed in a discussion of the impersonative ability and quality which the reader is able to project for "a lively visualization." Aggertt and Bowen state:

How much impersonation the reader should use is determined by three factors: the type of literature, the composition of the audience, and the aesthetic distance inherent in the reading situation.³¹⁹

Due to the interpreter's use of restrained and suggestive gestures, Aggertt and Bowen believe that the reader should "use impersonation only as an aid to imaginative suggestion, not as a means of portrayal."³²⁰ The manuscript is the controlling factor for the amount of bodily activity which the student may exert in the presentation. The chapter titled "Visible Communication," which the authors retain in the 1963 edition, forwards new statements on the use of the whole body. Aggertt and Bowen explain:

The presence of that manuscript and the understanding that gesture must be a part of thought and spring from thought, together with the fact that movement must never call attention to itself, prompts many oral interpreters to prefer covert gesture rather than overt.³²¹

The determinate for guidance is a "sense of propriety" which the authors urge the student to employ.

The prominent feature of the 1963 edition is the omission of the impersonative, dialect reading of the character Deshee as recorded in the 1956 edition. The authors promote the short aesthetic distance required in an interpretative situation as the reason for the use of suggestion and not the portrayal of characters when one is reading. Aggertt and Bowen state:

The reading of dramatic scenes offers a great temptation to the reader to forget the powers of imaginative

suggestion and to try to show the characters to the audience. Of course, dramatic literature does permit a relatively high degree of impersonative treatment, with more pronounced audible and visible characterization than is suitable with other materials. The reader should consider himself a purveyor of interior rather than exterior drama. He should be an effective reporter of a dramatic scene he sees in his "mind's eye."³²²

While Aggertt and Bowen pursue affirmative discussion of attitude and method concerning the concept of impersonation, an additional textbook, published in 1965, promotes boundaries for the concept.

The third edition of Oral Interpretation by Charlotte I. Lee, remains firm in the stance which she had taken in the 1952 and the 1959 editions.³²³ The attitude remains unchanged as Lee states, "Somewhere between acting and oral interpretation of drama falls the art of impersonation, or monodrama." Lee continues to provide the student with reference to the concept of impersonation in the Index, but reiterates, "Our concern here, obviously, is with interpretation."³²⁴ In the same general tone, five authors combine their compiled efforts to aid the student in the proper analysis of literature for the assurance of a successful performance. Robert Beloof, Chester Clayton Long, Seymour Chatman, Thomas O. Sloan, Mark S. Klyn base their 1966 text The Oral Study of Literature on the importance of the literature.³²⁵ "Performance" is a vital word throughout the text and it is toward this end that one discovers all discussion finds the virile course of thought. However, the concept

of impersonation does not enter into the context of the discussion by the authors nor is the concept acknowledged in the Index. Chatman obscurely touches the impersonative ability of the actors James Mason and Hal Holbrook. The author gives consideration to the use of their voices.

Chatman states:

. . . his job is to select that combination of features which best represents the voice that he imagines the poem to suggest. (Notice that I say poem rather than poet; we cannot know what the poet intended except as that emerges from the poem itself.) With rare exceptions (for instance Hal Holbrook's very studied imitation of Mark Twain's voice) the identification expresses the interpreter's understanding not the author's voice as actually heard or imagined. Since he does not have, and does not want, a specific model, what the interpreter seeks is not so much exactness as plausibility, or to use a forceful term from aesthetics, verisimilitude.³²⁶

All references to the actor James Mason are in regard to his recorded dramatic monologue interpretation of Robert Browning's "The Bishop Orders His Tomb." Chatman believes that "a performance like Mason's is a highly effective interpretation of the poem."³²⁷ The text by the five authors is paralleled by another 1966 text which also incorporates the actor's realm in the discussion. In The Art of Interpretation by Wallace A. Bacon, reference is given to the actor Emlyn Williams who impersonated Charles Dickens. Bacon discusses the reading of journals, letters, and diaries. He projects and clearly states: "That the locus of the text is not the same for the reader and the actor."³²⁸ Bacon is "careful not to say that the interpreter does not

characterize." But, according to Bacon, the reader cannot duplicate Dickens, for they are "separate and distinct personalities," whereby, it is the purposeful intent of the reader to "disappear" into the vitality of the literature.³²⁹ It becomes a matter of effect and shift of locus. Bacon extends this view:

. . . in his performance of fiction by Charles Dickens, the actor Emlyn Williams took great pains to make himself up to look like Dickens, and used a replica of the reading desk actually used by Dickens. Dickens the writer thus became the narrator of each of his writings, in his "own" person.³³⁰

Bacon bases the text on the interpreter's ability to use restraint and he advises: "It is better to say 'Let's see whether' than to say 'You must never.'"³³¹ He emphasizes this thought, but shifts the focus of the text away from the concept of impersonation in the obvious omission of an Index reference and total lack of discussion within the context. Bacon provides the student with rationale statements concerning the differences between acting and interpretation; costume, dialogue, and role-playing as the major differentiations between the two fields of art.³³² On the other hand, he believes that "the oral performance of a poem or a story . . . gains because it involves gesture"; but the gesture must be in the essence of restraint. It is in this respect that Bacon touches upon the subject of the interpretation contests and points to the struggle to define guidelines. He states:

The reader can do only so much in the way of overt action as will not interfere with our awareness that he is one reader pretending to be many. This often calls for the most careful economy in gesture, but surely it is nonsense to say, as the rules for a certain contest in interpretation continue to do, "gestures of the arms and body will be counted against contestants."³³³

One may assume that the concept of impersonation becomes submerged beneath restrictive attitudes and rules that prevent the student of oral interpretation from overstepping into the boundary of the actor. However, another 1966 textbook discloses that the two fields readily blend for discussion. The Performing Voice in Literature by Robert Beloof, does not allow discussion or Index reference to the concept of impersonation, but Beloof gives notable mention to the leading actor/interpreters of the time, Charles Laughton, Sir John Gielgud, Sir Laurence Olivier, and John Barrymore. The references concern recordings and the use of the dramatic pause and memorization.³³⁴

While Beloof assumes the attitude of avoidance for the subject of impersonation both in the context and reference material of the textbook, it is of interest to note the prevalent attitude in the realm of academia. Beloof proceeds to broach the subject of prejudice toward oral interpretation in general and in the interim touches upon aspects of the concept of impersonation. He submits his viewpoints:

. . . one might well ask where then does the feeling against oral interpretation as a legitimate part of

the curriculum arise. I should like to suggest that it arises in precisely those moments in the classroom when the subliminal bodily responses are required to be bodied forth in a series of such physical manifestations as gestures, expressions, and vocal tones, in a tight relationship with the language of the text.³³⁵

Beloof steeps the text in words of "performance" and projects discussion toward the use of "suggestion," in fusion with both the actor and the reader. The student is then able to ponder his statement: "The question always must be whether or not we are convinced by the total concept projected by the combination of text and reader."³³⁶ He modifies and enlarges upon the use of gestures with the dramatic use of the body, such as: "Looking at the back of one hand on the lectern and sketching briefly on the back of it with the fingertips of the hand [which] would offer a chance to underline a structural pattern for listeners"³³⁷ Beloof acknowledges the use of dialect and the use of the body; he does admonish self-display. His final words for the text express this attitude:

As with any other art, there are many pitfalls; melodrama, sentimentality, exhibitionism, frigidity, perverse wilfulness, and (in its bad sense) intellectual pride. These are all risks that any creator or performer of any art must run if he is to create. Beyond that, they are the risks of being alive. Welcome to another facet of that awesome process.³³⁸

With a counter view, the 1966 text Interpretation for Our Time by Baxter M. Geeting openly focuses upon the concept of impersonation for discussion. Geeting allows the student adequate information and evidence of his attitude concerning

the presentation of impersonation. According to Geeting, "the line of demarcation narrows." He believes that the impersonator does "affect costumes, props (limited) and some scenery." In effect, he recognizes the actresses Ruth Draper and Cornelia Otis Skinner as well as Hal Holbrook's impersonations of Mark Twain as examples of actors and actresses, rather than oral interpreters.³³⁹ It is the assumption of a role, but for the oral interpreter role playing must be restrained. Geeting states the following:

It is considered in rather poor taste to indulge too freely in the changes of voice, posture, and appearance which distinguish characters in a play production. The art of oral interpretation is to SUGGEST such changes rather than to SHOW them. In other words, the practice of shaking, bending over, and limping to depict an old man is to be frowned upon. A mere suggestion of the infirmities of age in voice and diction is enough to get the idea across. As in dressing well, to err on the side of being understated is better than to be too obvious. However it is well not to rely too completely on the imagination of your listeners. Your suggestion of characterization must be sufficient to reach out and communicate with the audience.³⁴⁰

Paul N. Campbell, in the 1966 textbook Oral Interpretation, allows the student to consider more freedom, such as "walk around, sit down, lean on the reading stand, slump miserably, etc., if such movement seems likely to help get his message across."³⁴¹ While Campbell does acknowledge that rules must exist he believes that "the trend . . . is away from rules. Especially from hard-and-fast rules."³⁴² One must keep in mind that Campbell relates to the year 1966. He allows, in the text, that discussion of the concept

of impersonation be submerged between that of the actor and of the interpreter. The imperative question to emerge is: "When Charles Laughton gave his readings was he acting or interpreting?" Campbell veers to the impossibility of separating the two fields and proceeds to state the following opinion:

The sheer idiocy of considering a performance oral interpretation because the reader kept his hands still, or acting because gestures were used (and such distinctions are made by judges of oral interpretation events in forensic tournaments all over the country), apparently grows out of a desperate attempt to separate acting and interpretation. Why they must be separated, unless it is in order to keep one thing in one academic department and one in another, seems puzzling, indeed.³⁴³

Campbell poses several challenges for the student. Among them is direct reference to the concept of impersonation with research of speech journal articles that relate to the division of "acting, impersonation, personative reading, and oral interpretation." Campbell directs the question to the student: "How are these attitudes applicable or inapplicable today?" One may discern the waver of the concept in the author's viewpoint: "It should be clear, then, that if one insists on using the terms actor and oral interpreter, the same performer will be sometimes one, sometimes the other."³⁴⁴

By 1967 a more staunch attitude is retained by three affirming authors. Keith Brooks, Eugene Bahn, and L. LaMont Okey submit the textbook The Communicative Act of Oral Interpretation.³⁴⁵ They omit discussion but provide slight

reference to the concept of impersonation. The authors present graphic models within the text which indicate definite stimulus response lines with separation of the actor's realm and the interpreter's realm. (See Appendix E.)

Brooks, Bahn, and Okey assert that the manuscript is the point of discrimination between the two areas.³⁴⁶ They urge the student to use suggestion, and stress the awareness of the impact of subtleness with the use of the body and the voice.³⁴⁷

Brooks, Bahn, and Okey clearly point out the lack of costume and properties for the oral interpretation of characterization.³⁴⁸ In the conclusion of the chapter concerning drama, the authors submit study questions: "How did Leland Powers' method of presenting a play to an audience differ from the method advocated by the authors of your text?" "What is 'personation?' 'impersonation?' What can the oral interpreter learn from these methods of portrayal that will help him in his characterizations?"³⁴⁹

Paul Campbell, in his 1967 text The Speaking and the Speakers of Literature, repeats liberal statements and in the interim omits discussion concerning the concept of impersonation; however, he retains the outlook that the interpreter, just as the actor, share common denominators.³⁵⁰ Campbell states: "In a situation in which the audience expects interpretation, the performer may begin by interpreting, then slowly move over toward acting." Campbell

notes the overlap of the fields of Drama and Oral Interpretation and discusses the fact that the interpreter places all literature within the art, while performance is only a subsequent fact.³⁵¹

Jean DeSales Bertram provides vivid guidelines for the concept of impersonation in the 1967 text The Oral Experience of Literature: Sense, Structure, and Sound.

Bertram discusses drama and the use of the script and expresses her attitude and method as follows:

Oral interpretation does demand contact between performer and audience that is more direct than either acting or impersonation. Memorization followed by presentation without the script is clearly not oral interpretation. If you wish to do a monologue or impersonation, you do not need the book. If you wish to do a reading, refer to the book and turn the pages, at least occasionally. Many of the questions with respect to script, gestures, movement are really questions of taste. A reading might be done primarily to one side of or in front of a lectern, but unless the reader refers to his script from time to time the presentation is in some medium other than interpretation.³⁵²

Bertram extends her remarks to the restriction of the audience upon the how rather than the what as a possible source of wayward attention. In order to override this possibility she advises the student to rely upon the use of the voice and the face for expression rather than gesture and movement. She advises the discriminating use of good taste, but believes that "You can do whatever enables you to promote the idea, attitude, emotion, and mood of the selection."³⁵³ It is noted that "impersonation" holds a definite place of reference in the Index of her text.

Another 1967 textbook does not follow Bertram's pattern. Oral Interpretation: The Re-creation of Literature by Jere Veilleux clarifies immediately on the first page of the text that:

Oral interpretation is the art of re-creating a literary work (prose fiction, poetry, or drama) through the medium of oral reading by an interpreter to an audience. It is not acting, impersonation, mimicry, or pantomime, though at times it may embody elements of each of these arts.

Veilleux enlarges his views of the concept in a footnote reference:

The interpreter, also, is not an "impersonator," that is, one who is attempting to pretend to be a real character (with real costumes, properties, and representational actions) in an imaginary situation (the reading room or lecture hall). The art of impersonation--carried perhaps to its extreme form in the "female impersonator"--is far different from interpretation. But some forms of impersonation, when combined with interpretation, have been effective on the professional stage; for example, Hal Holbrook's impersonation of Mark Twain and Emlyn Williams' impersonations of Charles Dickens and Dylan Thomas.³⁵⁴

Veilleux expresses his opinion that "the audience expects 'reading,' not impersonation or acting." If the manuscript is memorized or the interpreter chooses to use flagrant action, Veilleux firmly believes that "the established conventions of oral interpretation" have then been transgressed.³⁵⁵ He encourages the use of suggestion within the context of the text, but submits a broader use of the concept of impersonation in an article in The Speech Teacher titled "The Interpreter: His Role, Language, and Audience." He proceeds to reveal his attitude and opinion:

. . . I can think of no valid theoretical objection to impersonation as one possible style of interpretation; certainly the Frost, Twain, and Dickens presentations successfully demonstrated its possibilities. We recognize that modes of theatrical production change as they mirror society's changing tastes; the 18th Century's Shakespeare is certainly not ours, and probably neither is the Elizabethan's. I suspect that the fact that impersonation is currently out of vogue, while suggestion is in, is due more to our own tastes in performance than . . . insight into the nature of interpretation.³⁵⁶

The following year, 1968, the text Reading Literature Aloud by Lawrence H. Mouat, marked the fourth printing for the 1962 edition. The revival of the past occurs in an additional textbook that expresses opinions which had been published in 1922. Louise M. Scrivner submitted her 1968 text A Guide to Oral Interpretation to be used in the classroom.³⁵⁷ Scrivner advocates the use of suggestion, and notes the closeness of oral interpretation to acting while the concept of impersonation is not directly discussed by her or given a place of reference in the Index. Scrivner brings forward quoted statements by Ralph Dennis, the former head of the Speech department at Northwestern University as they were published in the 1922 issue of The Quarterly Journal of Speech Education:

How can we measure platform art? . . . By this: does it appeal, does it get over to the judicious few as well as to the many? That's a high standard, a practical standard If we accept such measurements what care we about personation or impersonation, characterization, or acting, except as they be good or bad mediums for the individual under discussion. . . .

If a reader . . . shows me life through his personal slant, his concept, his vision; if he is sincere,

true, honest, does not offend, if he moves me, makes me think, I am for him Let's not quibble over terms, over methods. . . . Let's learn how to retranslate, into living words and actions that will be understood by all, the thoughts, the life values, the life interpretations which men have put into books.

Scrivner provides the foregoing quotations to present a base for her following statements:

The line between the suggestive role of the interpreter and the more literal role of the actor must remain a vague one. But is it so bad if, when reading a dramatic part, the interpreter slips over into the actor's realm and "identifies"? We think not, so long as he does not call attention to himself. There must be a degree of flexibility between suggestion and representation of character.³⁵⁸

Scrivner proceeds with the continued use of restrictive statements concerning attitude and method as she invites the student to employ a "sense of good taste" with readings that entail characterization.³⁵⁹

During the lapse of twelve years another textbook undergoes changes in the approach of teaching, concerning the concept of impersonation. Severina E. Nelson submits the fifth edition of The Art of Interpretative Speech; an update of the 1956 fourth edition and one which continues to feature the coauthor Charles Henry Woolbert. However, this fifth edition is Nelson's contribution to current trends while she maintains the past philosophy. With deft strokes she removes the subject Index and also states, "The sister arts, impersonation and acting, are not involved in this study."³⁶⁰ Nelson maintains that the impersonator

or actor is more indirect than the interpretative approach to communication and she submits her belief that "A fine balance exists in interpretation between the direct approach and restraint, depending on the form of literature." Nelson continues: "One never speaks of impersonation in connection with a poem, except perhaps in the presentation of a dramatic monologue," She includes in this publication the use of the concept of impersonation with the presentation of the dramatic monologue, provided the characterization uses restraint. Nelson includes Hal Holbrook as an example of an impersonator and provides the following illustration for the student:

Those who have heard Hal Holbrook give his Mark Twain program have witnessed an impersonator in action--with typical attire, postures, walk, small gestures as well as facial and vocal expression. Holbrook impersonates Mark Twain in a most successful manner, as far as anyone today can know, through studied Mark Twain mannerisms, personality and vocal eccentricities.

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The performer must thus find the way to integrate his voice and body movement in order to show his auditors how the ideas mean.

Accomplishment of this end does not demand great histrionic display, vocal gymnastics or rare impersonative technique, but you should at least give the impression that you are interested in what you are interpreting and believe it worthy of the attention of your hearers.³⁶¹

In this edition, Nelson removes all practice materials and further reference to the concept of impersonation. She extends the thought to the student that "the art of interpretation falls within the art of acting" with the presentation of drama.³⁶²

Included in the year 1968 is another textbook that fails to mention the concept of impersonation. With copyrights in 1964, 1967, and the second printing in 1968, David W. Thompson and Virginia Fredricks submitted Oral Interpretation of Fiction: A Dramatistic Approach. Thompson and Fredricks refer to the existence of a "source of confusion for students" of oral interpretation and acting due to the fact that "imitation" exists in both of the fields:

. . . in a general way, interpretative reading is like acting in taking as its base line or underlying truth the whole world of the physical. A good interpreter reads as if he were constantly ready to pantomime the action if the language of words should fail him. Of course, with the author's text in his hands, words never do fail him, and yet he never loses his attitude of physical readiness.³⁶³

Thompson and Fredricks point to the distinction that "the reader merely suggests what the actor embodies," but they see the interpreter as a "director" of the reciprocal action of showing as well as encouraging imaginative participation.³⁶⁴ They emphasize that the oral interpreter must retain the literature as the source of "focus."³⁶⁵ The concept of impersonation is not discussed in the context and the subject index is omitted from the book.

In 1970 the Interpretation Interest Group of the Speech Association of America was noted in a footnote reference in the second edition of Interpretation: Writer, Reader, Audience by Alethea Smith Mattingly and Wilma H. Grimes. The authors note the following adopted statement from the 1968

national convention of the Speech Association of America:

Interpretation is an art concerned with the education of the human being as an expressive agent for the performance of texts of many kinds, whether for persuasive or aesthetic ends. It involves close critical analysis of the texts as well as study and practice of all of the arts of delivery, whether verbal or nonverbal, overt or covert. It seeks a presentational form for the printed words, whether in solo or group performance.³⁶⁶

The authors use this adopted definition to forward their own definition of the nonpareil interpretation which is, according to Mattingly and Grimes, "the full revelation of whatever experience is inherent in the literature."³⁶⁷

They are firm once again, as in their 1961 stance, with the omittance of discussion of the concept of impersonation and the inclusion of interpretation principles to the realm of acting.³⁶⁸

The following year, 1971, Charlotte I. Lee submitted the fourth edition of Oral Interpretation. Lee retained the same stance which she had taken in the previous texts concerning the reference in the Index to the subject of impersonation.³⁶⁹ She continued to relate the concept to monodrama and to place this form as an individual art between acting and oral interpretation.³⁷⁰ However, in the fourth edition a change omits the use of gestures and places complete reliance upon suggestion. The comparison that follows is included here as an aid in discerning the continued efforts to refine the method and attitude concerning

characterization, and which bears upon the concept of impersonation. Lee states in the 1965 third edition:

Abandoning the overt actions he has been using, he depends primarily upon posture, muscle tone, and kinesthetic response to suggest physical characteristics, although he may of course use gestures appropriate to the characters whenever they aid communication.

In the 1971, fourth edition:

Abandoning the explicit, descriptive, overt actions he has been using, he depends primarily on posture, muscle tone, and kinesthetic response to suggest physical characteristics whenever they aid communication.³⁷¹

According to Lee, "The interpreter, like the actor, is responsible for complete mental and emotional characterization."³⁷² The differentiation is in the use of suggestion.

A 1972 textbook complements the above attitude with guidance toward economy. The second edition of The Art of Interpretation by Wallace A. Bacon centers the student's attention on the distinct realms of acting and oral interpretation, as previously noted in the 1966 edition. However, Bacon adds that "Economy in overt and covert behavior is a virtue."³⁷³ He establishes the focus of the text in the Preface with the assertion that the art of interpretation is the active process of "becoming" as well as that of "performance."³⁷⁴ Bacon omits reference to the concept of impersonation but he continues to avow that "The whole reader is a gesturing agent."³⁷⁵

An additional 1972 text acknowledges the two realms of acting and oral interpretation with the inclusion of liberal

supportive statements for the concept of impersonation. Communicative Reading, the 1972, third edition by Aggertt and Bowen, includes statements that the 1970's experienced a reduction of the distinctive barriers between acting and oral interpretation. The authors maintain that "acting is fundamentally portraitive and that interpreting is primarily suggestive"; but the distinguishing manifestations are reciprocal in nature. The authors express their attitude: ". . . if they [acting and oral interpretation] are sometimes quite different and sometimes similar, what difference does it make?"³⁷⁶ They state their opinion which indicates attitude and method:

Too often, the interpreter has been unduly restricted by those too self-conscious about the alleged differences between interpretation and acting. If the literature needs lively impersonation from the reader for effective audience response, then the reader had better use it.³⁷⁷

The lyric poem, fiction, and drama with characterization are enhanced with impersonative treatment provided the interpreter presents an animated but restrained performance.³⁷⁸ This edition presents enthusiastic, expansive statements and represents sixteen years of support for the concept of impersonation as evidenced in the 1956 and 1963 texts by Aggertt and Bowen. The attitude and method remain unchanged, with the continued inclusion of the impersonative treatment for the poem "Simon Legree--A Negro Sermon" and the instruction to "become the preacher."³⁷⁹ The authors

provide a prominent reference in the Index but this is not duplicated in a publication two years later.

Chester Clayton Long preferred to discuss characterization in terms of paralanguage in the 1974 edition The Liberal Art of Interpretation, and he omits Index reference to the concept of impersonation. Due to the interpreter's need to identify with several characters in the literature, Long believes:

. . . in the light of paralinguistic features, the old argument about whether interpretation is acting or acting is interpretation, or whether the interpreter "suggests" and the actor "impersonates," is easily resolved.³⁸⁰

Long also believes that the aspects of characterization would be impossible for an interpreter to project fully. There must be a reliance "on degrees of subtle suggestion and projection from the stage space"³⁸¹ Long directs the student's attention to the professional stage and Hal Holbrook's performances, and in contrast makes it clear that interpretation in the classroom is centered educationally upon the literature.³⁸² He promotes the unification of the physical body with a gestalt presentation combined with a conversational performance that does not draw attention to the performer.³⁸³

The presentation of a female character by a male interpreter or the presentation of a male character by a female interpreter is in the form of suggestion. This is due to our cultural norms. According to Long, "Our values

say we can tolerate 'suggestion' in which the sexual identity of the reader is not lost, but not 'impersonation,' which may create the illusion of femininity or masculinity too completely."³⁸⁴

The following year the publication of an additional text remained unchanged in attitude and method and the authors remained firm in their statements. Keith Brooks, Eugene Bahn, and L. LaMont Okey submitted the 1975, second edition The Communicative Act of Oral Interpretation with unchanged statements in comparison with their 1967 edition. They promote the use of suggestion and retain basic attitudes in the text:

When the vocal and physical responsiveness of the oral interpreter usurps the function of the listener (to fulfill the potential of the literary experience in his own mind), the oral interpreter has gone beyond the realm of suggestion.³⁸⁵

The authors continue to believe that "there is no single right way to communicate any single piece of literature."³⁸⁶ They warn the student not to exaggerate the acquired interpretative skills in an exhibitory manner.³⁸⁷

They also continue to maintain that narrative poetry needs a unified effect and Brooks, Bahn, and Okey retain the advice: ". . . do not make the character stand out as if it were an impersonation."³⁸⁸ It is interesting to note that the concept of impersonation is not listed in the Indices of either the 1967 edition or the 1975 edition, but the authors retain the study questions for the 1975 text

in the chapter "Drama" which refers to Leland Powers' method and impersonation. They continue to omit discussion of the concept which marks a contrast to an additional 1975 text.

Richard Haas and David A. Williams bring the concept of impersonation into full focus in The Study of Oral Interpretation: Theory and Comment. The theories that had preceded 1975 are brought to the forefront with the compilation of key speech journal articles and commentary, in order that the advanced student may perceive enlightenment in the study of oral interpretation.³⁸⁹ David A. Williams submits "Impersonation: The Great Debate" as an overall review of the original Babcock-Tallcott controversy. He states:

One could go on endlessly juxtaposing different points of view, all of which contain a certain amount of validity, but sooner or later, after poring over the literature of interpretation versus impersonation, one comes to the conclusion that little has been resolved.³⁹⁰

In Williams's "Comment," he believes that the source of the problem rests in the academic environment with the restraints of rules and the use of suggestion which should be flexible and totally dependent "on the strength of the character or the density of the persona" within the literature. The emphasis is on the freedom to "blow life" into characterization and Williams extends the view that "Suggestion is a dimension of impersonation and impersonation is a dimension of suggestion."³⁹¹ Haas and Williams invite the comments of Wallace A. Bacon who at the inception of the

1960's submitted words of caution. The article by Bacon, "The Dangerous Shores: From Elocution to Interpretation," was published in The Quarterly Journal of Speech in 1960, and his comment in "The Dangerous Shores A Decade Later" denotes that "The pendulum always swings: that is what history, above all, illustrates." Bacon's comments modify a fifteen-year period in which he believes that the "interpreter is now 'permitted' not simply to suggest but to do."³⁹² The relaxed attitude, but with the omission of the concept of impersonation, is exemplified in a 1976 textbook. Unlike the previous textbooks in format, Literature Alive! by Teri Kwal Gamble and Michael Gamble was published in 1976. The outstanding feature of the text is the promotion of bodily activity and "INVOLVEMENT." Warm-up exercises are included in the first chapter "Awakening and Contacting Your Body." The entire body is given attention as Gamble and Gamble instruct the student:

Before we look at how the interpreter's body can help him or her to explore and communicate literature, let's try a few body warm-ups. After all, a communicative body is an expressive body, and an expressive body is agile and aware. The following exercises should help you to physically experience and internalize literature: they should help you to approach a literary selection with your whole being.³⁹³

This new format, however, masks the fact that the basic principle of suggestion is supported in the portrayal of a character's physical behavior, when the student is involved in a dramatic interpretation.³⁹⁴

One becomes aware of progressive changes in format for the textbooks and a dramatic change occurs with the publication of a fifth edition of Oral Interpretation in 1977. The prominent feature of this text by Charlotte I. Lee and Frank Galati is the elimination of the term "Impersonation" from the Index and also the lack of discussion of the concept in the context. Another outstanding feature is the acknowledgment of the relaxed nature of the current teaching of oral interpretation. Lee and Galati extend their views:

Happily, differences still exist in degrees of emphasis on one or another aspect of the field. However, the isolationism and long list of "thou-shalt-nots" that characterized oral interpretation in the early part of the century no longer prevail. Modern interpreters open their minds to the aesthetician, the literary critic, the linguist, the psychologist and the social behaviorist. They realize that the more they know about related studies the more they learn about literature.³⁹⁵

The Preface to the text is equally encouraging for the student. The word "suggest" is used in a noncommittal variance with each individual piece of literature, which is to be embodied and shared with the audience. Lee and Galati do not forget the strictures of exhibitionism; but they openly stress in the use of the body and overt movement that the "personality of the interpreter" is the pivotal point for ease in communicating the literature. If the student has a natural tendency to talk with the hands, that student is, according to Lee and Galati, allowed to "use whatever bodily action is necessary to make the meaning clear to [the]

audience and to convey the emotional quality effectively."³⁹⁶ Interrelated and bearing upon the concept of impersonation, Lee and Galati discuss kinesthetic response and empathy which provide a synthesis of mental, emotional and physical projection for the identification and embodiment into the characters of literature. This serves as an interaction for visual and audible communication.³⁹⁷ In the discussion of the first-person narrator in literature and characterization, Lee and Galati state: "Only by assuming the personality of the narrator can the interpreter develop a believable response to the material."³⁹⁸

The authors remain adamant in the use of physical action:

In the case of a specific physical action, it is important to remember that suggestion rather than explicitness is the goal. It is never wise to underestimate the audience's ability and willingness to accept suggestion if it is clear and shows the proper motivation and empathic response. Listeners tend to accept a presentation on its own terms, so long as it is consistent and unobtrusive.³⁹⁹

Lee and Galati advocate "suggest" and do not "represent" as they guide the student to focus on the fact that the interpreter is not the character in the literature, but rather the intermediary to procure the imagination of the character's mentality and behavior. Lee and Galati stress the "mean" between extremes and they believe that "any action that seems necessary for communication is to be used without apology or self-consciousness."⁴⁰⁰

An affirmation of the relaxation of rules is published in an additional 1977 text. Edited by Esther M. Doyle and Virginia Hastings Floyd Studies in Interpretation, Vol. II contains the compilation of essays submitted by twenty-one educators concerning different aspects of oral interpretation. Paul H. Gray, one of the contributors, provides his observation in the essay "American Concrete: New Poetics and Performance." Gray notes the changes that had occurred in the preceding interval of twenty-one years:

Another development in interpretation theory has been a diminishing interest in distinguishing between acting and interpreting, at least in terms of performative technique, and consequently, a freer use of space by interpreters.⁴⁰¹

A textbook published in 1979 confirms and expands upon the above statement. Authors Donald H. Ecroyd and Hilda Stahl Wagner submitted Communicate Through Oral Reading. Included is the current opinion and method of the authors concerning the concept of impersonation. Ecroyd and Wagner discuss character portrayal:

In the oral interpretation of literature, how much mimicry should the communicative reader use? Earlier textbooks, whose philosophies are still revered by many, discuss the dogmatic lines drawn between the arts of acting and impersonation on the one hand and oral interpretation or communicative oral reading on the other. For all practical use, such strict lines prove futile.⁴⁰²

The authors draw the student's attention to the word "suggestion" and the variance in the meaning for character portrayal:

This word, suggestion, is impossible to define with a common meaning. Different individuals, schools, and regions all bring a characteristically shaded meaning to this important word. Reading aloud, we say, is a communicative act, and the nature of what will be communicated is determined by the reader, the listener, the material, and the situation--not by adherence to some imaginary or rigid rules about what is or is not permissible.⁴⁰³

Ecroyd and Wagner believe that the student "should read as [his] personality dictates." Through the aid of suggestion, the student assumes the character's personality.⁴⁰⁴ The authors do not object to the use of an accent, if the material calls for this type of specific characterization. Changes in physical stance as well as the use of the hands, arms, and expressions of the face are the interpretative means for characterization.⁴⁰⁵ Ecroyd and Wagner include a variance in the reading of narrative prose and dramatic literature: "When reading both types of literature, readers use their own bodies as the communicative instrument, usually avoiding character make-up, costume, or properties."⁴⁰⁶ They allow the word "impersonation" to enter the text on a limited basis and with a lack of reference in the Index.

In a 1979 oral interpretation textbook the concept was omitted in the Index but references were made to the concept of impersonation as a mixed form. Wallace A. Bacon, in the third edition of The Art of Interpretation, came forth with the basic stance of the 1966 and 1972 texts concerning the concept. However, he found it necessary to clarify this "hybrid" form:

Without book or lectern, the solo interpreter provides us with a rather different esthetic condition. When he or she adds costume, lights, and setting, we have moved into still another condition. At some point, the medium we call interpretation has shaded off into another medium--monodrama, impersonation, or something loosely called a "one-man" or "one-woman show." Tastes certainly differ, and these hybrid forms are at one time popular and at another time disliked.

Bacon continues:

The question that concerns us . . . is when the foregrounding of text leaves off and the foregrounding of the performer begins. Interpretation, in the view of this book, emphasizes the foregrounding of text, of body act rather than body fact.⁴⁰⁷

The preceding statements are included in order to clarify the use of physical movement with the elimination of a book and lectern. According to Bacon, the student should ask himself: "Why do I want to eliminate book and lectern? before giving them up." He adds: "The tradition and the convention have been that both are present--but conventions change."⁴⁰⁸ At another point, Bacon expands on the term "convention":

Conventions are, of course, simply that--agreements arrived at which help both performer and audience. Any convention can be successfully violated, and at any rate conventions ought not become straitjackets that hamper imaginative activity. But nothing is to be gained by pretending that the conventions do not exist.⁴⁰⁹

Bacon also believes in the "embodiment" of literature within the restraints of simulated activity.⁴¹⁰

As in his 1966 and 1972 editions, Bacon retains referral to the actor Emlyn Williams' portrayal of Charles Dickens without including the concept of impersonation.⁴¹¹

His concluding statements place "performance" as the center of the interpretative endeavor.⁴¹² The entrance into the 1980's continues the trend of omission and submergence of the concept of impersonation.

The interval of five years between 1977 and the sixth edition of the publication Oral Interpretation by Charlotte I. Lee and Timothy Gura shows little change for the year 1982. There is an absence of the concept of impersonation in the context as well as in the Index and the retention of the basic 1977 stance. Lee and Gura repeat the advice to the student that he "should use whatever bodily action is necessary to make the meaning clear to [his] audience and to convey the emotional quality effectively."⁴¹³ New statements appear in this edition with indications of a relaxed stance, but these statements are interwoven with strictures.

The memorization of lines is automatically delegated to the actor's realm, but Lee and Gura express the fact that "we are now past the days when interpreters were told that memorizing meant acting." The primary emphasis that they stress is to "communicate" with unobtrusiveness and economy as opposed to an embellishment of exhibitory technique.⁴¹⁴ They provide the student with the words "performer" and "performance" as well as "interpreter," but state:

Because they are restricted, interpreters can use substantially more refined, more economical activity than actors. Thus they become capable of more variety, subtlety, and nuance in their physical world, since they can achieve the same effect with less, and since the audience itself is cooperating.⁴¹⁵

The concept of impersonation is not discussed as the authors instruct the student to portray characters of the opposite sex through the use of suggestion combined with complete physical and mental projection for an illusion of reality.⁴¹⁶

The 1982 text Performing Literature: An Introduction to Oral Interpretation by Beverly Whitaker Long and Mary Frances Hopkins acknowledges Don Geiger, author of The Sound, Sense, and Performance of Literature, as their influential guide for the textual content.⁴¹⁷ Long and Hopkins place emphasis on the performer and the performance, but do not refer to the concept of impersonation in the context of the book or in the Index. The relaxed nature of the text envelops the trend for teaching oral interpretation. Freedom in the use of the body, in the use of the script, and finally in the use of props and costumes as well as music or other visual aids is expressed by the authors. They concentrate on the performer and in the interim express their attitude and method:

The performer's means include the words of the text together with her [or his] own body, voice, mind, memories, imagination, and emotions. Depending on the nature of the assignment and the appropriateness to the text, the performer's means may also include props, costumes, and such other media as music or visuals.⁴¹⁸

Long and Hopkins use a natural approach to oral interpretation. They reflect on the student's ability to assume many roles in the daily art of living and the extension of

these role-playing instances to the performance of literature. They promote warm-ups both physically and vocally as well as psychologically and the projection of these exercises with the ever present question: "'How can I see/feel more [?]" rather than "'How can I show more [?]"⁴¹⁹ They encourage the student "to make bold distinctions among the characters" when interpreting a scene.⁴²⁰ "Performing is physically, vocally, and psychologically engaging."⁴²¹

A textbook published in 1982 does not alter the emphasis on the performer and the performance while there is brief insertion of the word "impersonation." Roles in Interpretation by Judy E. Yordon omits the concept of impersonation from the Index but she refers to both actors and interpreters as "performers" with minimal separation. Yordon informs the student that the interpreter uses both suggestion and economy of movement, and that rules restrict the creative process in the fulfillment of the interpretation of literature.⁴²²

Yordon refers to several actors, one of which is Hal Holbrook and his solo interpretation of Mark Twain Tonight. She provides reference to the models as examples of interpretative career opportunities. However, Yordon believes that "becoming [Mark] Twain would tend more toward impersonation than interpretation."⁴²³ She mentions the concept of impersonation, but does not provide the student with full discussion. This could present a possible confusion of perspective for the student.

Yordon believes in role-playing and the embodiment of the persona as well as the interpretative art of becoming. She states that there must be additional nonverbal qualities:

In interpretation you try to match not only the persona's voice, but also the persona's physical stance and walk, gestures, and facial expressions. In interpretation . . . , you not only sound words, but you also take on the voice and body of the persona and suggest the mind behind the words.⁴²⁴

Statements of freedom with restrictions of economy are emphasized in the text. It is of note that the projection of the interpreter into the characterization is to be complete, but the movements are to be smaller and unaided with props, costumes, or sets. Yordon advocates borrowing "the skills of either the actor or the interpreter to best accommodate the text being performed."⁴²⁵

In 1983, Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives was edited by David W. Thompson. This edition refers to the key impersonation debate as recorded in the 1975 text The Study of Oral Interpretation: Theory and Comment by Richard A. Haas and David A. Williams.⁴²⁶ The review of literature for the treatment of the concept of impersonation has evolved full-circle for analysis and evaluation in the light of contemporary thought.

Chapter 2--Notes

¹See Appendix C in "A Brief History of Theories of Interpretation," in Charlotte I. Lee and Timothy Gura, Oral Interpretation, 6th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), pp. 479-486; Eugene Bahn and Margaret L. Bahn, A History of Oral Interpretation (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1970); Mary Margaret Robb, Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities: A Historical Study of Teaching Methods, rev. ed. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968); also, Edyth May Renshaw, "Three Schools of Speech" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1950); David W. Thompson, ed., Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives (New York: University Press of America, 1983).

²Mary Margaret Robb, "Searchers of the Past," The Speech Teacher, X, No. 4 (November 1961), p. 298.

³G. P. Mohrmann, "The Language of Nature and Elocutionary Theory," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LII, No. 2 (April 1966), p. 123.

⁴Ibid., p. 124.

⁵Waldo W. Braden, "The Beginnings of the Lyceum, 1826-1840," The Southern Speech Journal, XX, No. 2 (Winter 1954), p. 125.

⁶Boyer Jarvis, "A Note on Oral Interpretation," Western Speech, XXIV, No. 1 (Winter 1960), pp. 29-30.

⁷Ibid., p. 30.

⁸Robb, Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities, pp. 12-13.

⁹Ibid., pp. 123-124.

¹⁰Edyth May Renshaw, "Three Schools of Speech," pp. vi-vii.

¹¹Ibid., p. viii.

¹²Ibid., p. vii.

¹³John W. Zorn, ed., The Essential Delsarte (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1968), p. 5.

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¹⁵Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 170-186.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 16.

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¹⁹Robb, pp. 124-129. ²⁰Bahn and Bahn, p. 162.

²¹Ibid., p. 163. ²²Ibid., p. 164.

²³Ibid., pp. 163-164; Epilogue, p. 171.

²⁴Dorothy E. Coats, "The Masculine Repertoire of Charlotte Cushman," The Southern Speech Journal, XI, No. 3 (January 1946), pp. 67-68.

²⁵Ibid., p. 72.

²⁶Phyllis Hartnoll, ed., The Concise Oxford Companion to the Theatre (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 126.

²⁷Garff B. Wilson, "The Art of the Leading Actresses of the American Stage," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLVIII, No. 1 (February 1962), p. 32.

²⁸Robb, p. 168. ²⁹Bahn and Bahn, p. 164.

³⁰Coats, p. 72. ³¹Ibid., p. 74. ³²Robb, p. 168.

³³Theresa Murphy, "Interpretation in the Dickens Period," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLI, No. 3 (October 1955), p. 245.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 246-247.

³⁵Theresa Murphy and Richard Murphy, "Charles Dickens as Professional Reader," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIII, No. 3 (October 1947), pp. 304-305.

³⁶Ibid., p. 302.

³⁷Melvin H. Miller, "Charles Dickens at the English Charity Dinner," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLVII, No. 2 (April 1961), p. 146.

³⁸Charles Neider, ed., The Autobiography of Mark Twain, (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), p. 190.

³⁹Ibid., p. 192.

⁴⁰Refer to memorized version in Neider, ed., pp. 193-197; refer to oral version in Mark Twain, Roughing It (New York: New American Library, 1962), pp. 287-291.

⁴¹Neider, ed., p. 197.

⁴²Kraid I. Ashbaugh, "Mark Twain as a Public Speaker," Western Speech, XIV, No. 1 (January 1950), p. 10.

⁴³Ibid., p. 11.

⁴⁴Alan Gribben, "It is Unsatisfactory to Read to One's Self: Mark Twain's Informal Readings," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 62, No. 1 (February 1976), pp. 51-54.

⁴⁵E. James Lennon, "Mark Twain Abroad," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIX, No. 2 (April 1953), pp. 198-199.

⁴⁶Stanley T. Donner, "Mark Twain as a Reader," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIII, No. 3 (October 1947), p. 309.

⁴⁷Neider, ed., p. 197. ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 198.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 199.

⁵⁰Martha Thomson Barclay, "The Genesis of Modern Oral Interpretation: 1915-1930," The Speech Teacher, XXI, No. 1 (January 1972), p. 39.

⁵¹Robb, Oral Interpretation of Literature . . . , p. 137; also, Renshaw, "Three Schools of Speech," p. xi.

⁵²Robb, p. 163. ⁵³Ibid., pp. 172-177.

⁵⁴Maud May Babcock, "Interpretative Presentation Versus Impersonative Presentation," The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, II, No. 1 (January 1916).

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 18. ⁵⁶Ibid., p. 18.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 18-19. ⁵⁸Ibid., p. 19.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 20-22; refer also to this reaction by Paul M. Pearson, "Artistic Interpretation," The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, II, No. 3 (July 1916), p. 291.

⁶⁰Babcock, p. 22.

⁶¹R. A. Tallcott, "The Place for Personation," The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, II, No. 2 (April 1916), p. 116; also refer to Rollo Anson Tallcott, "Teaching Public Reading," The Quarterly Journal of Speech Education, IX, No. 1 (February 1923), pp. 53-54 for supportive statements for acting as preparation for oral reading.

⁶²Tallcott, "The Place for Personation," pp. 116-119.

⁶³Ibid., p. 122.

⁶⁴Maud May Babcock, "Impersonation VS. Interpretation," The Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, II, No. 4 (October 1916).

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⁶⁷Ibid., p. 343.

⁶⁸David A. Williams, "Impersonation: The Great Debate," in Richard Haas and David A. Williams, eds., The Study of Oral Interpretation: Theory and Comment (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1975), p. 44.

⁶⁹Thomas A. Bailey, The American Pageant: A History of the Republic (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1961), p. 776.

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⁷¹Robb, p. 187. ⁷²Bailey, pp. 816-818.

⁷³Robb, pp. 191-193.

⁷⁴Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading (New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1927), p. vi.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. vi. ⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 15. ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 19. ⁷⁹Ibid., p. 30.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 38-40. ⁸¹Ibid., p. 38.

⁸²Ibid., p. 39. ⁸³Ibid. ⁸⁴Ibid., p. 30.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 178. ⁸⁶Ibid., p. 180.

⁸⁷Gertrude E. Johnson, Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation, rev. ed. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1930).

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⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 8-9. ⁹¹Ibid., p. 19. ⁹²Ibid. p. 20.

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¹⁰²Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Reading Aloud: A Technique in the Interpretation of Literature (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1932), p. 26.

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¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 328. ¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 329.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 330.

¹⁰⁸Annie H. Allen, "The Impersonation of Plays," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XX, No. 1 (February 1934), p. 58.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., pp. 60-61. ¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 58.

¹¹¹Ibid. ¹¹²Ibid., p. 61.

¹¹³Argus Tressider, Reading to Others (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1940), p. v.

¹¹⁴Gertrude E. Johnson, ed., Studies in the Art of Interpretation (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1940).

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 78. ¹¹⁶Refer to Renshaw, p. 373.

¹¹⁷Refer to Bahn and Bahn, p. 171.

¹¹⁸Johnson, Studies in the Art . . . , pp. 80-82.

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 83-84. ¹²⁰Ibid., pp. 106-108.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 111. ¹²²Ibid., pp. 112-113.

¹²³Ibid., p. 117. ¹²⁴Ibid. ¹²⁵Ibid., p. 118.

¹²⁶Ibid., pp. 121-122. ¹²⁷Ibid., p. 124.

¹²⁸Ibid. ¹²⁹Ibid. ¹³⁰Ibid., p. 128.

¹³¹Ibid., pp. 125-126. ¹³²Ibid., p. 127.

¹³³Ibid., p. 129. ¹³⁴Ibid., p. 131.

¹³⁵Ibid., pp. 131-133. ¹³⁶Ibid., p. 134.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 135. ¹³⁸Ibid., pp. 136-137.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 157. ¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 161.

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¹⁴³Bahn and Bahn, p. 173. ¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Cornelius Carman Cunningham, Literature As A Fine Art: Analysis and Interpretation (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1941), pp. 7-8.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 86. ¹⁴⁸Ibid.

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¹⁵¹Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Reading Aloud: A Technique in the Interpretation of Literature, 2nd ed. rev. (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1941), pp. 7-8.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁵³Refer to Parrish, 1932 ed., p. 328.

¹⁵⁴Parrish, 1941, 2nd ed., p. 398.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 399. ¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 400.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 401. ¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 402.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 403.

¹⁶⁰Margaret Prendergast McLean, Oral Interpretation of Forms of Literature (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1942), p. vii.

¹⁶¹Ibid., pp. xix, xx. ¹⁶²Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁶³Ibid., pp. 136-137. ¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 164. ¹⁶⁶Ibid., p. 191.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 206. ¹⁶⁸Ibid., p. 254. ¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 323.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 333. ¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 336.

¹⁷²S. H. Clark, Interpretation of the Printed Page, rev. ed., Maud May Babcock, 1915 ed. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1946).

¹⁷³Ibid., p. ix. ¹⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 251-253.

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¹⁷⁶Cornelius Carman Cunningham, "The Sepia School of Interpretation," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXVIII, No. 1 (February 1942), p. 37.

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¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁸⁰Ibid.

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¹⁸²Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁸³Ibid., pp. 67-69.

¹⁸⁴Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 114-115.

¹⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 177-178.

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¹⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 4-5.

¹⁹¹Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁹²Ibid., pp. 4-5; comparison may be given to 1927 ed., p. 38.

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¹⁹⁴Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁹⁵Ibid.

¹⁹⁶Woolbert and Nelson, 1927, p. 38.

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²⁶⁶Ibid. ²⁶⁷Ibid., p. 9. ²⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 48-49.

²⁶⁹Ibid., p. 134. ²⁷⁰Ibid., p. 372.

²⁷¹Ibid., pp. 440-441. ²⁷²Ibid., p. 449.

²⁷³Ibid., p. 452.

²⁷⁴Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech, 4th ed., 1956, p. vii.

²⁷⁵See Woolbert and Nelson, 3rd ed., 1945 for comparison as quoted in this thesis.

²⁷⁶Woolbert and Nelson, 4th ed., 1956, p. 6.

²⁷⁷Ibid., p. 7.

²⁷⁸Ibid., p. 228; 3rd ed., 1945, pp. 196-197 for comparison.

²⁷⁹Ibid., p. 9; 3rd ed., 1945, p. 7 for comparison.

²⁸⁰Ibid., p. 9.

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²⁸⁴Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation, 2nd ed., 1959, p. 295.

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³⁰⁷*Ibid.*, p. 5. ³⁰⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

³⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p. 96. ³¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 115.

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³¹²*Ibid.*, p. 105. ³¹³*Ibid.*, p. 128.

³¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 151-155. ³¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 199.

³¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 228.

³¹⁷Don Geiger, The Sound, Sense and Performance of Literature (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1963), p. 86.

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³⁴⁸Ibid., p. 317. ³⁴⁹Ibid., p. 328.

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³⁹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 134.

³⁹⁵Charlotte I. Lee and Frank Galati, Oral Interpretation, 5th ed., 1977, pp. 561-562.

³⁹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 69. ³⁹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

³⁹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 247. ³⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 368.

⁴⁰⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 373-375.

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⁴⁰²Donald H. Ecroyd and Hilda Stahl Wagner, Communicate Through Oral Reading (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979), p. 62.

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⁴⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁴⁰⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 82-83; the writer italicized the word "usually."

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⁴¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 115. ⁴¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 417.

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⁴²²Judy E. Yordon, Roles in Interpretation (Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1982), pp. 10-11.

⁴²³Ibid., p. 303 refers to career opportunity; p. 17 refers to impersonation.

⁴²⁴Ibid., p. 6; footnote reference follows to Wallace A. Bacon's text The Art of Interpretation, 3rd ed., 1979, p. xv "'Emphasis will be on the process of becoming.'"

⁴²⁵Ibid., refer to p. 167 concerning props; p. 156 concerning characterization; p. 11 for quotation.

⁴²⁶David W. Thompson, ed., Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives (New York: University Press of America, 1983), p. 542; footnote 44, p. 547 in "The Rise of Expression" by Paul C. Edwards.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

HISTORICAL

Sixty-two texts were surveyed for this thesis of which sixty-one are graphically valid for historic value. Conspicuous by absence as by presence, Figure 1 indicates the overall trend for the use of the term "impersonation" as recorded by time period, authors' text(s) and percentage. The decline is progressively acute toward the year 1984.

The use of "impersonation" as a term has declined. However, as evidenced by this study and Figure 1, the use of the term and the incorporation of the concept into teaching methods has persisted in varying degrees within the textbooks for an eventful seventy years in the instruction for the Art of Oral Interpretation. The survey noted the tendency of the authors, with the coexistent pressures from the academic as well as the social backgrounds, to bind the past to the present. It is pertinent, then, to discuss how the concept of impersonation has been perpetuated through succeeding publications of the textbooks.

Figure 1. Total number of textbooks using term "impersonation," by years.

A synoptical, analytical, recapitulation of seven of the textbooks in ensuing time periods illustrates that there have been divergent paths of thought for the use of the term, and that factional aspect is a potential source of confusion for both the instructor and the student.

During the years 1927 to 1941, Woolbert and Nelson provide supportive statements for the concept of impersonation.¹ In 1932, Parrish submitted a plan for study, criteria for the impersonator, and selections for practice.² Parrish, in 1941, retained the Criteria and Plan of Study for the practice of impersonation which is an indication of his positive endorsement.³

During the period 1941-1960, Nelson, in 1945, revised and shifted the basic material on impersonation.⁴ As the surviving author, she excluded the main reference in the Table of Contents concerning the relationship between interpretation, impersonation, and acting. But she retained information which revealed that she believed instruction for the concept was valid, however, worthy of no more than a subtitle in the context of the textbook.

Crocker and Eich pointed to the controversy over the concept in 1947 and included guidelines of memorization and ability for the use of the concept.⁵ In 1952 Lee restricted the use of the concept only with the presentation of monodrama.⁶ Parrish extended his text with the Plan of Study and Criteria for the practice of the concept in 1953.⁷ Crocker and Eich retained the guidelines of memorization and ability in 1955.⁸ Nelson retained the concept as valid in the 1956 text.⁹ Aggertt and Bowen presented impersonative reading as a form of interpretation and discussed the controversial aspect of the subject.¹⁰ Lee continued with the restriction for the use of the concept only to monodrama in 1959.¹¹

During the 1960-1984 period, Mouat restricted impersonation to the opposite sex and then only if the student is an accomplished impersonator.¹² Aggertt and Bowen extended impersonative reading as a form of interpretation in 1963.¹³ In 1965, Lee restricted impersonation to

monodrama only.¹⁴ In their 1967 edition, Brooks, Bahn, and Okey omitted discussion in the text of the concept, yet presented study questions that pertained to the concept in earlier editions.¹⁵ In 1968, Nelson linked impersonation with acting and noted that the concept is not in the study while she instructed the student to use impersonation in the dramatic monologue.¹⁶ In 1968, Mouat extended the fourth printing of instruction on impersonation of the opposite sex by accomplished students only. In 1971, Lee again restricted impersonation to monodrama only.¹⁷ Aggertt and Bowen retained supportable statements in 1972 for the concept and incorporated the concept of impersonation for study.¹⁸ Brooks, Bahn and Okey referred the student to the problem area in the study questions but continued to omit discussion in the context of the book.¹⁹ See Table I.

One must consider the zealous student and the conscientious educator who would look with dismay for answers concerning the concept in the pages of these popular textbooks. These exemplary books have promoted the advancement of diversified views concerning the concept of impersonation. The inability to discover the complete answers for the use of the concept and the overall diversification of opinion for use of the concept has resulted in, and inadvertently contributed to, the decreased discussion by the contemporary authors (see Figure 1).

TABLE I
TEXTS PUBLISHED WITH NEW COPYRIGHT DATES

Year	Authors						
	Woolbert & Nelson	Parrish	Crocker & Eich	Lee	Aggertt & Bowen	Mouat	Brooks Bahn & Okey
1927	x						
1932		x					
1941		x					
1945	x						
1947			x				
1952				x			
1953		x					
1955			x				
1956	x				x		
1959				x			
1962						x	
1963					x		
1965				x			
1967							x
1968	x					x	
1971				x			
1972					x		
1975							x

The historical survey further indicates that the boundary for the concept is so flexible and adaptable that the authors used it to include not only impersonation of the opposite sex but a certain amount of animated reality.

The survey implies that the concept has been useful to bond the Art of Oral Interpretation to the social background. The examples for this tying aspect exist in references to Charles Laughton, Emllyn Williams, and Hal Holbrook who gave performances on the professional stage. The larger consequence to the bonding of social to educational purposes denotes the continual effort by the educators to stimulate student interest.

The viability of the concept of impersonation is proven by survival over time under an evolutionary assumption of new terms. The authors have relied upon history, experience, and their mentors. In this respect, it is possible to trace an evolutionary aspect of the term "impersonative reading." The first surveyed entry was in 1916 by R. A. Tallcott. The reappearance of the term was in 1952 and 1956 by Lionel Crocker, Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen, respectively. It is also possible to follow the survey and trace the emergence of other terms such as, "performer/performance," "hybrid," and "becoming," "embodiment," and "match." The latter three terms are attributed to the contemporary period for the discussion of characterization. The teaching methods and attitudes in the form of new, descriptive terms are thus linked to an evolutionary perspective.

PEDAGOGY

From the academic standpoint, the concept of impersonation has caused stress, anxiety, and confusion. The implications aver to rigidity in the teaching methods, controversy as to what is the correct application of the concept, and tediousness with the subject. It is not inconceivable then, for one to project a presumptive, eclectic approach which the educator might use in the classroom setting. The full focus of this approach would cover all of the authors' opinions for the use of the concept. The all-encompassing perspective is the basis for the definition of this thesis.

Ad additional implication for the classroom situation is that the individual educator has been pressed to reach a point for decision; whether to include the tiresome subject of the concept of impersonation or to avoid it. Robb provides impetus to this thought when she discusses the contemporary period of the 1960's concerning the forces which influenced the trend toward a gradual evolution of teaching methods.²⁰

Robb directs discussion to the thousands of Master of Arts and Ph.D. degrees that were granted in the 1960's. The implication is that this interjection of new influences is directly related to the decreased discussion. In addition to this, the Federal government aided encouragement for

expansion by providing financial support to the humanities and arts. But there were also "anti" attitudes. Robb believes that "an active negativism--a rebellion against traditional standards" existed during this time.²¹ The implication is that "anti" attitudes entered into the classroom situation and consequently affected the teaching methods. The shifts in attitude and method are directly related to the momentum of the background forces of the times. Robb's report extends to 1968 with the revised edition and thus partially accounts for the phenomenal shift in teaching methods and attitudes during this contemporary period. The writer assumes that these forces continued with forward impact into the 1970's; however, the years from 1968 to 1985 lack complete perspectives for a final evaluation for this thesis. The writer invited the comments of the textbook authors regarding the contemporary treatment of the concept of impersonation.

AUTHORS: QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

A form letter was sent to fourteen authors (see Appendix F). Ten of them returned replies to the inquiry. Those who responded with contemporary comment for this thesis were: Wallace A. Bacon, Elbert R. Bowen, Paul D. Brandes, Paul N. Campbell, Virginia Fredricks, Baxter M. Geeting, Charlotte I. Lee, Beverly Whitaker Long, Sara Lowrey, Judy E. Yordon. In November of 1983, Isabel M. Crouch and David A. Williams

had extended their views with replies to the writer's initial proposed thesis inquiry, and thus were not again contacted by form letter. Their contemporary comments are included in the responses.²² Three questions were asked of the authors. The question and their responses are as follows:

1. Do you feel that the current swing of the pendulum producing a loosening of rules will once again also produce future emphasis on the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation?

Author

Response

Wallace A. Bacon	[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] ". . . we seem indeed to have dropped it [impersonation] from the critical vocabulary in interpretation. . . . the pronounced rise of group interpretation has managed to let people by-pass any notion of impersonation."
Elbert R. Bowen	"I doubt that the term 'impersonation' will make a comeback. It was really passe before my time. (See Gertrude Johnson's collection of articles on the subject.) I insisted on using it in our textbook because it was a good word, the <u>only</u> word for the thing which I felt

must be discussed. Ours was the only textbook which really made the effort. Most wanted to avoid the subject altogether, . . ."

Paul D. Brandes ". . . impersonation is already in; . . ."

Paul N. Campbell [The reply was not directly focused on the question.] "I'm afraid I know of no sense in which 'impersonation' is being taught today."

Isabel M. Crouch "I continue to use techniques of impersonation if it works."

Virginia Fredricks "I'm not sure I understand what you mean by impersonation. If it's the stand-up comic or night-club routine, I devoutly pray oral interp [sic] doesn't encompass this kind of performance. If there were to be the playing out or acting out of a role (Holbrook style, e.g.) I don't think this would be 'a negative.' Usually it's the poorly acted or suggested performance that I believed should be avoided. Having said that, I tend to be more restrictive

as to how much literalness I find acceptable for my students to use."

Baxter M. Geeting "Yes, I believe the current swing toward loosening of rules will produce more emphasis on Impersonation within the so-called boundaries of the Art of Oral Interpretation."

Charlotte I. Lee "I am a little at a loss as to how to answer your questions. I haven't thought of the term 'impersonation' for a long time.

. . . the first thing I would need to know is how you are defining the term."

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.]

Beverly Whitaker
Long

"I do not know. It seems to me that the loosening of rules you speak of is related to the current emphasis on performance behaviors' being grounded in the text. Therefore, when the speaker or narrator is highly dramatized or defined (as opposed to lowly dramatized or defined), it would be quite natural for the performer to render a highly

detailed performance--something very close, I suspect, to what you are calling impersonation."

Sara Lowrey

"I guess so. [She added her personal belief.] I believe the individual should create the art as he sees it.

David A. Williams

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] "We assume the role of the speaker when we perform a text. The question becomes 'one of degree. How much of a role? How much impersonation? . . . we are indeed practicing it [impersonation] without aesthetic restraints."

Judy E. Yordon

"I would love to be able to give you a lucid response to your request, but I'm afraid your questions left me a bit confused. I need to know how you are defining impersonation in your thesis."

2. Is it possible that, indeed, impersonation is being taught today through aesthetic evaluation, but the concept itself is consciously submerged?

Wallace A. Bacon

"I don't think it has been 'consciously submerged,' but rather that it has been

subsumed by the current views of relationships between acting and interpretation."

Elbert R. Bowen

"Yes."

Paul D. Brandes

". . . it is being taught openly; . . ."

Paul N. Campbell

No response.

Isabel M. Crouch

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] ". . . no one has taken me to task . . . for quite some time; I doubt that its use [impersonation] is as controversial as it once was."

Baxter M. Geeting

"Yes, it is possible that impersonation is being taught though the concept is currently submerged. We are loosening the boundaries in most courses and enlarging the concepts of what or what not is acceptable."

Charlotte I. Lee

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] "In Interpretation, whether individual or group, I keep the scene in the minds of the audience not on the stage. This means total

dedication to my inner responses and muscle control and voice suggestion and all the techniques of projection and communication, but a sharp limit on visual details that will pull their attention up to the stage area."

Beverly Whitaker
Long

"I do not understand the meaning of the term 'aesthetic evaluation' in your question."

Sara Lowrey

"I think very likely."

David A. Williams

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] "Explaining how much impersonation for any given text is not easy and really becomes an aesthetic question."

Judy E. Yordon

No direct reply.

3. What stand should one take when a student asks about the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation?

Wallace A. Bacon

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] ". . . I do not at all object to impersonation. While I say that I do not object to impersonation, I do not myself, in performance,

ever impersonate--nor would I. That is a personal choice. But others of my colleagues move easily between traditional interpretation and impersonation (the acting of character), and I thoroughly enjoy watching them."

Elbert R. Bowen

"Reason with her/him. Philosophize. I think my students understood, while students on so many other campuses seemed to be worried about the differences between 'interpretation' and 'acting,' which is a waste of time once you understand suggestion--impersonation."

Paul D. Brandes

". . . tell the student that oral interpretation is not theatre and not impersonation, that the oral interpreter's emphasis should be to help the listener create images, and not to create those images himself/herself. The imagination can do so much more than the literal portrayal can do. Furthermore, acting and impersonation limit the repertoire of the reader. All you need is a reader who can suggest enough to let

the audience run away with the excellence of the imagery."

Paul N. Campbell [The reply was not directly focused on the question.] "It all seems to smack of the old acting/interpreting squabble, of which I'm sure we're all quite tired."

Isabel M. Crouch ". . . use techniques of impersonation if it works."

Virginia Fredricks "I think it depends upon (a) a definition of terms (b) questions of taste (c) the instructor's objectives and goals. As in the old query of 'Isn't that acting!??' I think taste and judgment must prevail. I feel free to set my standards even though I acknowledge to my students that there are other opinions and approaches!"

Baxter M. Geeting "If a student asks to be helped in Impersonation and whose talent would indicate he or she could develop into a good Impersonator, go for it!"

Charlotte I. Lee

[The reply was not directly focused on the question.] "There is such a thin line between the terms you are dealing with. I guess I have found (for my own comfort probably) that it comes down to where you are creating the scene and characters. No costumes, no props. Of course, appropriate dress is important so that they [the audience] are not distracted by incongruities between what they see and what they have created in their minds."

Beverly Whitaker
Long

"I do not know what stand one should take except to say that the role of impersonation in our history is significant. It never really died out, but has received more emphasis in some periods than in others. Although what we are doing today sometimes has the appearance of impersonation, I doubt that many people would so label it."

Sara Lowrey

"I think it legitimate. I believe the individual should create the art as he sees it. Certain principles should always be considered; good taste, the author's purpose, restraint, seeking,

'the art which conceals its artistry'
holding 'a mirror up to nature'--
etcetera."

David A. Williams [The reply was not directly focused
on the question.] "The more we know
about the speaker in a text, the more
we can impersonate, and indeed, must
impersonate in order to capture the
essence and dimension of voice in the
text. One usually knows more about the
voice in a novel or short story than a
lyric poem. One could expect more
impersonation in prose than poetry,
with many exceptions."

Judy E. Yordon [The reply was not directly focused on
the question.] "If impersonation is
being defined as 'becoming the speaker'
in the selection rather than remaining
oneself--I'm all for it. If, by
impersonation, you mean 'becoming the
writer'--I'm against it. From my
experience, impersonation has had both
of these interpretations."

EVALUATION

Beverly Whitaker Long and Elbert R. Bowen believe that impersonation is the only word that explains the epitome of teaching oral interpretation. However, the authors' responses indicate that the use of the concept continues to be totally by individual choice. Bowen has confirmed this direction as evidenced in the survey. The current use for the concept is surrounded by the restrictive words of "suggestion" and "restraint."

Paul D. Brandes sees the concept as currently emphasized in the teaching methods, while Beverly Whitaker Long believes that the current method would not be labeled "impersonation."

Paul N. Campbell indicated a negative reaction to the thought of the concept. One can assume that the concept stirred past memories of struggle and dissension for restrictive evaluation as evidenced in this thesis. The authors who preferred not to respond to the inquiry indicate their reluctance to become involved with the concept. In this respect, silence speaks more emphatically than words.

The individual responses indicate that it is probable the authors would follow the previous course of their thought should they choose to provide additional textbooks in the future.

The concept is "passe" according to Bowen. Figure 1 confirmed this response as an overall reduction for

inclusion of the concept of impersonation in the contemporary period.

In defining the use of the concept, both Charlotte I. Lee and Judy E. Yordon place major emphasis on this facet. The overall evidence provided by this survey discloses the continued need for consensus of a workable definition.

The concept is "subsumed." Wallace A. Bacon points to this aspect for current teaching methods. His text demonstrates that it is possible to teach characterization methods without use of the concept of impersonation. Beverly Whitaker Long follows this same direction. In this respect, the concept has been cast aside for new terms. Charlotte I. Lee had not thought of the term "impersonation" for a considerable length of time and she too prefers not to include the concept in the last two publications of her textbooks. Virginia Fredricks follows the course that "there are other opinions and approaches." This is the prevailing thought for the overall evaluation of the responses, and direction for conclusion.

CONCLUSION

The historical survey has provided answers to the thesis questions as follows:

1. How has the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation been treated in the past?

The concept of impersonation has been emphasized in accordance with the social conditions of the era. The

textbooks have slowly reflected the changes with a pattern of modifications in conformance to the social background. The concept has not been treated uniformly by all of the educators.

2. How is the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation treated in the present?

The concept is presently in a de-emphasized period. Time has removed the textbook references to the actual performances on the professional stage and placed them presently as recollections of memories with only one famous name persisting to reflect on the past. Hal Holbrook remains active as a reminder of the role actors played in the promotional aspect to instill from the social background enthusiasm for the study of oral interpretation. Thirty-two years have elapsed since Mark Twain Tonight became Holbrook's acclaimed conception.

It may be that radio and television have become commonplace, and while Hal Holbrook's one-man show stands as a reminder of the past ties to oral interpretation, the fact remains that the contemporary period combined with the social background shows a marked decrease in the use of the term "impersonation" in the textbooks. This is a direct response to the realization of the controversial aspect for the use of the term. In this respect, silence mitigates further problems.

3. How should the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation be treated?

Through the years, and this is inclusive of the present time, there has persisted a consistent lack of consensus for a standard approved definition for the concept. The writer, therefore, believes that a change should occur in the approach to the use of the term "impersonation." There is no question as to the loss of enthusiasm and the eventual disregard for the concept in the textbooks. In addition, the authors' responses provide verification for future divergence of opinion for the use of the term. Further, it has been demonstrated in this survey that instruction is extended for characterization without the use of the term "impersonation."

The writer therefore recommends that a concerted effort be promoted to retire the seventy-year-old term "impersonation" from future textbooks and leave it in the annals of oral interpretation history as it now stands in Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives.²³ Disguised in the new terms of "match," "becoming," and "embodiment," the essence of the term "impersonation" will continue and forever be the core, the epitome, of oral interpretation. Based on the findings of the present inquiry, a national opinion survey could be conducted for retirement of this term from future textbooks.

Chapter 3--Notes

¹Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading (New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1927).

²Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Reading Aloud: A Technique in the Interpretation of Literature (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1932).

³Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Reading Aloud: A Technique in the Interpretation of Literature, 2nd ed., rev. (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1941).

⁴Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading, 3rd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1945).

⁵Lionel Crocker and Louis M. Eich, Oral Reading (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947).

⁶Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952).

⁷Wayland Maxfield Parrish, Reading Aloud, 3rd ed. (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1953).

⁸Lionel Crocker and Louis M. Eich, Oral Reading, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955).

⁹Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices of Effective Reading, 4th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956).

¹⁰Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen, Communicative Reading (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956).

¹¹Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959).

¹²Lawrence H. Mouat, Reading Literature Aloud (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962).

¹³Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen, Communicative Reading, 2nd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963).

¹⁴Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965).

¹⁵Keith Brooks, Eugene Bahn, and L. LaMont Okey, The Communicative Act of Oral Interpretation (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1967).

¹⁶Charles H. Woolbert and Severina E. Nelson, The Art of Interpretative Speech: Principles and Practices, 5th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968).

¹⁷Charlotte I. Lee, Oral Interpretation, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971).

¹⁸Otis J. Aggertt and Elbert R. Bowen, Communicative Reading, 3rd ed. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1972).

¹⁹Keith Brooks, Eugene Bahn, and L. LaMont Okey, The Communicative Act of Oral Interpretation, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1975).

²⁰Mary Margaret Robb, Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities: A Historical Study of Teaching Methods, rev. ed. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968); refer to Robb's discussion Part V, titled "Oral Interpretation Improves Its Academic Status: 1940-1965," for an overview of the period.

²¹Ibid., p. 213.

²²Isabel M. Crouch is a contributor of the essay "Interpretation Festivals in Colleges and Universities: Eastern, Southern, Central, and Western States," in David W. Thompson, ed. Performance of Literature in Historical Perspectives (New York: University Press of America, 1983).

²³Thompson, Performance of Literature . . .

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APPENDIX A

EXCERPTS FOR COMPARISON OF MARK TWAIN'S STORIES

THE STORY OF THE OLD RAM AS TOLD IN
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARK TWAIN

Once he did manage to approach so nearly to the end, apparently, that the boys were filled with an eager hope; they believed that at last they were going to find out all about the grandfather's adventure and what it was that had happened. After the usual preliminaries, the historian said:

"Well, as I was a-sayin', he brought that old ram from a feller up in Siskiyou County and fetched him home and turned him loose in the medder, and next morning he went down to have a look at him, and accident'ly dropped a ten-cent piece in the grass and stooped down--so--and was a-fumblin' around in the grass to git it, and the ram he was a-standin' up the slope taking notice; but my grandfather wasn't taking notice, because he had his back to the ram and was int'rested about the dime. Well, there he was, as I was a-sayin', down at the foot of the slope a-bendin' over--so--fumblin' in the grass, and the ram he was up there at the top of the slope, and Smith--Smith was a'standin' there--no, not jest there, a little further away--fifteen foot perhaps--well, my grandfather was a-stoopin' way down--so--and the ram was up there observing, you know, and Smith he . . . (musing) . . . the ram he bent his head down, so . . . Smith of Calaveras . . . no, no it couldn't ben

Smith of Calaveras--I remember now that he--b'George it was Smith of Tulare County--course it was, I remember it now perfectly plain.

"Well, Smith he stood just there, and my grandfather he stood just here, you know, and he was a-bendin' down just so, fumblin' in the grass, and when the old ram see him in that attitude he took it fur an invitation--and here he come! down the slope thirty mile an hour and his eye full of business. You see my grandfather's back being to him, and him stooping down like that, of course he--why sho! it warn't Smith of Tulare at all, it was Smith of Sacramento--my goodness, how did I ever come to get them Smiths mixed like that--why, Smith of Tulare was jest a nobody, but Smith of Sacramento--why the Smiths of Sacramento come of the best Southern blood in the United States; there warn't ever any better blood south of the line than the Sacramento Smiths. Why look here, one of them married a Whitaker! I reckon that gives you an idea of the kind of society the Sacramento Smiths could 'sociate around in; there ain't no better blood than that Whitaker blood; I reckon anybody'll tell you that.

"Look at Mariar Whitaker--there was a girl for you! Little? Why yes, she was little, but what of that? Look at the heart of her--had a heart like a bullock--just as good and sweet and lovely and generous as the day is long; if she had a thing and you wanted it, you could have it--have it and welcome; why Mariar Whitaker couldn't have a thing

and another person need it and not get it--get it and welcome. She had a glass eye, and she used to lend it to Flora Ann Baxter that hadn't any, to receive company with; well, she was pretty large, and it didn't fit; it was a number seven, and she was excavated for a fourteen, and so that eye wouldn't lay still; every time she winked it would turn over. It was a beautiful eye and set her off admirable, because it was a lovely pale blue on the front side--the side you look out of--and it was gilded on the back side; didn't match the other eye, which was one of them browny-yellery eyes and tranquil and quiet, you know, the way that kind of eyes are; but that warn't any matter--they worked together all right and plenty picturesque. When Flora Ann winked, that blue and gilt eye would whirl over, and the other one stand still, and as soon as she begun to get excited that hand-made eye would give a whirl and then go on a-whirlin' and a-whirlin' faster and faster, and aflashin' first blue and then yaller and then blue and then yaller, and when it got to whizzing and flashing like that, the oldest man in the world couldn't keep up with the expression on that side of her face. Flora Ann Baxter married a Hogadorn. I reckon that lets you understand what kind of blood she was--old Maryland Eastern Shore blood; not a better family in the United States than the Hogadorns.

"Sally--that's Sally Hogadorn--Sally married a missionary, and they went off carrying the good news to the cannibals out in one of them way-off islands around the world in

the middle of the ocean somers, and they et her; et him too, which was irregular; it warn't the custom to eat the missionary, but only the family, and when they see what they had done they was dreadful sorry about it, and when the relations sent down there to fetch away the things they said so--said so right out--said they was sorry, and 'pologized, and said it shouldn't happen again; said 'twas an accident.

"Accident! now that's foolishness; there ain't no such thing as an accident; there ain't nothing happens in the world but what's ordered just so by a wiser Power than us, and it's always fur a good purpose; we don't know what the good purpose was, sometimes--and it was the same with the families that was short a missionary and his wife. But that ain't no matter, and it ain't any of our business; all that concerns us is that it was a special providence and it had a good intention. No, sir, there ain't no such thing as an accident. Whenever a thing happens that you think is an accident you make up your mind it ain't no accident at all--it's a special providence.

"You look at my Uncle Lem--what do you say to that? That's all I ask you--you just look at my Uncle Lem and talk to me about accidents! It was like this: one day my Uncle Lem and his dog was downtown, and he was a-leanin' up against a scaffolding--sick, or drunk, or somethin'--and there was an Irishman with a hod of bricks up the ladder along about the third story, and his foot slipped and down he come,

bricks and all, and hit a stranger fair and square and knocked the everlasting aspirations out of him; he was ready for the coroner in two minutes. Now then people said it was an accident.

"Accident! there warn't no accident about it; 'twas a special providence, and had a mysterious, noble intention back of it. The idea was to save that Irishman. If the stranger hadn't been there that Irishman would have been killed. The people said 'special providence--sho! the dog was there--why didn't the Irishman fall on the dog? Why warn't the dog app'inted?' Fer a mighty good reason--the dog would a'seen him a-coming; you can't depend on no dog to carry out a special providence. You couldn't hit a dog with an Irishman because--lemme see, what was that dog's name . . . (musing) . . . oh, yes, Jasper--and a mighty good dog too; he wa'n't no common dog, he wa'n't no mongrel; he was a composite. A composite dog is a dog that's made up of all the valuable qualities that's in the dog breed--kind of a syndicate; and a mongrel is made up of the riffraff that's left over. That Jasper was one of the most wonderful dogs you ever see. Uncle Lem got him of the Wheelers. I reckon you've heard of the Wheelers; ain't no better blood south of the line than the Wheelers.

"Well, one day Wheeler was a-meditating and dreaming around in the carpet factory and the machinery made a snatch at him and first you know he was a-meandering all over that

factory, from the garret to the cellar, and everywhere, at such another gait as--why, you couldn't even see him; you could only hear him whiz when he went by. Well, you know a person can't go through an experience like that and arrive back home the way he was when he went. No, Wheeler got wove up into thirty-nine yards of best three-ply carpeting. The widder was sorry, she was uncommon sorry, and loved him and done the best she could fur him in the circumstances, which was unusual. She took the whole piece--thirty-nine yards--and she wanted to give him proper and honorable burial, but she couldn't bear to roll him up; she took and spread him out full-length, and said she wouldn't have it any other way. She wanted to buy a tunnel for him but there wasn't any tunnel for sale, so she boxed him in a beautiful box and stood it on the hill on a pedestal twenty-one foot high, and so it was monument and grave together, and economical--sixty foot high--you could see it from everywhere--and she painted on it 'To the loving memory of thirty-nine yards best three-ply carpeting containing the mortal remainders of Millington G. Wheeler go thou and do likewise.

At this point the historian's voice began to wobble and his eyelids to droop with weariness and he fell asleep; and so from that day to this we are still in ignorance; we don't know whether the old grandfather ever got the ten-cent piece out of the grass; we haven't any idea what it was that happened or whether anything happened at all.

Upon comparing the above with the original in Roughing
It, I find myself unable to clearly and definitely explain
why the one can be effectively recited before an audience
and the other can't; there is a reason but it is too subtle
for adequate conveyance by the lumbering vehicle of words;
I sense it but cannot express it; it is as elusive as an
odor, pungent, pervasive, but defying analysis. I give it
up. I merely know that the one version will recite and the
other won't.

THE STORY OF THE OLD RAM AS TOLD
IN ROUGHING IT

I found a seat at once, and Blaine said:

"I don't reckon them times will ever come again. There never was a more bullier old ram than what he was. Grandfather fetched him from Illinois--got him of a man by the name of Yates--Bill Yates--maybe you might have heard of him; his father was a deacon--Baptist--and he was a rustler, too; a man had to get up ruther early to get the start of old Thankful Yates; it was him that put the Greens up to jining teams with my grandfather when he moved west. Seth Green was prob'ly the pick of the flock; he married a Wilkerson--Sarah Wilkerson--good cretur, she was--one of the likeliest heifers that was ever raised in old Stoddard, everybody said that knowed her. She could heft a bar'l of flour as easy as I can flirt a flapjack. And spin? Don't mention it! Independent? Humph! When Sile Hawkins came a browsing around her, she let him know that for all his tin he couldn't trot in harness alongside of her. You see, Sile Hawkins was--no, it warn't Sile Hawkins, after all--it was a galoot by the name of Filkins--I disremember his first name; but he was a stump--come into pra'r meeting drunk, one night, hooraying for Nixon, becuz he thought it was a primary; and old deacon Ferguson up and scooted him through the window and

he lit on old Miss Jefferson's head, poor old filly. She was a good soul--had a glass eye and used to lend it to old Miss Wagner, that hadn't any, to receive company in; it warn't big enough, and when Miss Wagner warn't noticing, it would get twisted around in the socket, and look up, maybe, or out to one side, and every which way, while t' other one was looking as straight ahead as a spyglass. Grown people didn't mind it, but it most always made the children cry, it was so sort of scary. She tried packing it in raw cotton, but it wouldn't work, somehow--the cotton would get loose and stick out and look so kind of awful that the children couldn't stand it no way. She was always dropping it out, and turning up her old deadlight on the company empty, and making them oncomfortable, becuz she never could tell when it hopped out, being blind on that side, you see. So somebody would have to hunch her and say, "Your game eye has fetched loose, Miss Wagner dear"--and then all of them would have to sit and wait till she jammed it in again--wrong side before, as a general thing, and green as a bird's egg, being a bashful cretur and easy sot back before company. But being wrong side before warn't much difference, anyway, becuz her own eye was sky-blue and the glass one was yaller on the front side, so whichever way she turned it it didn't match nohow. Old Miss Wagner was considerable on the borrow, she was. When she had a quilting, or Dorcas S'iety at her house the gen'ally borrowed Miss Higgins's wooden leg to

stump around on; it was considerable shorter than her other pin, but much she minded that. She said she couldn't abide crutches when she had company, becuz they were so slow; said when she had company and things had to be done, she wanted to get up and hump herself. She was as bald as a jug, and so she used to borrow Miss Jacops's wig--Miss Jacops was the coffin peddler's wife--a ratty old buzzard, he was, that used to go roosting around where people was sick, waiting for 'em; and there that old rip would sit all day, in the shade, on a coffin that he judged would fit the can'idate; and if it was a slow customer and kind of uncertain, he'd fetch his rations and a blanket along and sleep in the coffin nights. He was anchored out that way, in frosty weather, for about three weeks, once, before old Robbins's place, waiting for him; and after that, for as much as two years, Jacops was not on speaking terms with the old man, on account of his disapp'inting him. He got one of his feet froze, and lost money, too, becuz old Robbins took a favorable turn and got well. The next time Robbins got sick, Jacops tried to make up with him, and varnished up the same old coffin and fetched it along; but old Robbins was too many for him; he had him in, and 'peared to be powerful weak; he bought the coffin for ten dollars and Jacops was to pay it back and twenty-five more besides if Robbins didn't like the coffin after he'd tried it. And then Robbins died, and at the funeral he bursted off the lid and riz up in his shroud and told the

parson to let up on the performances, becuz he could not stand such a coffin as that. You see he had been in a trance once before, when he was young, and he took the chances of another, cal'ulating that if he made the trip it was money in his pocket, and if he missed fire he couldn't lose a cent. And by George he sued Jacops for the Rhino and got jedgment; and he set up the coffin in his back parlor and said he 'lowed to take his time, now. It was always an aggravation to Jacops, the way that miserable old thing acted. He moved back to Indiany pretty soon--went to Wells-ville--Wellsville was the place the Hogadorns was from. Mighty fine family. Old Maryland stock. Old Squire Hogadorn could carry around more mixed licker and cuss better than most any man I ever see. His second wife was the widder Billings--she that was Becky Martin; her dam was Deacon Dunlap's first wife. Her oldest child, Maria, married a missionary and died in grace--et up by the savages. They et him, too, poor feller--biled him. It warn't the custom, so they say, but they explained to friends of his'n that went down there to bring away his things, that they'd tried missionaries every other way and never could get any good out of 'em--and so it annoyed all his relations to find out that that man's life was fooled away just out of a dern'd experiment, so to speak. But mind you, there ain't anything ever reely lost; everything that people can't understand and don't see the reason of does good if you only hold on and give it

a fair shake; Prov'dence don't fire no blank ca'tridges, boys. That there missionary's substance, unbeknowns to himself, actu'ly converted every last one of them heathens that took a chance at the barbacue. Nothing ever fetched them but that. Don't tell me it was an accident. When my uncle Lem was leaning up agin a scaffolding once, sick, or drunk, or suthin, an Irishman with a hod full of bricks fell on him out of the third story and broke the old man's back in two places. People said it was an accident. Much accident there was about that. He didn't know what he was there for, but he was there for a good object. If he hadn't been there the Irishman would have been killed. Nobody can ever make me believe anything different from that. Uncle Lem's dog was there. Why didn't the Irishman fall on the dog? Becuz the dog would a seen him a coming and stood from under. That's the reason the dog warn't appinted. A dog can't be depended on to carry out a special providence. Mark my words it was a put-up thing. Accidents don't happen, boys. Uncle Lem's dog--I wish you could a seen that dog. He was a reg'lar shepherd--or ruther he was part bull and part shepherd--splendid animal; belonged to Parson Hagar before Uncle Lem got him. Parson Hagar belonged to the Western Reserve Hagars; prime family; his mother was a Watson; one of his sisters married a Wheeler; they settled in Morgan County, and he got nipped by the machinery in a carpet factory and went through in less than a quarter of a minute; his

widder bought the piece of carpet that had his remains wove in, and people come a hundred mile to 'tend the funeral. There was fourteen yards in the piece. She wouldn't let them roll him up, but planted him just so--full length. The church was middling small where they preached the funeral, and they had to let one end of the coffin stick out of the window. They didn't bury him--they planted one end, and let him stand up, same as a monument. And they nailed a sign on it and put--put on--put on it--sacred to--the m-e-m-o-r-y of fourteen y-a-r-d-s--of three-ply car...pet--containing all that was--m-o-r-t-a-l--of--of--W-i-l-l-i-a-m--W-h-e--"

Jim Blaine had been growing gradually drowsy and drowsier--his head nodded, once, twice, three times--dropped peacefully upon his breast, and he fell tranquilly asleep. The tears were running down the boys' cheeks--they were suffocating with suppressed laughter--and had been from the start, though I had never noticed it. I perceived that I was "sold." I learned then that Jim Blaine's peculiarity was that whenever he reached a certain stage of intoxication, no human power could keep him from setting out, with impressive unction to tell about a wonderful adventure which he had once had with his grandfather's old ram--and the mention of the ram in the first sentence was as far as any man had ever heard him get, concerning it. He always maundered off, interminably, from one thing to another, till his whiskey got the best of him and he fell asleep. What

the thing was that happened to him and his grandfather's old ram is a dark mystery to this day, for nobody has ever yet found out.

APPENDIX B

PARRISH'S PLAN FOR STUDY AND CRITERIA

PLAN OF STUDY (Continued)

65. You are to imitate some imaginary person as outlined by your author. First, note carefully every suggestion of character, emotion, and action furnished by the text. Note the person's present situation. Create as far as you can his past history.
66. Write out in detail a description of his character and disposition. Is he strong or weak, confident or timid, reserved or mercurial, friendly or cold, etc. How will he stand, walk, talk, laugh? By what means can you represent these traits?
67. What is his present mood? Is he the kind of person who has strong feelings, and who shows them outwardly? Are his words meant to express his emotions or to conceal them? By what means in voice and gesture can you reveal these emotions? Review the vocabulary of moods in Chapter V.
68. Study in real life and in dramatic art the behavior of similar persons. Try to discover what is typical of them, and in your impersonation eliminate all that is transient and accidental.
69. Enter deeply into the life and emotion of the character. Practice repeatedly, and in your practice watch carefully for any tone, inflection, or gesture that seems helpful or effective in forwarding your conception. Remember this and use it again in your public performance.
70. In reading avoid so identifying yourself with the character as to pretend that you are the character. On the other hand, do not permit any of your own habitual or accidental mannerisms to distract attention from the essential idea, character, mood, or action of the person represented,

and do not introduce any trivial or irrelevant details of voice and gesture.

71. In deciding upon the appropriate degree of emotion and gesticulation for your impersonation, consider the occasion, the cultural level of your hearers, and the demands of good taste. Read again the warnings against elocutionary excesses at the end of Chapter II.

CRITERIA (Continued)

58. Did the impersonator suggest the character, emotion, and action of the person represented?

59. Did he suggest the setting, scene, or situation?

60. Did he maintain a proper distance from reality by avoiding a photographic copy of the character and presenting only what was typical or significant?

61. Did he enter deeply into the life and emotion of the character without completely identifying himself with it?

62. Did he avoid irrelevant but arresting details of expression, and obliterate his own personality so that only the essence of the poet's conception was revealed?

63. Did he avoid excesses of impersonation, employing enough detail to stimulate the hearers' imagination, but not enough to stifle it?

APPENDIX C

TALLCOTT, AND CROCKER AND EICH DIAGRAMS

TALLCOTT DIAGRAM

FIGURE A.

Comparing the Arts of the Actor and the Reader to Those of the Painter and the Illustrator

ARTIST	THE ACTOR		THE READER		
	<i>alone on the stage</i>		<i>alone on the platform</i>		
ART	ACTING		PERSONATING	IMPERSONATIVE READING	PURE READING
MATERIAL	PLAY	SOLILOQUY	PERSONATION	CHARACTER READING	INTERPRETIVE READING
TYPE OF COMPOSITION	Farce Novel-Comedy Comedy Comedy-Drama Drama Tragedy	Religious Play Comedy-Drama	Soliloquy Monologue Eccentric Address Character Series	Character Soliloquy Character Monologue Character Narrative Character Play	Reading Soliloquy Reading Monologue Reading Play Descriptive Reading Narrative Reading Lyric Reading Declamation
KEYNOTE	SCENIC EFFECTS		LITERAL ACTION	ECCENTRIC COMEDY	MOOD MANIFESTATION
ARTIST	THE PAINTER		THE ILLUSTRATOR		
	<i>with the use of color</i>		<i>without the use of color</i>		
ART	PAINTING		LIGHT & SHADE DRAWING	BROAD LINES CARICATURE	DETAIL LINE DRAWING
PRODUCT	DETAILED ART	IMPRESSIONISTIC ART	CRAYON DRAWINGS	CARTOONS	PEN AND INK SKETCHES
KEYNOTE	COLOR		BLENDED SHADOWS	COMEDY	MOOD

FIGURE B.

The shaded area represents the proportionate decrease of Realism with the increase of Suggestion as the student passes from Acting through Personating and Impersonative Reading to Pure Reading.

The diagram also illustrates the same proportionate decrease of Realism with the increase of Suggestion in passing from Painting to Detail Line Drawing.

CROCKER AND EICH DIAGRAM

APPENDIX D

AGGERTT AND BOWEN DIAGRAM

AGGERTT AND BOWEN DIAGRAM

PORTRAYAL		SUGGESTION	
ACTING		IMPERSONATIVE READING	INTERPRETATIVE READING
<p>Movies Television Stage Radio</p>	1. Complete impersonation (portrayal) of character and scene. Actor portrays only one character.	<i>Dramatic Monologue</i> Complete impersonation of one character by the actor.	<i>Drama</i> <i>Lyric Poetry</i> <i>Dialogue</i> <i>Exposition</i> <i>Simple Narration</i> Suggestion rather than portrayal of character.
	2. Complete memorization of manuscript, except in radio acting.	<i>Monodrama</i> Fairly complete impersonation of several or all characters in a scene.	Some degree of impersonation is possible. Interpreter uses a manuscript whether or not he has memorized.
	3. Relatively complete use of stage effects, such as scenery, costume, lighting, make-up, sound effects, and music.	Complete memorization of one character's lines. Use of any or all of the stage effects.	No impersonation is likely in these forms. Interpreter uses a manuscript whether or not he has memorized. No use of stage effects.

RELATIONSHIPS OF THE INTERPRETATIVE SPEECH ARTS

APPENDIX E

BROOKS, BAHN, AND OKEY STIMULUS LINES

BROOKS, BAHN, AND OKEY STIMULUS LINES

*Graphic Model of
The Communicative Act of Acting*

*Graphic Model of
The Communicative Act of Oral Interpretation*

Linear Stimulus-Response Pattern in Oral Interpretation

APPENDIX F

FORM LETTER SENT TO AUTHORS

November 26, 1984

Dear _____:

Although we have never met, we have a common bond in our love for the Art of Oral Interpretation.

I am a graduate student at Portland State University and I am presently concentrating my efforts on the completion of my thesis project. With the consent of my committee, which is chaired by my adviser Professor Robert Vogelsang, I am writing to ask a kind favor of you.

My subject matter is the treatment of the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation. It would enhance and advance my thesis greatly if I may receive your opinion to the following questions:

1. Do you feel that the current swing of the pendulum producing a loosening of rules will once again also produce future emphasis on the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation?
2. Is it possible that, indeed, impersonation is being taught today through aesthetic evaluation, but the concept itself is consciously submerged?
3. What stand should one take when a student asks about the concept of impersonation within the Art of Oral Interpretation?

I know that this is a busy time of year for you and so I shall be doubly grateful for your reply. You must know that I am very appreciative of your time on my behalf, and I am looking forward to hearing from you.

A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you and my very best wishes to you.

Sincerely,

Joann Johnson,
Graduate Student,
Portland State University